

# Texas Library Association Summer at the Library Grant Application funded by HEB

Please complete all sections of the application by **April 18, 2026**. Incomplete applications may not be considered. You must be a current TLA member to apply for this grant.

## To be submitted through a Google Form.

1. I attest that the individual completing the application is authorized to apply for grant funding on behalf of my organization: Yes
2. Primary Contact First Name: Analiza
3. Primary Contact Last Name: Perez-Gomez
4. TLA Member Number: 35567
5. Primary Contact's Title: Librarian IV
6. Primary Email Address: agomez3@ci.laredo.tx.us
7. Primary Phone Number: 956-218-2551
8. Library Name: Laredo Public Library
9. Library Address: 1120 East Calton Rd., Laredo, TX, 78041
10. Library Type: Public Library
11. Library website URL: www.laredolibrary.org
12. TLA District : District 4

## Library & Community Information

*Please enter as much current information about the library applying for the grant.*

13. What is your library's service area type?

The Laredo Public Library is a City of Laredo division, and serves all residents of Webb Count.

14. What is the size of the population your library serves?

According to the United States Census, the approximate population estimate for Laredo, Texas, as of July 1, 2024 is 261,260. For Webb County, it is 272,823.

15. What are the primary age groups served by your summer reading program?

Select all that apply. (All will be selected.)

Early Childhood (0-5 years)

Elementary (6 - 11 years)

Teens (12 - 18 years)

Adults (18+)

Multigenerational/families

16. Does your library currently offer a summer reading program? Yes

17. If yes, how long has your library had a summer reading literacy program?

18. At least 20 years. (Not sure about this)

If yes, what are the primary age groups served by your summer reading program?

Select all that apply. (All will be selected.)

Pre-K/Early Childhood

Elementary/Middle

Teens

Adults

Multigenerational/Families

19. If no, what obstacles have prevented the implementation of a summer reading program? N/A

### **Grant Proposal & Program Details**

20. Provide a brief description of your proposed summer reading program.

The Laredo Public Library will provide programming that aligns with the Unearth a Story Summer Theme, which celebrates science, paleontology, archaeology, anthropology, as well as “hidden” stories and local knowledge. We will offer exciting interactive programs for all age groups—toddlers, young children, pre-teens, teens, adults, older adults, and families that promote reading, creativity, and scientific exploration. We are asking for monies to purchase supplies and books that arts and crafts, STEM, and book programs that support learning about such fun topics as dinosaurs, archaeology, and gardening.

A key underlying component of the programming is an emphasis on media and information literacy. As we share stories and knowledge, we also want patrons to ask themselves, “How do we know what we know?” and “Who is reporting this and can we trust the sources?” The use of Artificial Intelligence has made the need for media literacy for urgent. According to a 2025 Pew Research Study, Artificial Intelligence has become more accepted by most Americans with a large majority (73%) stating they would be willing to let AI assist them at least a little with their day-to-day activities. Approximately 57% say that believe they have not too much or no control in whether AI is used in their lives and just 17% are comfortable with the amount of control they have. The report concludes that “Americans are more concerned than excited about the increase use of AI in daily life.” The Laredo Public Library’s response to these findings is to teach patrons how to think critically about AI in order to use it intelligently. We intend to do this through programming that integrates LEGO Education Robotics (Science and Computer Science & AI Kits) and by providing fun media literacy challenges including: “Real or AI?” Where patrons must determine what is AI generated; “Fearmongering” where patrons can take turns making facts seem scary, and “Liar or Truther” where patrons must interview their peer and conduct internet research to get to the truth. By providing opportunities to learn and discuss AI, we can empower patrons to transform their fear into confidence and make informed choices about how to integrate AI into their lives. They will use AI not to seek fast answers or solutions but will use it as a tool in subservience to their own critical thinking and problem-solving skills.

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21. How will this grant be used? Check all that apply.

Miscellaneous Supplies (prizes, giveaway books, food, supplies)

Technology & Digital Resources (platforms & subscriptions, devices)

22. What specific outcomes do you hope to achieve with this funding?

The specific outcomes fall into two main categories: STEM and Scientific Exploration Outcomes and Media and AI Literacy Outcomes.

STEM and Scientific Exploration Outcomes:

1. Participants will gain introductory experience with emerging technologies.
2. Participants will increase their curiosity and understanding of specific STEM topics.

Media and AI Literacy Outcomes:

1. Participants will demonstrate improved confidence in evaluating digital content.

2. Participants will develop a better understanding of artificial intelligence and its role in everyday life.

The outcomes coincide with UNESCO's Literacy Focus Areas which include supporting digital skills and providing flexible learning opportunities.

23. How will you measure the success of your summer reading program?

Success will be measured by number of programs offered, attendance in each program, and participant feedback through short surveys.

24. What partnerships (if any) will your library leverage to enhance the program?

The Laredo Public Library has close ties with the school districts, charter schools, and families that practice homeschooling in the area. During each program in the months leading to summer, library staff promote the library's summer reading program including the free programming for all ages and USDA's free summer meals program.

Throughout the summer reading program, local authors, artists, and subject matter experts take part in the implementation of programs so that patrons receive education, information, and recreational activities from a variety of sources.

25. Are you serving any special populations in your service area?

Yes

26. If yes, please explain below.

The Laredo Public Library proudly serves a community that is largely Hispanic or Latino. According to the U.S. Census Bureau's 2024 American Community Survey estimates, Hispanics make up 94.8% of Webb County's population of 272,823.

Our community is also notably young. Approximately 8% of residents are under age 5 and 30.5% are under age 18, compared to national averages of 5.5% and 21.5%, respectively.

In addition, 25.3% of residents are foreign-born, and 86.9% speak a language other than English at home, reflecting the region's strong cultural and linguistic diversity.

However, the community also faces significant socioeconomic challenges. About 20.6% of residents live below the poverty line, compared with 10.6% nationwide, and 70.9% of adults have earned a high school diploma, compared with the national average of 89.6%.

These factors underscore the important role the Laredo Public Library plays in providing equitable access to educational resources, literacy programs, and lifelong learning opportunities for the community.

### **Budget & Funding**

27. Total grant amount requested: \$10,000

*Average grant amounts are expected to be in the range of \$1,500 to \$10,000.*

28. Provide a brief line-item budget breakdown of how the requested funds will be allocated.

LEGO Education Computer Science & AI Classroom Bundle, grades 6-8: \$3179

LEGO Education Computer Science & AI Classroom Bundle, grades 3-5: \$2579

LEGO Education Science Kit, grades K-2: \$1999

Estimated shipping for LEGO Education Kits: \$285

Giveaway LEGO Kits (Approximately 100): \$1000

Giveaway STEM Books: \$500

Food: \$458

29. Does your library have additional funding sources for this program? Yes

30. If yes, please describe other funding sources and how they will be used alongside this grant. Yes, the Laredo Public Library is funded by the City of Laredo's General Fund. The requested funding will enhance an already vibrant and successful program and will fill a gap in much needed hands-on STEM programming.

31. If awarded partial funding, will this program still be implemented? Yes

32. If so, please describe how the program could be adapted or scaled to align with the available resources.

Depending on the amount awarded, library staff can offer the robotics component to a narrower age group or reduce/remove the giveaway LEGO kits, books, and food, from the program.

#### Additional Information & Certification

33. Is there any other information you'd like to share about your library's summer reading program or funding needs?

Inflation and budget cuts have had a negative impact on programming. We are also faced with the growing costs of aging facilities. Every dollar counts, is appreciated, and goes back to our community. We believe patrons of all socioeconomic backgrounds deserve to engage in and learn STEM and Media Literacy. Exposure is key and diminishes perceived barriers to STEM fields especially for a largely Hispanic community. We also know that getting books and kits into the hands of patrons goes a long way. They will share them with their family and treasure them for years to come.

34. I certify that the information provided in this application is accurate and that the grant funds will be used as described.

Yes

35. I certify that the proposed summer reading program complies with all applicable local policies, guidelines, and regulations governing library programming and services. Additionally, any technology or digital resources funded through this grant will be implemented in accordance with the library's technology policies, user agreements, and terms of services.

Yes

36. I acknowledge that if selected, I will submit a final report to TLA detailing program outcomes by November 1, 2026. Further instructions will be provided on format needed.

Yes

37. Our library will recognize HEB and TLA in program promotional materials. TLA will provide needed promotional language and/or material.

Yes

38. Please type your name below to electronically sign.

Analiza Perez-Gomez