

**Pacific Library Partnership
Innovation and Technology Opportunity Grant Program**

Due Friday, October 10, 2014

Please provide the following information in a Microsoft Word document. Please email the completed form to Wendy Cao at caow@plsinfo.org.

1. Title of Project Net@Home

2. Library/Committee applying for funding
San Mateo County Library
Name Tom Fortin
Email fortin@smcl.org
Mailing Address 125 Lessingia Court
San Mateo, CA 94402

3. Amount of funding requested \$15,000

PLP Innovation and Technology Opportunity Grant Program

1. One paragraph project summary.

Through Net@Home, a new and innovative pilot initiative to lend mobile Wi-Fi access, the San Mateo County Library (SMCL) seeks to initiate a new model of public internet access in which the Library works with commercial wireless carriers to lend internet access to our patrons at home. Our project addresses the digital broadband gap in our communities by providing free Wi-Fi mobile hotspots and tablet computers to be used in the home. In conjunction with the Library's outreach programs we hope to expand reading, learning, and creativity to targeted underserved populations in the County. The program is intended to enable households to continue education activities at home and help families learn and use the internet responsibly and build digital confidence. We believe this program will enable patrons get quality access to the internet and provide a model for new public service.

2. Explain how this project fits with the library's strategic directions.

Net@Home aligns closely with the Library's objective to provide a robust technology infrastructure supporting a wide array of state-of-the-art public services. Operating in a technology-rich community yet ever cognizant of the digital divide, SMCL has piloted and implemented successful technology programs over the years that have enhanced service and addressed customer needs. Lending laptops, installing early literacy computers, the wireless network, wireless printing, increasing bandwidth to 1Gbps and now Net@Home all help to reaffirm the Library's overarching strategic goal to develop and deliver outstanding library services that reflect the interests and needs of our community.

3. A description of the proposed project including the population served and the demographics of that population.

In 2013, California Connects estimated that the percentage of households in San Mateo County not subscribing to broadband was in the range of 19-32%. Though broadband availability in the County reaches 99% of households through DSL/cable, nearly 38% of San Mateo County households earn less than \$50,000 in income, making affordability a significant factor amplifying the local digital divide. Through an innovative new program called Net@Home, the San Mateo County Library proposes to expand its internet services to help address this critical community need.

As a core service, the San Mateo County Library (SMCL) provided 235,000 computer hours of broadband access to library users in FY2013-14. However, reliable high-speed

internet access in the home also has a huge impact in the lives of library users making a wide variety of day-to-day tasks from renewing a driver's license to filing taxes, simpler and more efficient. Home broadband access also bolsters local economic growth through online education to job searching and starting and running small businesses. It also supports individual well-being through social networking and providing access to health resources. In response to this critical need, public libraries are creating new nontraditional services to expand their role as information providers and we believe that Net@Home will help make a significant impact on underserved communities.

In planning the new Net@Home service, SMCL staff recently spoke with Mobile Beacon, the wireless provider, to plan the implementation of the pilot program in the communities we serve. Mobile Beacon (www.mobilebeacon.org) works with non-profits, schools, and libraries to provide affordable internet access. In its work Mobile Beacon partners with TechSoup (www.techsoup.org) which in-turn provides donated Wi-Fi devices to libraries and non-profit organizations. SMCL will partner with both Mobile Beacon and TechSoup to provide devices and broadband access to our Bayside communities.

The Library proposes to leverage this base with the ***Pacific Library Partnership Innovation and Technology Opportunity Grant*** to purchasing an additional Wi-Fi hotspots and mobile devices that will be distributed to targeted underserved SMCL service areas. The Library also anticipates the purchase of tablet computers to bundle with the hotspots, providing a complete web experience for patrons with need.

The check-out period for all devices will be 3-weeks, consistent with other library resources, and through existing programs such as the Quest afterschool tutoring program in East Palo Alto, we anticipate reaching out to families and individuals with high levels of need. The Library will also target additional outreach programs to the Coastside to include SMCL READS adult learning, families identified in our Summer Learning Camps, and users needing job search, college application, or Affordable Care Act registration.

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4. The goals and objectives of the project.

By January 2015, targeted San Mateo County households with need will have access to the SMCL Net@Home service lending Wi-Fi hotspots and tablet computers, providing a complete home broadband experience where it was not available before.

Goal 1: increase household access to at-home broadband internet

Goal 2: build internet and computing skills in communities with need

Goal 3: increase community engagement with library learning resources and services

Goal 4: establish a new library model for expanding its core internet and digital services

5. The project timeline (activities).

Activity	Date
Research	July-October 2014
Purchase devices	November 2014
Create Process	November- December 2014
Training staff	December 2014
Distribute devices	January 2015
Evaluate	February – June 2015

6. The evaluation of the project.

We will use the following to measure the success of the project:

1. Administer pre- and post-implementation surveys of patrons asking about:
 - a. Their experience using the technology and training needs,
 - b. Stories of success,
 - c. Anticipated and unanticipated use,
 - d. New capacities in understanding the technology.
2. Analytics to include number of searches, connectivity time, time of use, circulation, downtime, problems with the devices, loss, and count of total users involved in pilot.
3. Achievement results for students and other targeted need through the Library's Outreach programs.

7. The project budget.

East Palo Alto Library and Half Moon Bay Library			
ITEM	Count	COST	REASON FOR EXPENDITURE
4G Hotspots from TechSoup (CLEAR Spot Voyager) (Equipment Donation)	22	\$90.00	Processing fee
Yearly Service Fee		\$484.00	@ \$10.00 month each device
Supplies to process devices for check-out		\$1,500.00	Carrying cases/ cataloging... etc.
Marketing material		\$926.00	Graphic designer, print material
Mobile devices @ \$600 each	20	\$12,000.00	10 per location
	Subtotal	\$15,000.00	