

Section I: Introduction and Overview

1. Introduction

This document contains the final report with the summary of the findings, conclusions, and recommendations for consideration by the TIFB Library Working Group as part of the Needs Assessment Study of Texas Academic, Public and School Libraries as defined by the April 1, 2002, Project Plan. The report is the work of the Needs Assessment Study Team, Texas Center for Digital Knowledge at the University of North Texas. The study was conducted during the period of February through September 15, 2002. Funding for the study was provided by Telecommunications Infrastructure Fund Board (TIFB).

2. Study Organization and Structure

The Needs Study Team included Dr. William E. Moen, Principal Investigator and Project Manager, Texas Center for Digital Knowledge, School of Library and Information Science, University of North Texas. Dr. Moen was responsible for assembling the team of researchers and research assistants to work on the study. Dr. Carol Simpson, also a faculty member at UNT, served as Co-Principal Investigator and assisted in the coordination of the school library data collection aspect of the study. In addition to the Principal Investigator and Co-Principal Investigator, the team consisted of:

- Principal Researcher, Florence Mason
- Principal Researcher, Louella Wetherbee
- Graduate Research Assistant, Sandal Miller
- Graduate Research Assistant, Yeh Chang-Ching

Florence Mason and Louella Wetherbee served as the primary researchers to carry out the data collection and analysis activities for the study. The University of North Texas and the Texas Center for Digital Knowledge issued subcontracts with consultants Florence Mason and Louella Wetherbee. The subcontracts were signed in February 2002 and subcontractors work commenced at that time.

3. Study Objectives

The development of the study was guided by two factors, the study objectives as set forth in the Request for Proposal and the Project Work Plan, as well as by the "Framing Questions" that were first developed by the Needs Study Team and further defined through discussions with the Library Working Group:

- To identify and document the current technological capability and readiness of each type of library to meet user group needs.
- To identify and document the major categories of user technical and information needs in areas related to TIFB funded programs.
- To determine the state's role in ensuring that Texas libraries can complete and maintain an adequate technological capacity to deliver information services in the future.
- To determine the state's role in ensuring that librarians and library staff at all levels have appropriate technology skills.
- To examine how state-funded, centralized information resources can be integrated into and complement locally provided resources.

- To identify the appropriate organizations to develop and deliver various levels of support to ensure long-term maximum integration and use of state-provided information resources and technology.
- To identify the probable costs and type of TIFB grants required to meet existing and future library and user needs for the period 2003-2007.
- To identify appropriate outcome and other evaluation measures to assess the impact of the TIFB grant programs.

The framing questions are found in the Report Appendix I.

4. Document and Background Information

The Needs Study Team reviewed three categories of background data. These are the TIFB/KPMG library quality assurance documents, assessments of TIFTech training (AMIGOS), and published research reports on technology implementation in libraries.

5. TIFB/KPMG Quality Assurance Documents

The Needs Study Team identified and examined TIFB evaluation materials produced by KPMG. KPMG had a subcontract with TIFB to produce a Quality Assurance Program. The Needs Study Team examined the available Quality Assurance Program Deliverable Reports for the library-related grants included for cycles LB 1 through LB 4 and LB 6. The reports reviewed included the cycle questionnaires, the responses, and the resulting summary reports for each of these cycles. The Needs Study Team found that the results from the Quality Assurance Program were and are valuable to TIFB in terms of assessing the extent of compliance by the grantees with the terms of the TIFB grants. The actual assessment information, however, is mostly concerned with deadlines and compliance matters and does not provide information related to the impact of TIFB funds on library programs, user behavior, faculty instructional programs, or students' learning abilities.

6. AMIGOS Training Evaluation Documents

Documents available for review included the AMIGOS TIFTech training evaluation form; responses to evaluation narrative questions in regard to future training requests from 7/00 - 2/15/02; and the summary of AMIGOS training session evaluations for the period 8/00 - 2/02.

The AMIGOS evaluation material principally deals with presenter style and participant satisfaction with the presentations.

7. Published Research, Documents, Etc.

The Needs Study Team obtained and reviewed a number of studies and public research reports on technology implementation in educational institutions and public libraries. The most relevant reports to the current research include the following: The EGS studies, *Texas School Libraries: Standards, Resources, Services and Students' Performance*; and *Evaluation of the Effective Use of the Texas Library Connection*. The *Texas STaR Chart: School Technology and Readiness*, and the CORD and Concord Consortium report on a plan to implement more technology in Texas education. Other reports include:

- *The TexShare Communication Plan*, by the Center for Media Training, August 26, 2002
- The Texas Center for Digital Knowledge, UNT, *ZLOT Technology Inventory and Assessment, Technology to Improve Texas Education* (the TITLE Report);
- The Urban Libraries Council study, *Impacts of the Internet on Public Library Use*, (2002); by Dr. George D'Elia and Eleanor Jo Rodger

- The reports to the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation U.S. Library Program on the impacts of the Gates Grants (May 2001); and
- An article from *Public Libraries*, May/June 2002, summarizing the “Impact of External Technology Funding Programs for Public Libraries: A Study of LSTA, E-Rate, Gates and Others” by Bertot, McClure and Ryan.

The Needs Study Team found that the discussion and findings in the published documents are generally consistent with the findings from this assessment. Appendix VII provides a list of referenced research publications consulted in the course of this study.

8. Summary of TIFB Forum

An open session was held on April 25, 2002, at the Texas Library Association Annual Conference to gather comments from the Texas library community about the effects of TIFB grants on their institutions. Approximately ninety members of the Texas library community signed in and attended the session. The questions posed to the audience by the study team were as follows:

- How has TIFB served your library? What benefits have you experienced?
- What are the most pressing and critical needs your library faces in the next 2-3 years in implementing public access to electronic information resources?
- Describe the type of TIFB grant that would best serve your library in the next 2-3 years.
- Describe the training needs for libraries and library staff.
- Describe the training needs for users.
- A summary of the comments from the Forum along with a list of attendees is appended to the report (Appendix III).

9. Summary

The key study question that shaped the Needs Assessment study was to investigate the extent to which TIFB funds have had an impact on Texas academic, public, and school library media center libraries. The study questions and the document review helped the Team to develop questionnaire and focus group questions designed to discover the impact of TIFB grants on Texas Libraries. The following report sections discuss results from the various data gathering activities, including the focus group sessions, and results from the questionnaires distributed to academic, public, and school library media centers.