



## LSTA 2022 Grant - Improved Discovery Solutions Joint ILS Consortium Exploration Project

(Competitive grant- estimated grant amount \$25,000)

Northern Waters Library Service (NWLS) and Wisconsin Valley Library Service (WVLS) are collaborating to engage in a comprehensive joint ILS consortium exploration project to determine value and feasibility of an ILS merger between our two systems and respective ILS consortia.

NWLS and WVLS already operate in an established partnership branded as LEAN WI along with the IFLS Library System (IFLS), though this ILS merger exploration project is distinct from that partnership. Our systems are developing an MOU for this project per the LSTA 2022 Guidelines. Wisconsin Valley Library Service will act as fiscal agent for the purposes of LSTA grant funding management, if awarded.

WVLS and NWLS staff have been meeting periodically to consider the possible collaboration and revisit the Project WIN initiative. Both library systems are in the process of evaluating their current Integrated Library System products and considering other vendors.

Wisconsin Valley Library Service (WVLS) and Northern Waters Library Service (NWLS) are collaborating to engage in a comprehensive joint consortium exploration project to determine value and feasibility of a merger between our two systems and respective ILS consortia.

The draft goals of the research grant are:

- Identify concerns and barriers taking in account lessons learned from past collaboration attempts
- Identify benefits of a merged system
- Identify conditions that make a merged system desirable
- Identify fiscal realities of a merged system beyond migration and into the future
- Establish cultural groundwork, address concerns and establish communication pathways
- Design policies and governance structure
- Determine joint consortium overall budget and calculation method for membership shares
- Create timeline for migration including an implementation plan, logistics, and steps needed for a unified ILS

Grant funds would be used to cover the cost to hire a consultant to coordinate the following activities:

- Meeting facilitation
- Information gathering, analysis and reporting
- Communication with stakeholders
- Travel and meeting expenses
- A Formal report on concerns and barriers
- A Formal report on benefits, conditions, and fiscal realities
- A Formal report on recommendations for governance and policies
- An Implementation plan

Grant funding will allow WVLS and NWLS to hire consultants so that this project can be completed in an efficient and timely manner without compromising service to our libraries in the coming year. If WVLS and NWLS do not receive the grant, staff would continue to move through the process, but would not have capacity to move as quickly or be as thorough.