

Instructions and Template for Writing a Three-Year Technology Plan

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Instructions for Writing a Three-Year Technology Plan

Applying for E-rate discounts requires your library to have a three-year technology plan approved by the State Library of Kansas.

Your technology plan *should be* approved by the State Library before form 470 is submitted to the Schools and Libraries Division (SLD).

Your technology plan **must be** approved by the State Library before form 486 is submitted to the SLD.

Technology plans must meet five criteria:

1. Establish clear goals and realistic strategies for using telecommunications to improve library services
2. Ensure staff know how to use these new technologies
3. Assess hardware, software, and services needed to improve library services
4. Provide sufficient budget to acquire and maintain hardware, software, and training to implement strategy
5. Evaluate the implementation of goals

Note: These are paraphrased versions of the criteria. The official versions may be found at <http://skyways.lib.ks.us/KSL/libtech/erate/techplans.html#criteria>

Although no changes to these criteria are apparently contemplated by the SLD, plan responses to criteria numbers 1, 2, and 5 are not always thoroughly addressed.

☞ It's a good idea to read your final draft with these in mind and look for weak spots.

Tips for Technology Plan Approval

Most technology plans submitted to the State Library of Kansas are approved as written. Of the few plans libraries are asked to resubmit, many are returned for one or more of the following reasons. Reviewing these pitfalls before you submit your plan will improve your chances of timely approval.

1. New and existing services:

If your plan includes introduction of new services, programs, or installations (integrated library system, web server, videoconferencing, etc.) be detailed and specific, but don't forget to talk about existing services!

Even if you aren't planning to upgrade internet connections, phone service or internal connections (network, wireless access, etc.) be sure to include maintenance and upkeep in your narrative and budget statements.

2. Evaluation plans:

How will you evaluate the success of this goal? The number one cause of returned plans is insufficient information about how you will evaluate the results of carrying it out:

Not just “survey patrons” but how you'll survey them. What type of contact? Only current users? Set questions or interview?

Not just “statistics” but what numbers you will collect, for how long, what you'll compare them to, any targets you have “use of public computers for non-internet purposes is expected to increase by 30%” etc.

If you use this template form for your technology plan, don't just check one of the suggested options - this is a place where you need to be specific.

Don't confuse the data you collect for evaluation purposes with the actual evaluation!

3. Budget information:

What are the costs to meet this goal, and where will the money come from? Part of the purpose of the technology plan is to document, prior to obtaining E-rate discounts or reimbursements, a sound financial basis for the services you propose to provide, subsidized by E-rate. At the same time, in order to truly reflect your library's circumstances, it should describe your overall technology situation, including plans that will not be funded by E-rate. This does not have to be tremendously detailed. In any 3-year plan there has to be some estimating. A one-page summary of your library budget that would support the budget for year 1 of your plan would be a great attachment.

4. Time lines:

All of the activities to be carried out during the life of the plan should be related to each other chronologically. It should be clear what happens first, last, or at the same time. Since technology plan approval can be in effect for no more than three years, and because plans covering shorter periods are not really effective, technology plans and timelines covering three years are strongly recommended.

5. Library-wide focus:

SLD's information about the Technology Plan includes this often-overlooked point:

“It is critical that technology planning is not viewed or treated as a separate exercise dealing primarily with hardware and telecommunications infrastructure. There must be strong connections between the proposed physical infrastructure of the information technology and the plan for professional development, curriculum reform, and library service improvements.”

In other words, your plan should make it clear that you know how you are going to use technology to serve the public and train your staff. It may reflect changes you will make to collection development, library policies, staffing requirements, etc. You don't have to describe all of this in your technology plan, but try to include language that indicates it is part of a larger picture.

Need more help?

- A list of Technology Planning: Questions to Consider has been developed and provided by SLD as Appendix B to the Technology Planning Policies and Procedures at the E-rate Website: <http://www.sl.universalservice.org/apply/step2.asp#appb>
- See our E-rate information and resources page: <http://skyways.lib.ks.us/KSL/libtech/erate/>

Steps for writing your plan

Step 1:

The librarian, staff, and board should brainstorm how technology can improve service in your library.

Consider the following points and options:

1. Your technology plan can, and probably should, include more goals than e-rate will pay for.
 - E-rate will pay for phone bills, additional phone lines, internet accounts, and (with limitations) hardware and software for connecting computers to Internet.
 - E-rate will not pay for computers (other than file servers for connecting several computers to Internet).

Your technology plan should include, if necessary:

- purchasing computers and software
- purchasing furniture
- wiring your building
- maintenance
- training staff and patrons
- writing technical policies

Consider how all the factors mentioned in point #1 above would come together in a technology plan for improving library service. Step 2 gives three examples.

Step 2:

Write your technology plan.

☞ This template provides space for two goals. *This is only to illustrate the numbering system. If you've written a technology plan with only two goals, read the guidelines and tips again!* ☞

Following are three **Examples of technology plans**.

- Example 1: asks for discounts for current telephone lines, bills, and current Internet account
- Example 2: asks for discounts for additional phone line, bills, and current Internet account.
- Example 3: asks for discounts in upgrading to a fast Internet connection.

Each example provides information required for the template.

- Goals
- Steps for implementing goal
- Budget recommendations
- Method for evaluating implementation of goal

Example 1:

Paying for current phone lines, bills, and current Internet account.

Even if you only want e-rate to pay for your current Internet accounts and phone bills, inexpensive goals, like training and writing technology policies, can be added to your technology plan.

Consider the following services your library can offer.

- E-mailing kids in college or just in other parts of the country.
- Doing genealogy on-line: i.e., e-mailing others working on same names and looking at genealogy Web sites.
- Checking stock quotes, financial and investment news.

For these services, the technology plan would be:

(Compare the example below with the template. You will see where the information below fits into the plan form.)

Goal 1:

Establish one public access to Internet computer in the library by June 200X.

Steps:

1. Apply for e-rate discounts for current phone lines and Internet accounts. Due January 200X
2. Write policies for public access to Internet. March 200X
3. Policies approved by board. April 200X
4. Move current computer from behind librarian's desk to place where patrons can use it. May 200X
5. Advertise the availability of public access to Internet in library. June 200X
6. Survey patrons about their use, satisfaction, and desires for additional Internet service, etc. September 200X
7. Analyze survey results and plan for next year. October 200X

Budget required: whatever your budget is for current phone lines and Internet account

Amount budgeted: same as above

*☞ You should always include actual dollar amounts or estimates **for each goal**. If budget statements are too vague, your plan may be returned for revision! ☜*

Evaluation: survey

Goal 2:

Provide ten evening tutorials on e-mail between June and September 200X.

Steps:

1. Arrange for local expert or system consultant to give sessions
2. Advertise workshops in newspaper and flyers
3. Prepare evaluations of sessions
4. Hold Sessions
5. Analyze evaluations

Budget required: money for current phone line and Internet account

Amount budgeted: same as above

Evaluation: survey

Example 2:

Paying for additional phone line, bills, and additional account in addition to current phone lines, bills, and current Internet account.

If you want separate phone lines for Internet and telephone, and separate Internet accounts for librarian and patron follow this example.

Consider the following services your library can offer.

- E-mailing kids in college or just in other parts of the country
- Doing genealogy on-line: i.e., e-mailing others working on same names and looking at genealogy Web sites.
- Checking stock quotes, financial and investment news.
- Faster interlibrary loan through e-mail.

For these services, the technology plan would be:

(Compare the example below with the template. You will see where the information below fits into the plan form.)

Goal 1:

Establish one public access to Internet computer separate from the librarian's computer by June 200X.

Steps:

1. Apply for e-rate discounts for current phone lines and Internet accounts. Due January 200X
2. Write policies for public access to Internet. March 200X
3. Policies approved by board. April 200X
4. Purchase additional Internet computer. May 200X
5. Purchase computer furniture for additional computer. May 200X
6. Install additional wiring for patron computer. May 200X
7. Install additional phone line for Internet computer. May 200X
8. Purchase additional Internet account for Internet computer. May 200X
9. Advertise the availability of public access to Internet in library. June 200X
10. Survey patrons about their use, satisfaction, and desires for additional Internet service, etc. September 200X
11. Analyze survey results and plan for next year. October 200X

Budget required: money for two phone lines and two Internet accounts plus computer, furniture and wiring.

Amount budgeted: same as above

*You should always include actual dollar amounts or estimates **for each goal**. If budget statements are too vague, your plan may be returned for revision!*

Evaluation: survey

Goal 2:

Provide ten evening tutorials on e-mail between June and September 200X.

Steps:

1. Arrange for local expert or system consultant to give sessions
2. Advertise workshops in newspaper and flyers
3. Prepare evaluations of sessions
4. Hold sessions
5. Analyze evaluations

Budget required: whatever your budget is for current phone lines and Internet account

Amount budgeted: same as above

Evaluation: survey

Goal 3:

By February 200X, librarian begins sending and receiving interlibrary loan requests via KICNET.

Steps:

1. Contact State Library about KICNET license. January 200X
2. Update KILD record to show our library sends and receives ILL requests via KICNET. January 200X
3. Request training in use of KICNET from system. January 200X
4. Note any problems in process. On going

Budget required: no budget required

Amount budgeted: no budget required

Evaluation: log of problems. ILL statistics (KICNET and manual)

Example 3:

Upgrading to a fast Internet connection (*For more information, ask your system's Technology Consultant*)

Consider the following:

- Library computers networked (i.e., linked together) to provide Internet access to all computers
- Internet connection is fast and reliable
- Large up front cost paid by e-rate. Afterward, library only pays for Internet account(s).

The technology plan would be:

(Compare the example below with the template. You will see where the information below fits into the plan form.)

Goal 1: Establish a wireless connection to Internet by June 200X.

Steps:

1. Contact Internet provider to see if wireless connection is possible, December 200X.
2. If yes, apply for e-rate discounts on antenna, pole to attach antenna to, networking computer, and network cards and network software and discounts for current phone lines and Internet accounts. Due February 12, 200X
3. Purchase antenna, pole to attach antenna to, networking computer, and network cards and network software. May 200X
4. Install antenna and networking computer for wireless Internet connection. June 200X
5. Log problems with system. On-going

Budget required: money for your percentage of wireless connection

Amount budgeted: better be same as above

*☞ You should always include actual dollar amounts or estimates **for each goal**. If budget statements are too vague, your plan may be returned for revision! ☜*

Evaluation: log of problems

*--Adapted from training materials created by Chris Rippel, Central Kansas Library System.
Used by Permission. Please address any questions or comments to : jeffh@kslib.info*

Three-Year Technology Plan for --- **Library**

Date approved by the Board of Trustees _____

(if required by local and/or library policy)

Librarian: _____

Library Name: _____

Street Address: _____

Mailing Address, if different from above: _____

City, Zip: _____

Telephone: _____ Fax: _____

Email: _____

Person writing this plan: _____

Telephone, if different from above: _____

Email: _____

Time period covered by this plan: _____

(Please give exact begin and end dates - July 1, 20XX - June 30 20XY or January 1 - December 31, 20XX)

Adapted from training materials created by Chris Rippel, Central Kansas Library System. Used by permission..

Year 1: _____

Goal 1 improves:

- hardware _____
- software _____
- internet accounts _____
- phone lines or bills _____
- staff training _____
- other _____

Goal statement:

(Be specific! See <http://skyways.lib.ks.us/KSL/erate/techplangoals.htm>)

List steps (i.e., strategies) required to implement goal 1:

Budget required to implement and maintain goal 1 \$ _____

Amount budgeted to implement and maintain goal 1 \$ _____

How will you **evaluate implementation** of goal 1?

Survey: _____

Interview: _____

Other (describe):

Year 1: _____

Goal 2 improves:

- hardware _____
- software _____
- internet accounts _____
- phone lines or bills _____
- staff training _____
- other _____

Goal statement:

(Be specific! See <http://skyways.lib.ks.us/KSL/erate/techplangoals.htm>)

List steps (i.e., strategies) required to implement goal 2:

Budget required to implement and maintain goal 2 \$ _____

Amount budgeted to implement and maintain goal 2 \$ _____

How will you **evaluate implementation** of goal 2?

Survey: _____

Interview: _____

Other (describe):

Year 2: _____

Goal 1 improves:

- hardware _____
- software _____
- internet accounts _____
- phone lines or bills _____
- staff training _____
- other _____

Goal statement:

(Be specific! See <http://skyways.lib.ks.us/KSL/erate/techplangoals.htm>)

List steps (i.e., strategies) required to implement goal 1:

Budget required to implement and maintain goal 1 \$ _____

Amount budgeted to implement and maintain goal 1 \$ _____

How will you **evaluate implementation** of goal 1?

Survey: _____

Interview: _____

Other (describe):

Year 2: _____

Goal 2 improves:

- hardware _____
- software _____
- internet accounts _____
- phone lines or bills _____
- staff training _____
- other _____

Goal statement:

(Be specific! See <http://skyways.lib.ks.us/KSL/erate/techplangoals.htm>)

List steps (i.e., strategies) required to implement goal 2:

Budget required to implement and maintain goal 2 \$ _____

Amount budgeted to implement and maintain goal 2 \$ _____

How will you **evaluate implementation** of goal 2?

Survey: _____

Interview: _____

Other (describe):

Year 3: _____

Goal 1 improves:

- hardware _____
- software _____
- internet accounts _____
- phone lines or bills _____
- staff training _____
- other _____

Goal statement:

(Be specific! See <http://skyways.lib.ks.us/KSL/erate/techplangoals.htm>)

List steps (i.e., strategies) required to implement goal 1:

Budget required to implement and maintain goal 1 \$ _____

Amount budgeted to implement and maintain goal 1 \$ _____

How will you **evaluate implementation** of goal 1?

Survey: _____

Interview: _____

Other (describe):

Year 3: _____

Goal 2 improves:

- hardware _____
- software _____
- internet accounts _____
- phone lines or bills _____
- staff training _____
- other _____

Goal statement:

(Be specific! See <http://skyways.lib.ks.us/KSL/erate/techplangoals.htm>)

List steps (i.e., strategies) required to implement goal 2:

Budget required to implement and maintain goal 2 \$ _____

Amount budgeted to implement and maintain goal 2 \$ _____

How will you **evaluate implementation** of goal 2?

Survey: _____

Interview: _____

Other (describe):

Additional Goals:

Year ____ : _____

Goal __ **improves:**

- hardware _____
- software _____
- internet accounts _____
- phone lines or bills _____
- staff training _____
- other _____

Goal statement:

(Be specific! See <http://skyways.lib.ks.us/KSL/erate/techplangoals.htm>)

List steps (i.e., strategies) required to implement goal __:

Budget required to implement and maintain goal __ \$ _____

Amount budgeted to implement and maintain goal __ \$ _____

How will you **evaluate implementation** of goal __?

Survey: _____

Interview: _____

Other (describe):