



south carolina
STATE LIBRARY

ANNUAL REPORT FOR FY2025

1500 Senate Street
Columbia, SC 29201

statelibrary.sc.gov





South Carolina State Library
Annual Report FY25

South Carolina State Library



Vision: What We Aspire

The South Carolina State Library develops, supports, and sustains a thriving statewide community of learners committed to making South Carolina stronger.

Mission: What We Do

We serve the people of South Carolina by supporting state government and libraries to provide opportunities for learning in a changing environment

Values: What We Believe

We outwardly demonstrate who we are as an organization through our values. Our people are our greatest resources, and our values drive our people.

Communication

We believe communication in every direction and through multiple methods is essential to doing our work at the highest level. As an information organization, we use a transparent process for decision making which encourages creativity and fosters collaboration among staff and our community.

Flexibility

An agile organization can change course to provide better services. We define our organization in this way and pride ourselves in being good stewards of all resources.

Community Driven

Our community is the state. Our value is demonstrated in what we can give back as public servants. We believe that, by remaining open to our community's needs, we can personalize experiences for individuals and groups.

Inclusivity

We strive to expand opportunities to better connect with others and to break down barriers. Integrity, respect, and equality guide our performance, and we are committed to hiring staff that reflect our community.

Professionalism

Our staff model professionalism by providing a welcoming environment, supplying excellent customer service, valuing diversity, and supporting multiple methods of service delivery. A well-trained and knowledgeable staff is our greatest asset.

Agency's Discussion and Analysis

We believe in relationships that promote a strong statewide technological environment that provides equal access to information and serves and guides library services. Our customers include: public libraries, state institutions, teachers, students, families, state government agencies and employees, and patrons who are blind or have physical limitations that restrict their ability to hold a book in a traditional manner.

Innovation

The South Carolina State Library develops, supports, and sustains a thriving statewide community of learners committed to making South Carolina stronger.

- Strengthen relationships and communication among libraries.
- Demonstrate how libraries are essential to educational and economic well-being
- Facilitate informed governance.

Collaboration

The South Carolina State Library implements and promotes a strong technological environment statewide.

- Offer technical training and development opportunities.
- Develop technical expertise around technology trends, issues, needs and support.
- Lead a statewide digitization initiative.

Preservation

The South Carolina State Library protects and promotes cultural heritage in the state.

- Showcase programs and resources in collaboration with other organizations to demonstrate the state's vibrant cultural assets.
- Lead a statewide digitization initiative to protect the past and build on the present.
- Curate, preserve, and highlight a collection of South Carolina-related published materials.

Participation

The South Carolina State Library provides equitable access to information.

- Negotiate collaborative purchases for statewide access to resources.
- Expand electronic resources in response to changing information needs.
- Develop and deliver programs that support literacy for children and at-risk groups of all ages.

Director's Statement



I am pleased to present the South Carolina State Library's Fiscal Year 2025 Annual Report, highlighting our continued service to communities across the state. Guided by our mission and vision, we support state government and libraries by expanding learning opportunities, strengthening accessibility, preserving South Carolina's history, and fostering a statewide community of learners. The State Library's dedication to hiring a diverse workforce representative of South Carolina was recognized by the South Carolina Human Affairs Commission with an award for achieving a 100% commitment to Equal Employment Opportunity.

Our efforts in communication, including initiatives through the Center for the Book, continued to amplify the importance of reading, lifelong learning, and community engagement.

Effective external communication enabled the South Carolina State Library to reach more than 128,000 patrons statewide, strengthening awareness of resources and services. Over the past year, the Center for the Book has expanded the State Library's reach in literary and cultural arts by forming partnerships with South Carolina state agencies and enhancing collaborative efforts that showcase our collections and celebrate the state's rich heritage.

The South Carolina State Library was named a Preservation Steward by the Government Publishing Office. This designation represents our commitment to providing access to U.S. Government documents as part of our onsite print collection. The Digitization and Government Documents department completed several interesting projects this past year, which you can view online in our digital collections: <https://dc.statelibrary.sc.gov/home>. One of the most interesting projects completed this year was the digitization of historic tombstone inscriptions created by the Works Progress Administration (WPA) during the 1930s and 1940s, which document South Carolina's cemeteries and associated tombstones. This important historical work will ensure information is available and accessible for future generations.

The Electronic Resources department experienced notable growth and success. From 2024 to 2025, the Discus website was accessed more than 3.3 million times, maintaining a seamless access rate of 98%. These numbers reflect both the reliability of the platform and its critical role in supporting education, research, and lifelong learning for all ages.

The State Library awarded 108 subgrants in Fiscal Year 2025, funding projects that addressed a wide range of patron and community needs to include bookmobiles, book lockers, book vending machines, continuing education, digitization of historic documents, and many other

projects. These investments empowered libraries to innovate, expand services, and respond directly to local priorities. Our Information Technology department provided statewide technology assistance, ensuring libraries have the necessary support to operate efficiently and securely.

Through our Library Development department, we purchased new books for institutional libraries as part of our Institutional Libraries Program. This program supports facilities with long-term residents who cannot access public libraries. Our circulating toolkits continued to be a success this year, with public libraries using them for STEM and STEAM programs, such as robotics or drone activities for teens. Our Talking Book Services program improved accessibility with the introduction of a Mini Accessible Library, broadening opportunities for inclusive reading experiences.

We saw tremendous growth in new cardholders and in our social media engagement. We welcomed over 4,000 new e-card holders this year, bringing our total library card holders to over 23,000. Library Services continued to connect users to resources and engaged audiences through the “Discover the South Carolina State Library” webinar series.

This year also marked another significant achievement for the agency. Once again, the South Carolina State Library received the Francis Keppel Award from the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS), which recognizes excellence in program evaluation and management. This national honor affirms our staff’s dedication, professionalism, and contributions.

As we look ahead, the accomplishments of Fiscal Year 2025 position the South Carolina State Library to continue leading with innovation, collaboration, and impact. I extend my sincere appreciation to our staff, partners, and stakeholders for their commitment to strengthening libraries and enriching the lives of South Carolinians. 2026 is shaping up to be one of our best years yet – stay tuned for a major update on how we continue to preserve our State Library collections.

Warm Regards,



Leesa M. Aiken
South Carolina State Library Director



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NOTICE OF EMERGENCY EVACUATION ROUTES

AUTOMATIC CAUTION DOOR

PUSHING DOOR

iPoint

SKAT BOARDS

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Administration

The South Carolina State Library's mission is to develop, support, and sustain a thriving statewide community of learners committed to making South Carolina stronger. We serve the people of South Carolina by supporting the state government and libraries to provide opportunities for learning in a changing environment. Our operating principles are innovation, collaboration, participation, and preservation. South Carolina citizens of all ages, backgrounds, and abilities turn to their libraries to support creative, academic, personal, and professional interests. Libraries respond with information, collections, productivity tools, and learning experiences thoughtfully planned and professionally delivered. The State Library meets the essential needs of each distinct library audience in addressing local service demands. Our persistent goal is to strategically plan, collaboratively approach, and implement cost-effective solutions that deliver outstanding library services to every South Carolinian.

On March 6, 2025, our Agency Director, Leesa Aiken, who was awarded the Director's Award for Excellence last night at the USC School of Information Science 40th Annual Deans' & Directors' Lecture. This award is bestowed at the behest of the iSchool director when they feel it is warranted to recognize accomplishments above and beyond in support of the School of Information Science.

Since 2018, under Leesa Aiken's leadership, the South Carolina State Library has awarded **76 tuition assistance grants to 43 library staff members across 19 public library systems, totaling over \$135,000.** These grants have enabled library professionals who otherwise could not afford a MLIS degree, to pursue their education and receive the credentials their experience and expertise deserve.

Photo to the Right: South Carolina Agency Director, Leesa Aiken, is pictured with Tom Reichert, Dean of the College of Information and Communications, and Lyda McCartin, Director of the School of Information Science at USC School of Information Science 40th Annual Deans' & Directors' Lecture.



Human Resources

Human Resources supports the State Library’s commitment to diversity and equity by aiming to hire staff from a variety of backgrounds with relevant experience to represent South Carolina comprehensively. To foster a diverse workforce, the State Library leadership team has participated in various training sessions, including training on recognizing interviewing bias, to ensure that the most qualified candidates are selected. Each employee receives regular, detailed feedback to promote their success. Opportunities for cross-training and working on inter-department teams are available to help staff learn more about other departments and encourage collaboration. Employees are encouraged to pursue continuing education, attend state and national conferences, and engage in professional development.

The South Carolina State Library was awarded a Certificate of Recognition for Achieving Top Ten Status and Demonstrating Equal Employment Opportunity. During the 2023-2024 Reporting Period at the South Carolina Human Affairs Commission EEO Forum on April 24, 2025.

The State Library believes that an engaged workforce is crucial to meeting the high expectations and needs of South Carolinians. Our goal is to create a workplace where employees feel valued and enjoy their work. This environment fosters creativity and innovation, enabling the development of exceptional programs.



Photo: Rashad Hickson, Human Resources Director and Breanne Smith, Associate Deputy Director, accepting the Certificate of Recognition for Achieving Top Ten Status and Demonstrating Equal Employment Opportunity at the South Carolina Human Affairs Commission EEO Forum.

Communications

The Communications department is responsible for promoting all State Library services, programs, and initiatives to the general public. Communications staff manage social media platforms, including Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube, and LinkedIn, and create promotional materials and videos. Effective communication and email marketing have allowed the State Library to reach **128,394 patrons** across the state. The Communications staff fosters relationships with local media and state employees to highlight the State Library’s mission and services, enhance access to information, and increase participation in events. Additionally, the department advises public libraries on public relations issues, when needed, including brand standards, communication ethics, industry trends, and tools.

Communications Highlights:

- **8,558 Facebook followers**
- **6,532,X (formerly Twitter) followers**
- **2,407 Instagram followers**
- **16,462 YouTube channel views during** (watch time 2,500 hours).
- **1,129 total YouTube subscribers**
- **1,171 LinkedIn followers**

Photo to the Right: Two copies of the “Green Book” in our collection. These books were on display during our Speaker at the Center event with South Carolina Department of Archives and History.

Photo on Page 11: Chief Chavis of the Beaver Creek Indians speaking at our Speaker at the Center event.

South Carolina Center for the Book

The South Carolina Center for the Book (Center for the Book) is a component of the Communications department that celebrates literary and cultural arts in South Carolina. The Center for the Book offers an event series called Speaker at the Center, in which authors and cultural experts participate in readings, lectures, and panel discussions. Over the past year, the Center for the Book expanded its partnerships by collaborating with South Carolina state agencies while highlighting the State Library’s collections and state heritage. On the next page are highlights of significant events hosted by the Center for the Book.

July 2024: The South Carolina Department of Archives and History shared its expertise on the Green Book of South Carolina publications. The Green Book of South Carolina is the first mobile travel guide to African American cultural sites throughout the state. Created by the South Carolina African American Heritage Commission, it offers residents and visitors from around the world a user-friendly way to explore and celebrate enriching cultural experiences across South Carolina.



August 2024: The Center for the Book announced the 2024 Great Reads Selections and traveled to Washington, D.C. for the National Book Festival. In 2024, the South Carolina State Library's Center for the Book chose "The Big Game is Every Night" by Robert Maynor and "The Parker Inheritance" by Varian Johnson.

Each year, the 56 Affiliated Centers for the Book select "Great Reads from Great Places." These books are authored by writers from their respective states, are set in their states, or celebrate their state's culture and heritage. Every year, each Center for the Book that is part of the 56 Affiliated Centers for the Book chooses a youth and an adult book, creating a list of "Great Reads from Great Places."

September 2024: The Center for the Book participated in its first Historic Columbia Annual Jubilee Festival. To increase awareness about the South Carolina State Library and its services, outreach efforts, such as Jubilee, have become a key focus for the Center for the Book, and Jubilee is now part of its annual events.

November 2024: The Center for the Book invited Chief Chavis of the Beaver Creek Indians to the State Library. Chief Chavis discussed the importance of "preserving heritage and securing the future" in South Carolina. This event was featured in a Free Times article.

December 2024: This Speaker at the Center event involved a panel discussion about family recipes. This event featured authors, cultural experts, and community members who engaged with the audience about Southern cuisine and preserving its history.

February 2025: This Speaker at the Center event featured author Carolyn Click and an ancestor of George Elmore discussing Click's book "The Cost of the Vote: George Elmore and the Battle for the Ballot."

April 2025: The Center for the Book hosted the 2025 Read-In, a reading event that provides an opportunity for students, librarians, parents, and other literacy supporters to demonstrate the importance of reading and the need for library services in South Carolina communities. The South Carolina Association of School Librarians' Librarian of the Year, Miss South Carolina, and the Grand Marshall of the Parade, Queen Quet of the Gullah Geechee Nation, read books to over 1,500 students. This year, the Eau Claire High School marching band and dance team joined the Navy Junior Reserve Officers Training Corps and color guard in leading the parade.

June 2025: The Center for the Book joined Historic Camden in celebrating Carolina Day. This unique South Carolinian holiday celebrates the pivotal American Revolutionary War victory at the Battle of Sullivan's Island in 1776. The Center for the Book created a Carolina Day reading list highlighting the State Library's collections and spoke with attendees about its resources and services. The partnership with Historic Camden continues to strengthen through the future celebrations of SC250 and America250.



Digitization and Government Documents

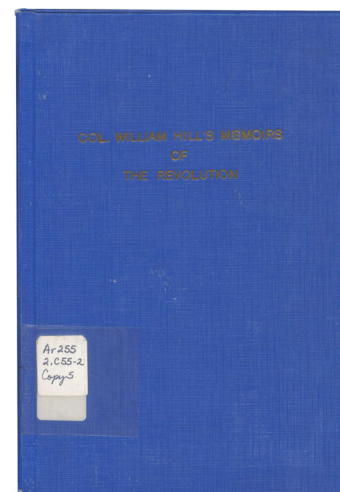
The Digitization and Government Documents department at the State Library serves as the state and federal document depository for state agencies. The department provides public access to state and federal print documents, as well as online access to digitized historical documents, books, and images from the State Library's collection and other agencies, libraries, and cultural heritage institutions.

Significant digitization projects completed during the Fiscal Year 2025 are shown below. Digitization is the conversion of text, pictures, or sound into a digital form that can be accessed on a computer.

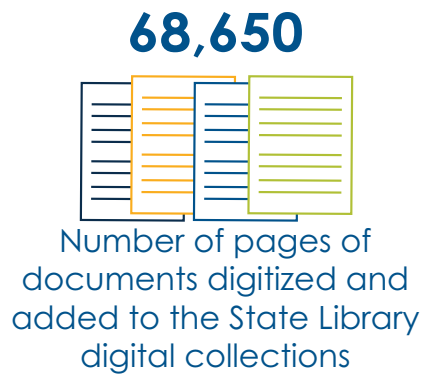
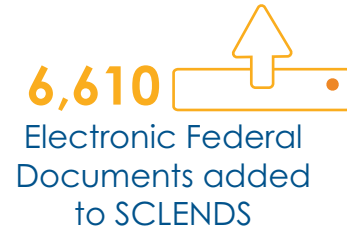
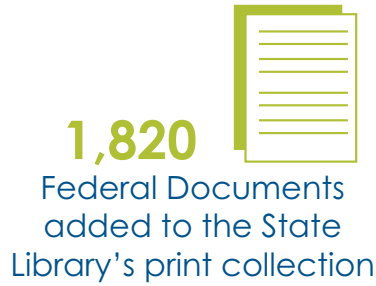
- Carolina Highways (1957-1975)
- Congressional Information Service's State Constitutional Conventions, Commissions, and Amendments for South Carolina
- Port Charleston (2001-2004)
- Port News: a publication of the port of Charleston (1948-1974)
- Reuben Gambrell WWII Art Project
- SC Acts & Joint Resolutions volumes (1910-1940; 1981-1985)
- South Carolina General Assembly's Legislative Manual (2023-2024)
- South Carolina Wildlife Magazine (2023-2024)
- Works Progress Administration (WPA) Tombstone Inscriptions in South Carolina
- Various publications relating to the Revolutionary War in South Carolina
 - Colonel William Hill's Memoir of the Revolution
 - Journal of the Commissioners of the Navy of South Carolina v.1 and v.2
 - Battleground of Freedom
 - Documents related to the History of South Carolina During the Revolutionary War
 - An Order Book of the Third Regiment SC Line Continental Establishment
 - Journal of the Proceedings of HMS Scorpion 1775,

Photo to the Right: Cover of Colonel William Hill's Memoir of the Revolution.

Photos of page 13: Three Notable State Document Award winners.



Digitization and Government Documents by the Numbers



The annual Notable State Documents Awards Ceremony, held in-person at the State Library in March 2025, acknowledged the incredible work done by state agencies, with **12 winners** this year reached a total of **60 attendees**.



2024 Notable State Documents Awards and Ceremony

Twelve exemplary state documents published in 2024 were announced as winners of the Notable State Documents Awards in early 2025. Sixty representatives from state agencies and community members attended a ceremony honoring the winners at the State Library. Since 1991, the State Library has recognized the vital work of the state government, state agencies and departments, and public colleges and universities through the Notable State Documents Award Program, which coincides with Freedom of Information Day, celebrated annually on March 16th.

South Carolina State Library celebrates 130 years as a Federal Depository Library

The South Carolina State Library celebrated its 130th anniversary as a Federal Depository Library. Before it was officially called the State Library, it was known as the Legislative Library. In 1814, the Legislative Library was established by an Act of the South Carolina General Assembly. In 1895, the State Library officially became a Federal Depository Library when the United States Government Printing Office (GPO) was established by the U.S. Printing Act of 1895, which centralized federal printing, created the GPO, and mandated that government publications be deposited in libraries for public access. The earliest record of the State Library receiving federal publications appeared in the Annual Report of the Public Printer for the Fiscal Year ending June 30, 1895. From historic printed documents to today's digital resources, the State Library is dedicated to its mission of preserving and offering free public access to United States government information for all citizens.

South Carolina State Library becomes an official U.S. Government Publishing Office Preservation Steward

In 2024, the South Carolina State Library became an official U.S. Government Publishing Office (GPO) Preservation Steward. To help libraries meet the needs of efficient government document stewardship in the digital era, GPO established Preservation Stewards to support continued public access to U.S. Government documents in print format. Preservation Stewards contribute significantly to the effort to preserve printed documents. Through this partnership with GPO, the State Library committed to preserving three federal publications in print, including all current and historical publications of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Agricultural Statistics Service, the Congressional Directory, and the U.S. Forest Service Recreation and Visitors Guides series.

The State Library continues to expand its collection of South Carolina-related federal documents and maps. Recent improvements include large-scale reorganization to optimize shelving, strengthening preservation efforts, and enhancing access to federal publications. The State Library also acquired specialized map cabinets to safeguard fragile federal maps that document South Carolina's landscape, history, and development. Staff are available to help the public explore these historic materials and to ensure continued access to these federal publications that shape both our state and our nation.

“Each library that serves as a Preservation Steward gives the American people the opportunity to learn more about our Nation's history,” said GPO Director Hugh Nathaniel Halpern. **“GPO thanks these libraries for helping us deliver on our vision of an America Informed.”**

Reuben Gambrell Digitization Project

The Digitization and Government Documents department collaborated with the South Carolina Historic Aviation Foundation to digitize 24 watercolor and pen-and-ink paintings and sketches by World War II serviceman Reuben Jackson Gambrell, Jr. (1917-2006), who is a South Carolina native and New Deal muralist. Created during his tour of duty in the Pacific Theatre at the end of World War II, these works feature portraits of Mr. Gambrell's fellow servicemen, a portrait of a native Mauritian native, and scenes from the landscapes surrounding his military stations. According to the Johnson Collection, an art museum in Spartanburg, South Carolina, Gambrell joined the military in 1942, attended the United States Army Air Corps Photography School, and was later stationed in the South Pacific.

The Reuben Gambrell Digitization Project will soon be part of the South Carolina Digital Library (scmemory.org/). The South Carolina State Library was proud to collaborate with the South Carolina Historic Aviation Foundation, South Carolina Confederate Relic Room and Military Museum, and the South Carolina Digital Library to provide renewed access to Mr. Gambrell's work.



Reuben Gambrell artwork titled "Radio Shack"

The Works Progress Administration Transcripts of Tombstone Inscriptions in South Carolina

The Digitization and Government Documents department digitized tombstone records related to the "WPA Tombstone or Cemetery Records Project," which was completed by the Works Progress Administration (WPA). In the late 1930s, the WPA completed numerous public works projects as part of the New Deal program. One such project commonly referred to as the "WPA Tombstone or Cemetery Records Project" engaged workers in recording information from tombstones located in cemeteries across the United States. This critical work served to document and preserve information from old and deteriorating tombstones, providing a record of names, birth and death dates, family member information, and iconography.

The Digitization and Government Documents department completed the "Works Progress Administration (WPA) Transcripts of Tombstone Inscriptions in South Carolina," which consists of 67 pages of records of microfiche negatives, each negative containing numerous individual transcriptions. Microfiche is a flat piece of film containing microphotographs. The "Works Progress Administration (WPA) Transcripts of Tombstone Inscriptions in South Carolina" is a collection of thousands of handwritten or typed cemetery tombstone transcriptions, arranged alphabetically by surname on individual cards. These transcriptions represent nearly 4,000 individuals buried in 350 historical cemeteries across the state of South Carolina.

We are proud of our contribution to this important work and believe that digitizing these records and making them widely accessible will benefit genealogists and others interested in family history or the history of South Carolina.

Electronic Resources

Digital Information for South Carolina Users, commonly known as Discus, is South Carolina's virtual library. Managed and administered by the South Carolina State Library, the **Discus collection of more than 70 scholarly subscription databases** is a vital resource for educators and students of all ages. The high-quality, vetted databases are **available 24/7 at no cost to all South Carolina residents**. The databases in Discus are used in public, private, and charter schools, as well as by home-school families, public libraries, special libraries, and academic institutions. In addition, read-aloud technology, closed captioning, font enlargement, varying reading levels, and translation tools are incorporated into the databases by the national vendor partners.

Discus has several partnerships, Tutor.com, an online tutoring company that connects students to tutors in online classrooms, and Britannica ImageQuest Jr., which offers a platform for Pre-K through Grade 5 students to search more than 50,000 age-appropriate images, fun clip art, and video clips for projects or classroom instruction.

Another partner, TumbleBooks, features an e-book collection of 1,400 curated read-aloud storybooks, chapter books, graphic novels, and songs for kindergarten through Grade 6, supporting early literacy for English, Spanish, and French speakers. TeachingBooks, a partner of TumbleBooks, has also been helpful for educators to cross-reference available e-books and supporting classroom material to share with students completing novel studies and literacy assignments.

Through this collaborative effort, the materials in Discus support both educators and students by providing novels, book guides, activities, and lessons for a complete study package.

Additionally, Discus offers 50 research databases, including CultureGrams, Bloom's Literature, PebbleGo, and PebbleGo Next, as well as World Almanac for Kids and Ferguson's Career Guidance Center. Each of these unique resources fills a specific niche for South Carolina residents studying world cultures, literary works, early childhood programs, general reference topics, and career assistance.



Kristen Rebollar, Discus Training Coordinator, at the Pageland Library Carnival on June 3, 2025.

Electronic Resources by the Numbers

During 2024-2025 the Discus website was accessed **more than 3.3 million times** by **838,971 active users** with a seamless **access rate of 98%**.

There were **29,379,601 item retrivals** in Discus during FY25.

9,734,291



Britannica Learning text-based and multimedia item retrievals

8,051,952



Capstone articles and eBooks viewed in PebbleGo and PebbleGo Next

5,265,864



TeachingBooks investigations including book title clicks, lesson plan downloads, and more

530,512



Gale Cengage text-based and multimedia item retrievals

16,486



LearningExpress Library practice tests, tutorials, courses, and eBooks used (6% increase)

4,978



Tutoring Hours on Tutor.com

Finance and Grants

The Finance and Grants department at the State Library oversees the day-to-day fiscal operations of the State Library. Each purchase the State Library makes is tied directly to a strategic direction, agency goal, and the Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) federal grant's purpose to support the mission and vision of the agency. Each budget line is categorized, enabling tracking of expenses to be broken down to the most granular level. The State Library is fiscally responsible and diligently negotiates multi-year purchases that will provide the largest statewide impact and routinely works with other groups to secure collaborative partnerships that share costs across agencies or groups to save the state money. Those partnerships include the Department of Education, South Carolina Education Television (SCETV), Partnership Among South Carolina Academic Libraries (PASCAL), the Department of Administration, the Department of Employment and Workforce, the Department of Pardon and Parole, SC First Steps, and others. Collaborative purchases are important to the State Library, and we constantly seek to find opportunities for savings and equal access.

The department oversees the distribution of the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) federal grant funds for public libraries. With these federal funds, libraries throughout South Carolina are able to purchase materials and technology to enhance services to patrons, participate in continuing education experiences, and conduct strategic planning and community needs assessments that they otherwise would be unable to provide.

IMLS funds are primarily distributed to public libraries through subgrants. An annual cycle offers grant programs, such as competitive Impact Grants of up to \$50,000 for targeted projects in individual counties. The State Library provided 108 subgrants in Fiscal Year 2025 for projects that met a multitude of patron and community needs. Examples include the Anderson County Library book vending machine in a local grocery store, which made library materials available to residents of all ages; both Lancaster County Library and York County Library outdoor book lockers, which provided increased access to library materials 24 hours a day, seven days a week; the Laurens County Library created a makerspace at the newly-opened Clinton branch; and SC Plants the Seed program, which provided free books about nutrition, farming, and healthy food to children and families and nutrition education in collaboration with other state agencies and community partners.

Additionally, grants were provided to public library staff for conference attendance, continuing education, and tuition reimbursement for classes taken at an accredited Library and Information Science degree program. The State Library assisted all libraries in core reading encouragement efforts such as the statewide Summer Reading Program. Public libraries participate in the statewide Summer Reading Program, which is also supported by school libraries. In Fiscal Year 2025, subgrants for the Summer Reading program were provided to 46 library systems across the state.

Subgrant Summaries

- **18 Continuing Education awards:**
\$17,270 awarded
- **21 Tuition Assistance awards:**
\$45,934.60 awarded
- **10 Impact awards:**
\$269,528 awarded
- **46 Summer Reading awards:**
\$91,254.935 awarded
- **10 SCPTS awards:**
\$45,800 awarded

Impact Subgrant Summaries

Abbeville: Main Library Upgrades - \$50,000

Successful library service means creating library spaces and programs that address the needs of the community. The Abbeville County Library System enhanced their Main library branch with new elements and set up areas focused on different age groups. Spaces was upgraded for patrons of all ages, with special emphasis on 0-5, tweens/ juveniles, and teens. Providing spaces that allow the library to offer programming and activities, along with the books and materials their patrons want, has make a huge difference for their users.

Anderson: Grocery Store Book Vending Machine - \$50,000

The Anderson County Library purchased and installed an International Library Services Lending Library Kiosk at a local Food Lion grocery store on the west side of Anderson County, providing a point of service to members of the community the library wasn't previously reaching. The book vending machine is 15 minutes from an existing physical library and is stocked with children's books, popular adult fiction, and DVDs for all ages. Patrons can also return materials using the convenient book drop next to the vending machine. The library partnered with Pridemore Development and Food Lion to install the vending machine at the front

of the grocery store, allowing an easy and convenient way to access library materials in an untraditional setting. This project is an innovative, convenient, and cost-effective way to provide library materials for Anderson County residents.

Dillon: Interactive Books - \$25,000

The Dillon County Library System purchased Wonderbooks, print books with ready-to-play audiobooks inside. The library also purchased WhaZoodles, educational audio players for children, and Launchpads, tablets loaded with educational content. Wonderbooks engage reluctant readers of all ages and provide the opportunity for families of all literacy levels to read together and WhaZoodles and Launchpad offer high-quality and interactive educational content without an Internet connection. These materials are available at all 3 branch locations and the library promoted the new materials during outreach events at schools, parks, daycare, and retirement centers.

Georgetown: African American Cultural Collection and Speakers - \$30,000

As part of its 225th anniversary celebration, the Georgetown County Library offered exciting public programming and book resources related to the profound enrichment of American life through African American cultural experiences. These programs and material focused on the shared traditions of art, music, folklore, theatre, literature, and history rooted in the region's distinctive Gullah heritage, a mixture of West African and European legacies.

Lancaster: Del Webb Library Book Locker - \$20,353

The Lancaster County Library installed a book locker at the Del Webb branch, providing expanded library services to a growing population in northern Lancaster County, where around 50% of the county's population now resides. The book locker is conveniently located by the front door, so patrons can park under an overhang and walk a very short distance to access library held items. The

location is also accessible to golf carts, which are widely used in the area by the retirement community adjacent to the library. The book locker extends library hours without having to expand staff time!

Laurens: Collaboratory! - \$50,000

The Collaboratory! makerspace lab at the new Clinton branch library allows Laurens County Library patrons to create, design, and explore STEAM/STEM learning experiences. The makerspace allows the community to be creative and have a platform where they can interact with each other and learn new things through STEAM/STEM activities like 3D printing, educational virtual reality experiences, and fiber arts.

Lee: Outreach Vehicle Expansion - \$8,528

The Lee County Public Library installed a fold-out ramp and other features that will allow their existing library van to more easily transport books and other library materials around the county, including to rural areas. With these updates to their existing vehicle, the Lee County Public Library can reestablish a mobile library route and expand the reach of library services across the county.

Richland: Sensory Inclusive Kits and Trainings - \$15,000

Richland Library increased offerings to patrons needing sensory support by obtaining Sensory Inclusive certification through the nonprofit organization KultureCity and providing staff training about disabilities and sensory-friendly spaces and programming. The library also purchased sensory bags for all 13 branch locations for in-library use, containing items such as noise-canceling headphones, weighted lap pads, and fidgets. The library also added sensory items to circulate in their Library of Things and expanded the existing Sensory Room at their Southeast branch.

Sumter: Robotics Club Laptops - \$7,400

The Sumter County Library purchased laptops to support their “I Can Do STEAM” program, a coding and robotics club that alternates between coding and engineering programming to teach young people the foundational concepts of robotics. This club uses coding, building, and robotics to provide an alternative learning space in learning and applying skills in science, technology, following the engineering cycle, being artistic, using math to solve problems, and solving any problem by simply deconstructing it into smaller problems. Programming was held at all 3 branch locations and the library also partnered with the Salvation Army Red Shield Youth Center of Sumter to provide summer programming and participated in local community STEAM events.

York: Fort Mill Branch Book Locker - \$13,247

The York County Library purchased an additional book locker for their Fort Mill branch, located in a bustling, high-traffic suburban area. The additional locker ensures that more patrons can pick up materials outside the library building at their convenience and eliminates wait time for available locker space at this busy location.



Abbeville: Storytime in an upgraded space.



Anderson: Book Vending Machine



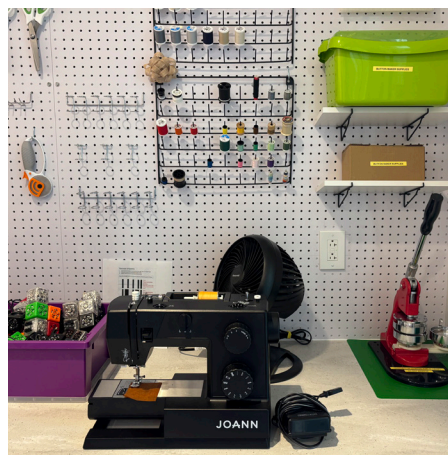
Dillon: Wonderbooks



Georgetown: African American Cultural book display



Lancaster: Book Locker



Laurens: Sewing machine in the Collaboratory! Maker-space



Lee: Outreach Vehicle expansion



Richland: Multi-sensory Room



Sumter: Drawing with Robots using Bee-Bots at a robotics club event



York: Book Locker

Information Technology

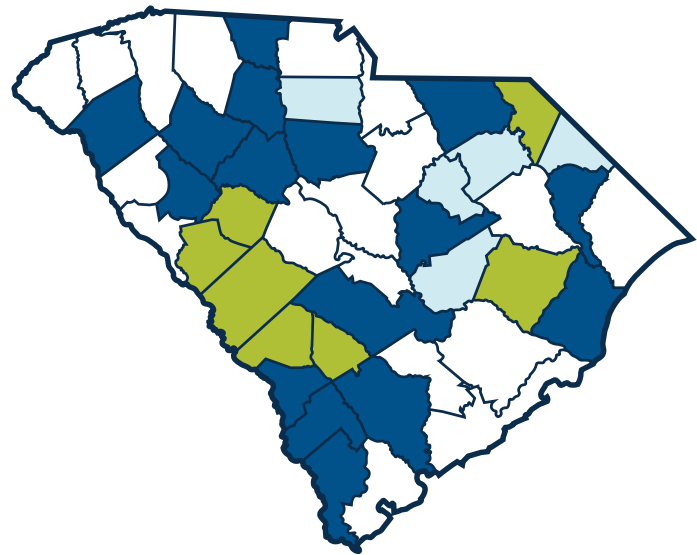
The Information Technology Department provides technology assistance to public libraries in South Carolina. During FY25, assistance ranged from technology infrastructure assessments to remote support and project management. A continued focus was placed on leveraging Federal E-Rate Program funding for network infrastructure improvement projects at public libraries across the state. The schools and libraries universal service support program, commonly known as the E-rate program, helps schools and libraries to obtain affordable broadband access.

E-rate Funds Project Highlights




For the 2025 E-rate application window, we **assisted 18 South Carolina Public Library Systems** with requesting funds for network infrastructure projects and/or Managed Services (MiBs). We also provided technology assessments and detailed equipment specifications that were used in the application process. **Total funds requested \$495,774.** The library systems assisted were: Aiken-Bamberg-Barnwell-Edgefield, Allendale-Hampton-Jasper, Anderson, Cherokee, Chesterfield, Colleton, Fairfield, Georgetown, Greenwood, Laurens, Marion, Marlboro, Newberry, Orangeburg, Saluda, Sumter, Union and Williamsburg.

IT supported 19 E-rate Category 2 funded projects during FY25. The library systems assisted were Allendale-Hampton-Jasper, Anderson, Cherokee, Chester, Chesterfield, Clarendon, Colleton, Darlington, Dillon, Fairfield, Georgetown, Greenwood, Laurens, Lee, Marion, Newberry, Orangeburg, Sumter and Union.

E-rate Funds Map



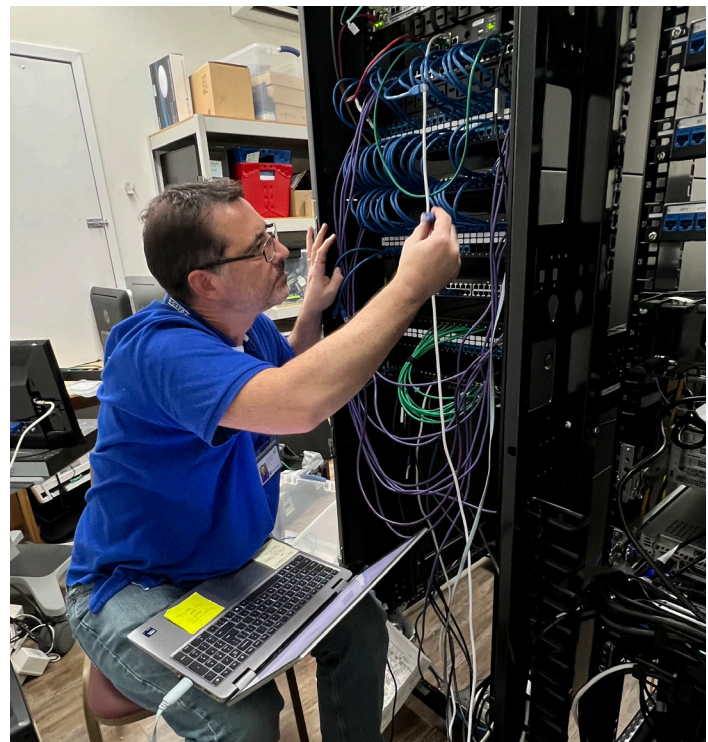
Map Key

-  Assisted Library Systems with requesting E-rate funds
-  Supported E-rate Category 2 funded projects during FY2025
-  Both

Information Technology Highlights:

- Conducted a **total of 20 site visits** during the year to the following Library Systems: Allendale-Hampton-Jasper, Anderson, Clarendon, Dillon, Greenwood, Laurens, Marion, Sumter and Union.
- **Anderson County Library:** This is a continuation of the project that started in FY23. The Main Headquarters location has aged network cabling infrastructure that's causing internal connectivity and performance issues. We developed a detailed multi-phase plan to address all the identified problems. This included creating detailed specifications and drawings. Assisted them with filing application for FY2024 Federal E-RATE funds to help fund this project. **Requested funds \$411,317.** This project was completed in May 2025.
- **Sumter County Library:** The Main branch location network cabling infrastructure is aged and designed poorly. Worked closely with Sumter County Gov. IT Department. We developed a detailed plan to address all the identified problems. The State Library created detailed specifications and drawings. Assisted them with filing application for FY24 Federal E-RATE funds to help fund this project. **Requested funds \$178,453.** Project is ongoing.
- **Laurens County Library:** New Clinton Branch, worked with the Library System, building architects, county and general contractor. The State Library assisted with design and installation of the technology infrastructure at the new branch location. This project is complete and branch recently opened.
- **Allendale Hampton Jasper Regional:** The Pratt Memorial Library in Ridgeland, SC started a major renovation. Worked with the Library System and building architects on designing the technology infrastructure for the renovated location. Helped move them into a temporary location. Project is ongoing. Renovation projected to be completed by late 2025 or early 2026
- **Union County Library:** Two Uninterruptible Power Supplies (UPS) units at their main location and one at their Jonesville location had failed. They didn't have the budget to replace them. The State Library purchased and installed the needed equipment. **Project cost \$5,100.**
- **Williamsburg County Library:** The cloud management license used to manage their wireless network system wide had expired. The library system did not have the funds to renew the license subscription. The State Library purchased and deployed the needed subscription licenses. **Project cost \$2,200.**

Photo to the Right: Paul Harmon, Director of IT Services, working on a E-Rate Category 2 funded project at Chester County Library.



Library Collections

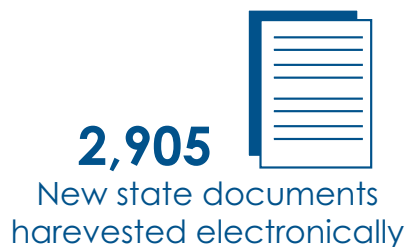
The Library Collections department coordinates the selection and purchasing of new print materials and the acquisition, cataloging, and providing access to South Carolina state agency electronic documents. The collection includes library and information science, civic engagement and government, information technology, grants research, diversity and inclusion, institutional libraries, mental health, and South Carolina-related titles. The department also provides online access to digitized historical documents, books, and images from its collection, as well as through partnerships with other agencies, libraries, and cultural heritage institutions.

The department also provides online access to digitized historical documents, books, and images, and cultivates partnerships to make historical and cultural materials available online.

Library Collections by the Numbers



State documents added to state documents digital depository



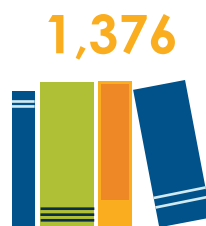
New state documents harvested electronically



State documents shipped to depository libraries (serials and monographs)



New collections created in digital collections



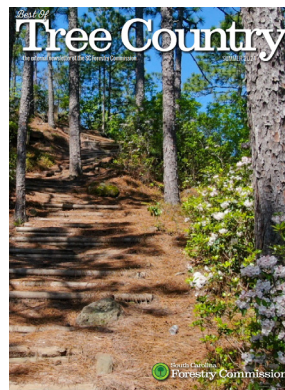
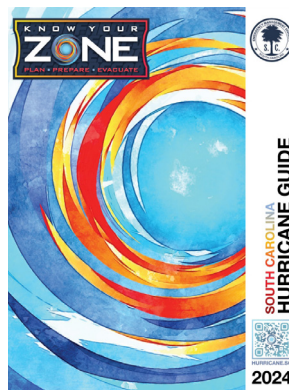
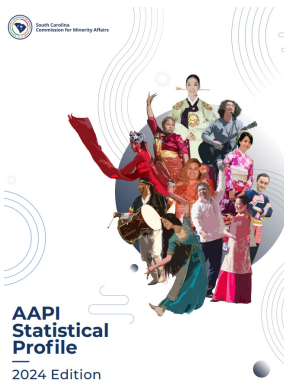
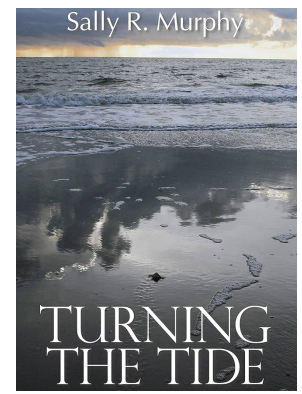
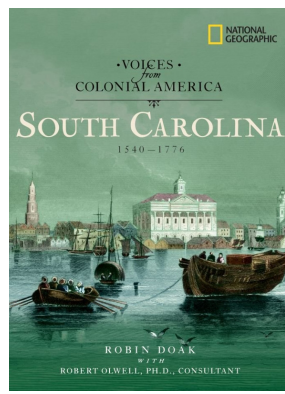
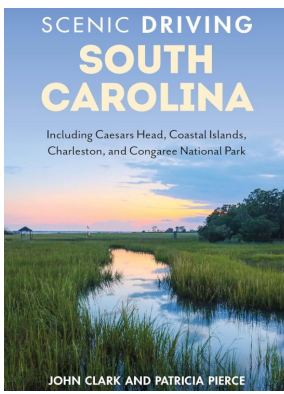
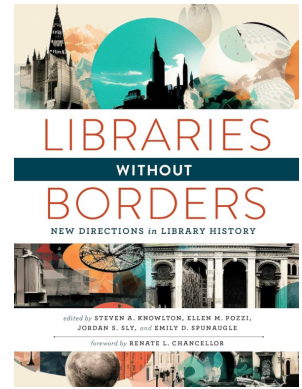
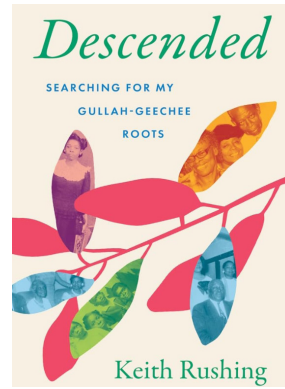
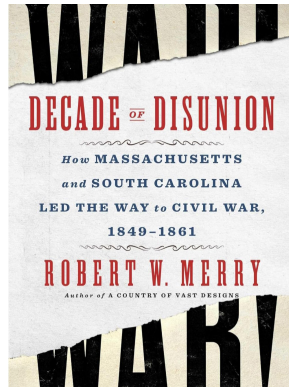
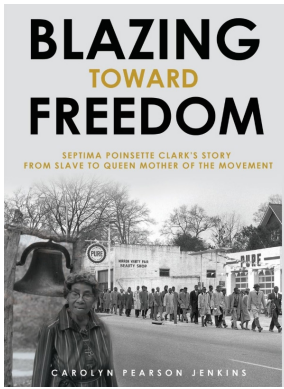
New titles cataloged for the collection



Items added to the State Library's print collection



59,153 Total State Documents available in the State Documents Digital Depository in FY25



Photos Above: Books and State Documents in our general and state documents collections

Library Development

The Library Development department offers assistance, training, and support to public library staff, trustees, and directors. It provides consulting services for all aspects of library operations, services, and programming. Library Development Consultants are experienced in general library functions and operations, each with expertise in a specific area such as children's and young adult services, library management and planning, collection management and programming, and outreach services. The department also offers statewide programs relevant to library and patron needs, circulating program kits, and printed materials to promote early and family literacy.

Through site visits and consultations, the department provides direct, one-on-one support to library directors and staff to promote best practices in service. Consultants conduct on-site training, webinars, and small-group sessions to enhance staff skills. The department performs assessments, evaluations, compiles statistical reports, and manages librarian certification to ensure the selection of qualified personnel and high-quality service. The Library Development department also offers training for Boards of Trustees and provides consulting on recruitment, hiring, strategic planning, and other administrative issues. Additionally, the department recommends library standards.

The Library Development department offers training on various topics. It provides professional development for staff who work with children and teens in public libraries, teaching them how to create more engagement with teens, refresh children's story times with new ideas, and suggest

resources for early literacy spaces. The Facilities and Access Consultant offers guidance on constructing, renovating, and maintaining library facilities, as well as improving accessibility for patrons. This role also supports state-funded institutional libraries in prisons, juvenile justice facilities, mental health centers, and long-term care facilities for adults with disabilities. This year, we purchased new materials for four state agency libraries and assisted in establishing a new library at the Department of Disabilities and Special Needs.

This department supports partnerships to reach English language learners and multilingual families, and offers resources that strengthen collections and programs representing the state's diverse population. The annual Spanish for Library Staff series trains staff to serve multilingual customers. The ADA Accessible Libraries series prepares libraries for upcoming changes to ADA Title 2 legal requirements affecting local government agencies.

Library Development staff also coordinate statewide services and programs to meet information needs identified around the state. Rural libraries, in particular, have identified gaps in access to technology, healthcare, and fresh food. Public libraries can borrow a wide variety of circulating program kits on topics including STEM/STEAM, story times, book club sets, cooking equipment, board games, and memory care programs for patrons with dementia. Libraries have used the kits to host robotics or drone programs for teens, Lego play for children, bilingual story times, and hands-on cooking programs. In Fiscal Year 2025, we **added 21 kits**, bringing the **total collection to 136 program kits**, which

were **borrowed 225 times**—expanding programming opportunities and resources for communities across South Carolina.

The Library Development department also provides early literacy materials to schools, daycares, and other early-childhood organizations. The signature South Carolina Day by Day Family Literacy Activity Calendar is available to libraries and partners in English or Spanish. The Day by Day calendar offers daily activities that support early literacy skills, helping children better prepare for school. The State Library has been distributing the calendar for over a decade, with several states having replicated this project. Early literacy brochures and activity booklets were provided to participating libraries to use in their local programs, including “Literacy on the Go” and “Have Fun with Math and Science.” This past year, we **distributed over 40,000 brochures and activity booklets**.

Library Development Highlights:

- Purchased books for state Institutional Libraries run by the Department of Corrections, Department of Juvenile Justice, Department of Mental Health, and Department of Disabilities and Special Needs.
- Hosted the second annual Directors’ Summit for public library directors to support them with information about library budgets, state statutes and legislative process, library board training, time management, and the process of completing a renovation or construction project
- Presented the popular Spanish for Library Staff webinar series in collaboration with REFORMA de las Carolinas
- Offered an Arts Integration for Public Libraries workshop in partnership with the SC Governor’s School for the Arts

and Humanities to teach library staff how to incorporate drama techniques into literacy programming

- Library Kits Unpacked – Visited multiple libraries across the state during their staff days and meetings to boost awareness and encourage use of the SCSL Circulating Kit collection.
- Explore & Share: SCSL Circulating Kits Webinars – Hosted multiple live virtual sessions showcasing different kits. These sessions introduced libraries to new kit options and facilitated programming discussions.



Photos Top to Bottom:

Delivered books to DDSN Midlands Center, on October 3, 2024

Circulating Kit Exchange, on May 14, 2025

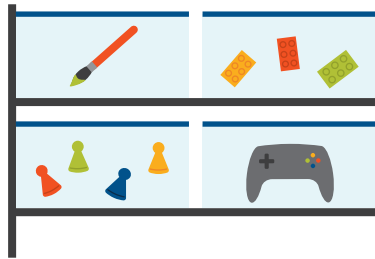
Circulating Kits by the Numbers



Silent Sound System kit was checked out **9 times** this year.

136

Total Circulating Kits



225

Circulating Kits checked out this year



SC Public Library Staff Thoughts on Circulating Kits

“This kit gave me an outline and some structure for facilitating this program. I was also able to share some verified health benefits of listening to music.”
- Jane Crossman, Chesterfield

“We are so thankful for this service as it provides our library patrons with interactive programs that we would not have without this option of kits.”
- Gracie Williamson, Chesterfield

“People were engaged for hours!”
-Janice Surginer, Richland Library

“Our children, caregivers, and staff LOVED the costume kit. Thank you so much!”
- Kathryn Cress, Chesterfield

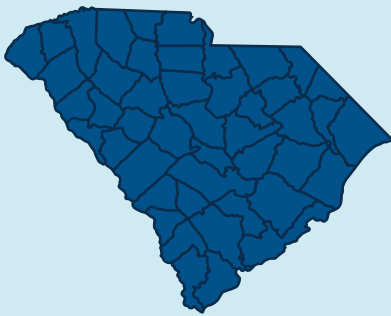
“The programs became inclusive, allowing those sensitive to sound to enjoy.”
-Janice Surginer, Richland Library

“My seniors who used this kit are memory care patients, and they absolutely loved the clay and cutters. It showed me something new to do with them.”
- Kendra Bell, Cherokee

SOUTH CAROLINA LIBRARY SYSTEMS

at a Glance FY25

Population of Service Area:
5,154,107



South Carolina Library Systems has a total of **206 locations**.

South Carolina Library Systems has a total of **35 Bookmobiles**.

Please Note:
Items borrowed does not include retrievals from subscription databases.

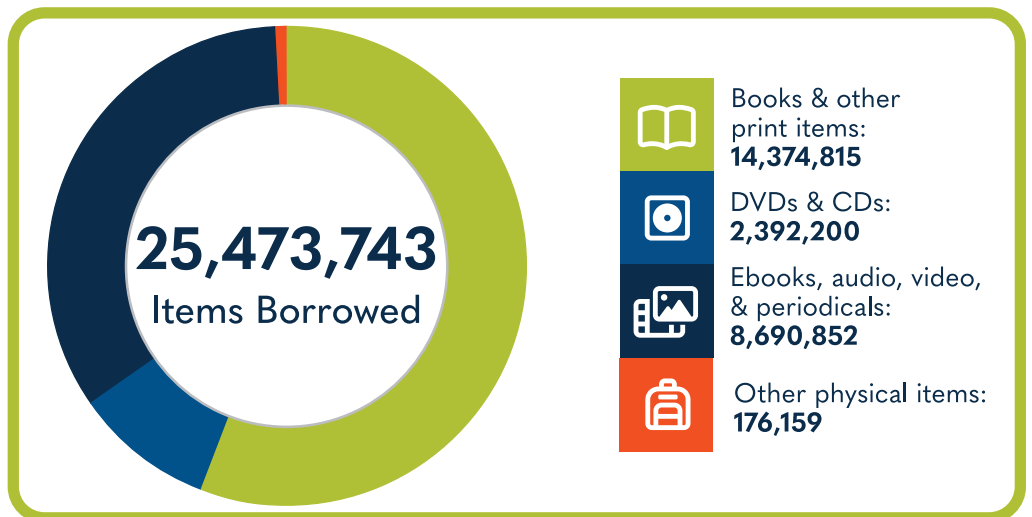
10,803,926
Library Visits

Total Hours Open (Systemwide)
506,664

2,941,299
Total Wi-Fi Sessions

2,317,590
Total Library Cardholders

1,977,808
Reference Questions Answered



58,891
Total Programs

1,481,804
Total Attendees

36,348
Children's Programs (ages 0-18)

8,949,545
Children's/Young Adult items checked out

Data gathered by the South Carolina State Library from the 2025 Public Libraries Survey, the 2020 Decennial Census, and the 2019 ACS 5 Year Estimates Subject Tables. U.S. Census Bureau, U.S. Department of Commerce.

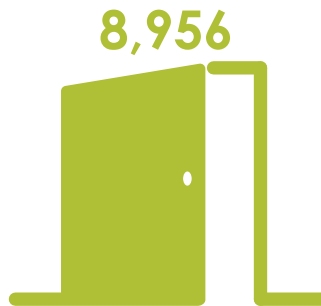
Library Services

Library Services is responsible for reference, research, programming, training, outreach, accessing print and electronic collections, and circulation. This department directly serves state employees, elected officials, public libraries, and all South Carolina residents 18 and older. Staff members offer the public free training opportunities, both on-site and virtually. Our most successful workshops this fiscal year were the “Discover the South Carolina State Library Webinar Series” and the continuation of the popular “Grants Research and Grant Writing” workshops. We have experienced a significant increase in new cardholders this year, primarily due to the introduction of e-cards. Additionally, Library Services staff continue to offer Book-a-Librarian services to patrons and virtual training webinars, which extend the State Library’s outreach to South Carolina residents throughout the entire state. This service was expanded to include one-on-one Genealogy appointments.

Library Services by the Numbers



State Library Cardholders



State Library Visitors



New E-card registrations



Items Circulated



Interlibrary loan requests filled for State Library patrons



Interlibrary Loan Items Circulated



Expanded webinar series, Discover the State Library, to monthly event to promote State Library collections, databases, and services.

Library Services Highlights:

- Discover the South Carolina State Library webinar series was continued and expanded to monthly events to promote the rich variety of print and electronic resources in the State Library's collection and to provide instruction to patrons on access and use. This year's offerings included: Our Natural resources and State Parks, Cemeteries Across SC, Palmetto State's Valiant Stand: South Carolina's Contributions in WWI, Poetry Across SC, Defenders of Liberty: The Evolving Story of America's Military and Great Outdoors of SC. There were **64 attendees** at these live webinars.
- Other programs and trainings offered this year included: Freedom of Information Act Series, National Voter Registration Day with the League of Women Voters, and multiple Grants Research and Writing sessions to the public and the SC Department of Education. We had **370 attendees** at these programs and trainings.
- A staff member implemented a long-term outreach project with South Carolina's Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs). The project provided training for library staff and students on State Library resources and services designed to support academic and professional work. **In total, 11 sessions were conducted with 74 participants.**
- The State Library continues providing training to correctional institution staff on available services and resources. State Library staff provided training to the Federal correctional institution (FCI) Edgefield Education. Reference staff **answered 63 reference requests** by US mail from South Carolina inmates.



Photos Top to Bottom:

Freedom of Information Act Roundtable event with the SC Press Association, on July 18, 2024.

State Employees Side of FOIA event with SCDMH Office of Public Information Director, Tracy LaPointe, on August 1, 2024.

National Voter Registration Day with the League of Women Voters event, on September 9, 2024.

Program Evaluation and Management

The Program Evaluation and Management department was created to meet agency goals and document project outcomes for tracking, accountability, and transparency. The department enables the agency to gain a broader perspective across teams and departments, acting as a connector to maximize collaboration within the agency and with partner organizations. Agency-wide project management and evaluation allows the agency to track projects more effectively to ensure all projects are designed appropriately on the front end, which includes establishing goals and milestones, tracking key performance indicators, follow-up, and completing evaluation and reporting in a timely manner.

The department staff collaborate with departments in the State Library to promote ongoing improvement by evaluating programs and implementing necessary policy, procedure, or statutory updates. They work with departments to create and revise documented processes, procedures, and systems to streamline operations and ensure succession planning. They also assess barriers that hinder a team's ability to operate effectively. Using lean methodologies, department staff coordinate projects across functions to maximize the agency's resources and reach the intended audiences.

The Program Evaluation and Management department staff led the agency's strategic planning, aligned project goals, and coordinated collaboration of the five-year Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) strategic evaluation and five-year strategic plan. They coordinated the project management process, facilitated professional development and the conference

presentation process, and systematized all survey requests from the agency to other entities to ensure survey questions are clear and concise to encourage survey participation. The department compiles and prepares information in a format that allows for analysis and quick, data-driven decision-making. Staff within the department lead and coordinate data collection and compilation, perform analysis, monitor trends, develop survey data, and create visualization products using library data for South Carolina public libraries. Public libraries are provided with training and assistance on effectively using data gathering and analysis.

In 2025, the South Carolina State Library received the Francis Keppel Award from IMLS. This award, presented annually at the State Data Coordinator meeting, recognizes "State library agencies that have excelled in the completeness, promptness, and high quality of the local public library data that they collect, edit, and submit annually."

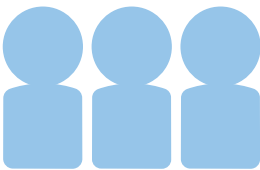
The South Carolina State Library also made updates to the professional development process. SCSL staff have the opportunities to participate in continuing education, state and national conferences, workshops, and other forms of professional development. Staff are encouraged to exchange knowledge, expertise, and capabilities between departments. This empowers staff to drive innovation by brainstorming as a group to create a tangible output from peer-to-peer learning. This work environment encourages creativity to develop exceptional programs.

SLENDS

SLENDS libraries share a single catalog, allowing patrons to search for items in all SLENDS libraries. Requesting items is as simple as clicking a button. Within a few days, any available circulating item can be delivered from any SLENDS library across the state.



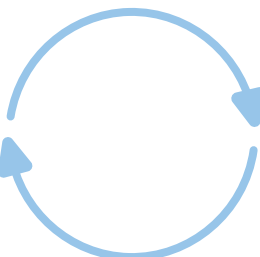
22
Partner Libraries



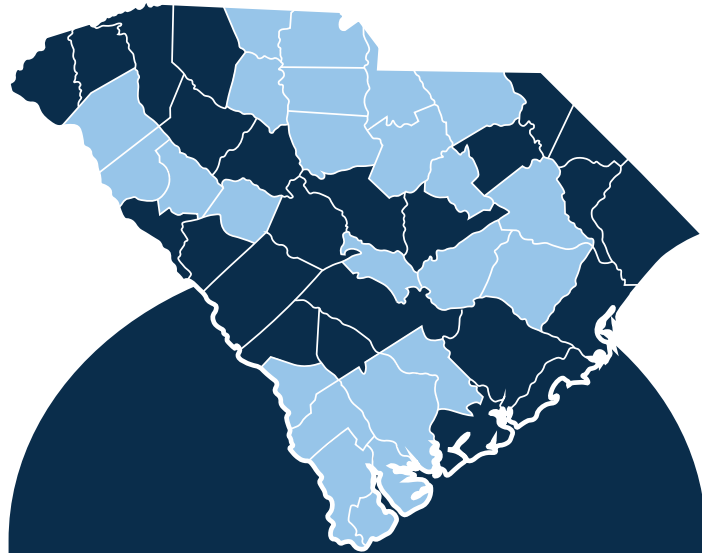
Over 700,00
Patrons



Over 2.75 million
items in the
shared catalog



4,552,192
Total SLENDS
Items Circulated



Partner Libraries

- | | |
|--------------------------|------------------------------|
| Abbeville | Fairfield |
| Allendale-Hampton-Jasper | Florence |
| Anderson | Greenwood |
| Beaufort | Kershaw |
| Calhoun | Lancaster |
| Cherokee | Lee |
| Chester | Saluda |
| Chesterfield | South Carolina State Library |
| Harvin Clarendon | Union |
| Colleton | Williamsburg |
| Dorchester | York |

Talking Book Services

South Carolina State Library Talking Book Services (TBS) strives to fulfill the mandate set by the National Library Service (NLS) for the Blind and Print Disabled, “that all may read.” The primary goal of TBS is to serve as South Carolina’s network library in the national system by fostering a lifelong love of reading. Books delivered on cartridges, played on specialized digital talking book machines, or downloaded to personal devices via the web-based BARD system are the largest circulating items in the program. Still, TBS also provides access to national and local magazines in audio format, loans large print books and descriptive DVDs, and assists patrons with referrals for braille services. These vital materials are provided and shipped free of charge through the National Library Service and the U.S. Postal Service, fostering equitable access for all our patrons, particularly those marginalized by disability, economic hardship, or limited transportation options.

This year, Talking Book Services expanded access even further with the launch of a new model talking book machine called the DA2. The DA2 provides all the benefits of the DA1 machine, with added features of WiFi and Bluetooth capability, as well as internal storage for a large number of digital audio files, greatly enhancing access to the NLS’s catalog.

Talking Book Services is available Monday through Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Each day, Reader Advisors answer questions, enroll new or transferred patrons, troubleshoot problems, and guide patrons to their next great read, while our dedicated mailroom and recording studio staff work hard to create and disseminate materials to our many patrons throughout the state. Our connections with patrons, often developed over decades of service, create lasting connections, allowing TBS to provide truly transformative service.

Talking Book Services by the Numbers



4,144 Active
TBS Patrons
199 Active
Institutions



24,245
Total Patron
Contacts



64 Events



4,026
Outreach
Contacts

Growing community connections through programming is another important goal of Talking Book Services. Programs such as the Summer and Winter Reading Program and the K-12 Art Gallery competition each spring draw many participants, and outreach activities conducted at outside events, such as the Rocky Bottom Summer Camp of the National Federation of the Blind and Camp Leo of the Lions Club, are additional points of connection for the TBS community. TBS's long-standing participation in the Summer Teen program through the SC Commission for the Blind provides teens with visual disabilities on-site work experience alongside the opportunity to get to know one another.

This year, in addition to the regular annual programs provided, TBS created a collaborative project with the SC State Museum, called the Mini Accessible Library, designed to enhance the State Museum's regular monthly Accessibility Mornings. The Mini Accessible Library features a book cart stocked with fourteen children's picture books, with a focus on South Carolina life and history, as well as books that promote accessibility. The books were purchased by TBS and were fitted with clear braille overlays of each line of text. Additionally, each book was recorded in the TBS recording studio and downloaded onto specialized audio cartridges to be played on the two talking book machines that were provided in the Mini Accessible Library. Additional information, including discussion questions, was also translated into Braille to enhance access for teachers and parents of blind, low-vision, and other print-disabled visitors to the museum.



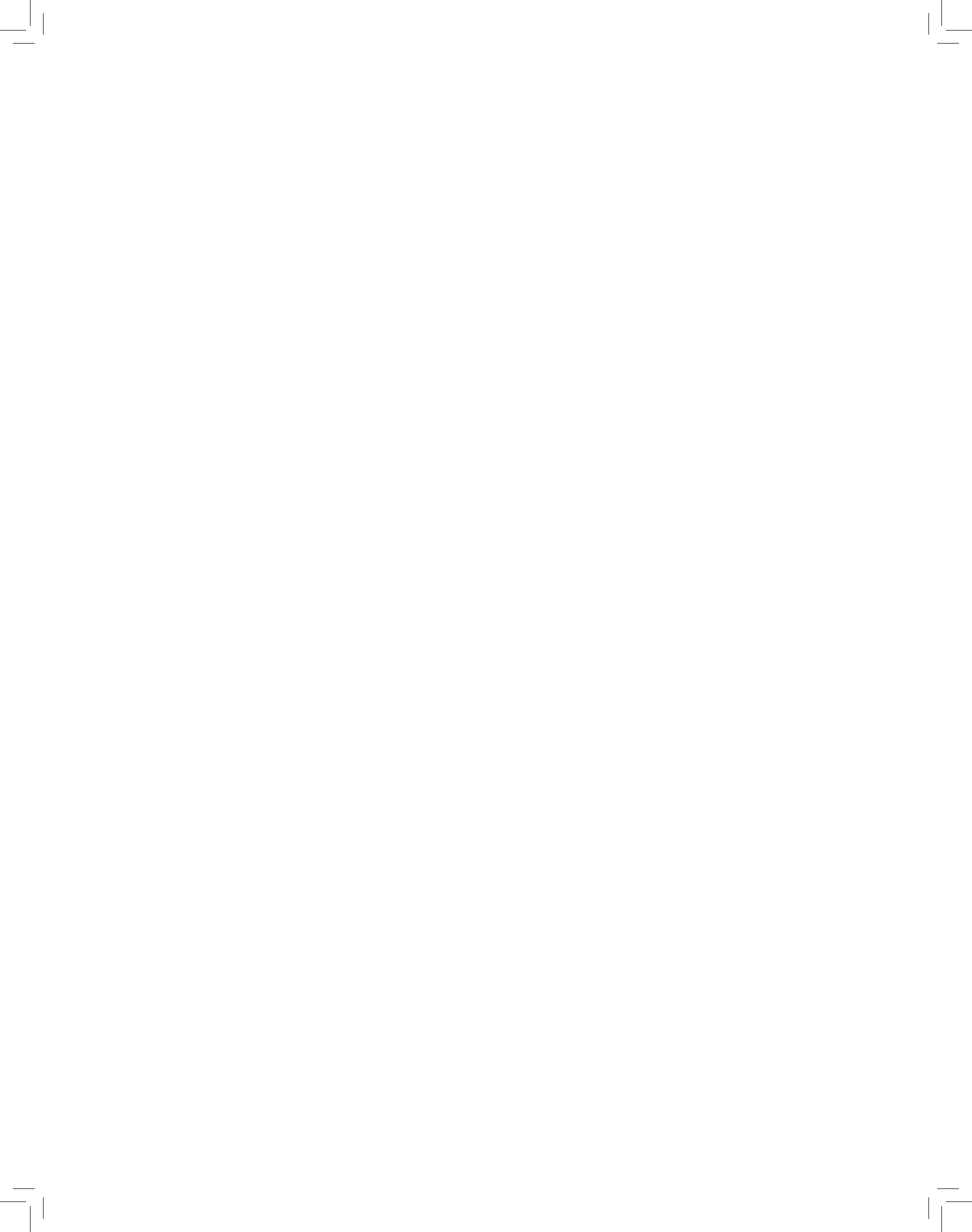
Photos to the Right Top to Bottom:

Naomi Bradey, Reader Advisor, at an outreach event at the State House Grounds.

2025 TBS Art Gallery Display at the South Carolina State Library.

Breanne Smith, Associate Deputy Director; Jennifer Falvey Wilson, Director of Talking Book Services and Tyler Edmond, Reader Advisor, with the Mini Accessible Library at the South Carolina State Museum.







The information contained in this report is based on the agency's Annual Accountability Report to the South Carolina State Legislature. Data is from the 2024-2025 State Fiscal Year ending June 30, 2025. This project was made possible in part by a Library Services and Technology Act grant from the Institute of Museum and Library Services.