

AYOS

PPO A Year of STEM

Kingsport Public Library

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Application Form

I. Instructions

In collaboration with [Cummins Inc.](#), the American Library Association (ALA) invites applications from U.S. public libraries to participate in *A Year of STEM*, 12 months of curated STEM programming to foster curiosity and STEM-mindedness in early childhood learners across the country.

Applications must be submitted online by **11:59 p.m. Central Time on October 28, 2026**. Prior to beginning this application, please review the [Project Guidelines](#) and [Frequently Asked Questions](#).

Project Name*

To begin, please answer the question below "Project Name" by typing the following four-letter response text box:
AYOS

Below, type **AYOS**

AYOS

How did you learn about the A Year of STEM opportunity?

This information will help us understand how our marketing efforts are working. Please check all that apply.

Received an email

If you selected Other, please specify below.

Generative AI Statement*

Generative artificial intelligence (AI) tools may be used for initial research, brainstorming, or early drafts of your application, but final submissions must represent your own original work and be thoroughly reviewed for accuracy.

Please check the box below to confirm you understand and agree with the above statement on AI use.

I understand and agree.

Consent to Share Information

Please note that your application responses are neither anonymous nor confidential, and may be incorporated into reports published by ALA, Cummins Inc, or other project partners .

Additionally, ALA is collaborating with [Knology](#), a research organization, to evaluate the impact of participation in the grant on libraries and their communities. If you have any questions about their research, please feel free to contact Corinne Brenner (corinneb@knology.org).

ALA will provide all application and report data to Knology. All responses will be anonymized by Knology for reporting purposes, and researchers will not use your name or your library's name without express permission.

Check the box below to request your application and follow-up reports not be shared with Knology.

II. Applicant Information

Please answer the following questions about the applicant organization (the Library) and the individual who will be responsible for coordinating the project on behalf of the library (the Project Director). See the [Project Guidelines](#) for a list of Project Director expectations. All fields are required unless noted otherwise.

Library Name*

City of Kingsport (Kingsport Public Library)

Library Type*

Public Library (single branch)

Number of Branches in Your Library System (if applicable)

Library Branch Name (if applicable)

Library Website URL (if applicable)

<https://www.kingsportlibrary.org/>

Community Type*

Select the option that, in your opinion, best describes your community. Note that these are not precise definitions; we simply want a sense of your community.

City/Suburb

Population Size of Your Community*

Select the population size for the municipality (city/town) that your library is located in.

50,000 – 99,999

Address 1*

415 Broad Street

Address 2

City*

Kingsport

State/Territory*

Find your [state/territory abbreviation](#).

TN

Zip Code*

9 digits, xxxxx-xxxx. To find your 4-digit sort code, visit the [U.S. Postal Service Look Up a Zip Code webpage](#).

37660-4270

U.S. Congressional District (e.g., IL-07)*

4 digits, xx-xx. To find your congressional district, visit the [U.S. Census My Congressional District webpage](#).

TN-01

Project Director First Name*

Stephanie

Project Director Last Name*

Griffin

Project Director Pronouns (optional)**Project Director E-mail***

stephaniegriffin@kingsporttn.gov

Project Director Phone Number*

(10 digits, xxx-xxx-xxxx)

423-845-0498

Extension**Project Director Title***

Library Director

Department

Parks and Recreation: Public Library

III. Proposal Narrative

This section contains five narrative questions. Each narrative section may not exceed 2,500 characters (including spaces and punctuation), or approximately 400 words. Please answer each question in its entirety, being sure to answer all parts of each question.

Community and Library Information*

Introduce us to your library and the community it serves. Your answer may draw upon geography, demographics, community dynamics, key issues or challenges, or any other aspects of your library/community you deem relevant. Finally, tell us why this **particular** grant project would be a good fit for your library.

Welcome to the mountains where they call us and we call them home. Amongst these sleeping giants is our town of Kingsport, TN. We are an epicenter of innovation and

economic growth as we call Eastman Chemical Company and Domtar our neighbors. Our local demographic is a mix of all walks of life from those trying to find their place in this world and those who are the type A businessmen and women who know exactly what they want. This is where we come in, we offer a setting where anyone and everyone is welcome to learn and grow. If it's a book club to connect to others needing to find a community with similar ideas or a single mom play group who meet with us for Storytimes and programs. We are the nexus for it all. We are the meeting place for various groups from all walks of life, and we are the connection place for expanding learning and education. We are more than books; we are the future and the community epicenter.

This particular grant project would be a good fit for us because we are a small municipal library with a high demand for STEAM activities from our patrons. We have recently created elementary focused programming, Discovery Lab, that has been receiving high praise for its innovation and learning processes. This has also increased our circulation of Scientific materials and the STEAM Kits we currently have on hand. These great receptions have also included some short falls. Our STEAM Kits have been needing replacement items due to wear and tear as well as overuse. This has put a strain on our budgeting as it means funds that could be used towards new STEAM programs have been consistently reallocated to maintain the kits for our patrons' use. This has also resulted in a bigger demand for more diverse kits. These kits have been used to supplement homeschool curriculum in sciences to scaffold their lesson plans. The STEAM kit demand has also led to our staff getting creative in building their own for outreaches at afterschool programs and daycares to work towards our Library's Mission in helping our residents reach their full potential for lifelong learning.

Past Experience with STEM Programming for Early Learners*

STEM programming for early learners (infant to third grade, with an emphasis on ages 0-5 years-old) will be an integral part of the *A Year of STEM* project. Describe any STEM programs your library offers for early learners. Describe a program that has been particularly successful. What made it a success? (Note: You may wish to share both your library's past experience as well as the professional experience of the Project Director.)

Programming our Library offers to teach our youngest patrons STEM concepts starts with our Storytimes. We offer a very clear and consistent layout to optimize learning in a format that can be replicated at home by friends and family to foster early learning. We introduce shape toys and spatial reasoning toys for our kiddos to explore till we begin our Storytime with our call to action song. Throughout Storytimes we encourage counting through interactive puppet play and math based materials. A specific example of this is our Little Programmer Kyndra Jones creating a Lesson Plan that lays out what she is trying to teach the children that week, offering welcoming activity toys that relate to the topic such as felt pizza toppings to go onto a cardboard pizza where we encourage the kids to name and count the shapes. Then we read a book that encourages counting shapes, then we pretend to feed the puppets pieces of pizza by relating it to a subtraction song, then we close it all out with a fine motor STEAM craft that teaches letter and number association that the parents and child can build together to foster social connection. Between this early learning program and our Elementary Program, Discovery Lab, we have received high praise from our patrons asking for more similar programming with consistent attendance. There has also been a call for outreaches to local communities to offer similar STEAM programs with places such as Girls Inc, YMCA afterschool centers, and local Daycare centers where we currently conduct programming.

As the Head of Youth Services, I have a personal past experience with Child Development Centers with the US Army for the past 6.5 years. I have seen the importance of STEAM programming in the peak developmental years of 0-5 in children. Over the years I have seen parents and staff confused as to how to teach STEM to younger populations. A lot of times it's just showing them and explaining that STEM programs and activities aren't complicated. At those tender years of development that brain cells are wiring faster than light and learning is expedited in such a way that we can start small and scaffold a child's learning as they grow and learn. It's starting with Shape sorters and stacker toys as Infants, to shape recognition games as a Toddler, and learning cause and reactions as a Preschooler with simple science experiments and more complex STEAM kits available to them.

National STEM Day Family Program*

As part of *A Year of STEM*, host libraries will need to plan a family program in November 2027 focused on National STEM Day. What would you propose for this event? How would you reach families in your community? Please describe your program plans for the family day event and any past experience your library has hosting family programs, catering to multiple ages simultaneously.

For Kingsport Public Library's National STEM Day: The Innovator Expo we would crack out all the STEAM Kits and have them laid out on a table for patrons to come explore and "try before you check out" the materials so they can get a better sense of what we have and how to use it before they take it home beyond just looking at the description in the binder we typically offer our patrons to consider. We would break the tables up by age group so as you get closer to the front of the tables the older the kits age groups get. This would end with a Teens program set up for the older kids such as robots, 3d Printers, Button makers, ect. We'd offer STEM focused Storytimes throughout the day, Elementary programming will be set up as well that includes a Lego Club showcase and building station, Discovery Lab interactive Station with experiments, local STEM focused authors with tables set up with their materials, as well as any other local partners who are willing to offer a demonstration of their STEM capabilities such a robotics clubs and competition groups, The Inventor's Center that offers STEM focused programs that we partner with, and any other partners who are interested in showcasing their innovations. To wrap it up we would also conduct an online showcase of local inventor's creations representing each age group and prizes for participation based on most views.

Partnerships and Outreach*

Partnerships with local organizations—such as daycares, Head Start, early childhood organizations, and myriad others — will have an important impact on the success of this project. Describe any existing or potential partnerships that will help make *A Year of STEM* programming a success in your community. If you wish, you may upload letters of support from these organizations in Section V. How will you reach the target audience for your programs (i.e., early learners and their caregivers)?

We regularly partnership with local daycares and Head Starts in our areas that foster our connection to our community at the youngest ages and their families. What will make our A Year of STEM Programming a success will be that we can group on the foundational base we already have built and expand what we are currently capable of into something innovative for our patrons. Where we would bring ideas and the small budget items we can afford for our programming with our partners, A Year of STEM could revolutionize how we operate in our offerings to our youngest patrons. We can link better materials and resources to our daycare teachers to aide in their efforts to build STEM activities into their daily routines that can be linked to reducing caregiver burnout and create a more positive ripple effect in our community as a whole. We are looking at expanding our partnerships to include local companies and co-ops to expand our STEM capabilities in programming at the library as a part of our mission to foster lifelong learning in a welcoming environment. We are creating a Maker's Space that would offer our community with access to 3D Printers and software, sewing machines, button machines, vinyl printers, and other technology that will be used in both youth and adult programs. A Year of STEM Programming will be an

extreme success in our community in the knowledge that our communities are asking for such programs and looking forward to our future STEM offerings that will be available to all in our Maker's Space.

STEM Kits*

As part of the program you will receive a STEM Kit quarterly. These kits can be used in the library, or checked out to patrons to use at home. Please describe your libraries' experience with kits (if any), and, if awarded, how you envision making the kits available to your patrons as part of your collection.

We currently use Penworthy STEAM kits and they are highly circulated. We offer everything from Family Game Night kits for older kids and their families to music theory fundamental kits for infants. We offer them in our PAC for holds and check out availability to our online frequent patrons and then we offer a binder onsite with all of our available kits and descriptions of each one. They can check them out for a week at a time and we consistently see them repeatedly checked out as a favorite past time for some children and regularly used in conjunction with stay-at-home parents using homeschool materials for formal education purposes or younger parents using it to expand on "Parents as Teachers" curriculum to foster parent child connection and education. We would use the kits added to our collection as a resource available to all patrons for circulation or for in house use as a part of a program for its respected age group.

IV. Budget

Budget Plan*

Describe your plans for the grant funds. What will you use the funding to purchase or support? Please be specific (e.g. \$1,000 will be spent on staff time to support the development and implementation of the project, \$1,000 will be used to purchase book titles from the programming guide to be used for storytimes). **The total amount of this section must add up to \$5,000.**

Format budget similar to the following:

- \$XXX for Item(s) 1
- \$XXX for Item(s) 2
- \$XXX for Item(s) 3

- \$1,500 used collection development for STEM Materials (including editions in Spanish and other locally significant languages)
- \$1,500 used for current STEM Kit component replacements to maintain our current kit quality
-\$2,000 used for STEM programming within the Youth Services Department and any supporting materials

V. Upload Supporting Documents (optional)

Applicants are encouraged to upload any materials that support their application. Supporting materials may include, but are not limited to, letters of support, sample promotional materials, or past media coverage about your library. Letters of support should be addressed to the American Library Association's Public Programs Office (PPO).

Upload (1)

Upload (2)

Upload (3)

Upload (4)

Upload (5)

VI. Certify Authorization to Submit Application

This application to participate in *A Year of STEM* is an application for a grant from ALA, using funding provided by Cummins Inc. ALA is required by law to ask applicants to identify a certifying official who is authorized to submit applications for funding on behalf of the institution. To complete this section, you must enter all the requested information.

Certifying Official First Name*

Hope

Certifying Official Last Name*

McDonald

Certifying Official Title*

Head of Youth Services

Certifying Official Institution*

Kingsport Public Library

Certifying Official Email Address*

hopemcdonald@kingsporttn.gov

Certification*

By checking this box and submitting this application, the authorized representative for the applicant organization certifies that all statements contained herein are true and correct to the best of their knowledge and belief, and that the applicant organization (including, when pertinent, each additional library branch on whose behalf it is applying) is neither presently debarred, suspended, proposed for debarment, declared ineligible, nor voluntarily excluded from participation in this transaction by any federal department or agency.

NOTE: You can check the status of your institution with regard to debarment at the website of the [System for Award Management](#) (SAM.gov).

I agree

Certification Date (today's date)*

09/09/2026

VII. Review and Submit

Please review your application to ensure a complete submission. Once you have completed your review, click "Submit" in the bottom right corner of your screen.

You cannot make changes to your application once it has been submitted. The online application form must be submitted by the deadline. Late or incomplete applications and applications from reviewers whose institutions are applying for the corresponding grant opportunity will not be reviewed. If you have any questions while working on this application, please contact publicprograms@ala.org.

Ensure you receive messages regarding your application! Emails regarding your application status will come from administrator@grantinterface.com. Please save this email address as a contact to prevent notification emails from being marked as spam

File Attachment Summary

Applicant File Uploads

No files were uploaded.

