

# **Request for Proposals**

## **Expanding Library Services and Access for Justice-Impacted People in CT**

**Proposal Due Date:** Friday, November 21, 2025

### **Background/ Program Overview**

The Institute for Municipal and Regional Policy (IMRP) at the University of Connecticut seeks proposals from libraries interested in expanding access to library services for incarcerated individuals and people transitioning through reentry and residential programs across Connecticut. This opportunity is offered through the *ReConnect CT: Digital Pathways program*, an effort funded by the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA), aimed at advancing digital opportunities for justice-impacted populations.

Through this RFP, IMRP aims to support libraries in normalizing and expanding services for incarcerated patrons (both within correctional facilities and in community-based reentry programs), ensuring that returning citizens have equitable access to information, digital skills training, and community resources that promote educational, economic, and civic engagement. This RFP is an extension and supplement to the Digital Pathways curriculum delivered through the ReConnect CT program, ensuring continuity and implementation in the community.

The IMRP is a dynamic non-partisan organization striving to inspire and sustain a just, equitable, and inclusive Connecticut through independent research and evaluation, public policy analysis and development, and community engagement. The IMRP is situated within UConn's School of Public Policy and housed at the UConn Hartford campus. For more information on the IMRP, visit <https://imrp.dpp.uconn.edu/>.

### **Objective of this RFP and Scope of Services**

This RFP invites Connecticut libraries to propose programming that strengthens and expands services (information access, employment readiness, financial literacy, education continuation etc.) for incarcerated and formerly incarcerated patrons. Libraries may propose activities including, but not limited to:

#### **Service Development & Expansion**

- Extend library services (e.g., library cards, access to collections, dedicated hours) to incarcerated individuals at the Connecticut Department of Correction (CTDOC) facilities.
- Develop or contribute to reentry toolkits that support patrons as they transition back into the community after incarceration.
- Build collaborations with community partners that support reentry, including halfway houses, higher education institutions, job readiness programs, educational resources, and access to benefits and healthcare.
- Expand programming through partnerships with digital learning platforms (e.g., LinkedIn Learning) to provide relevant training in workforce, financial literacy, and technology skills.

**Digital Navigation & Access**

- Serve as a host site or co-facilitator for the Digital Pathways curriculum.
- Provide access to public internet, devices (e.g., laptops, tablets, laptop kiosks), and dedicated space for digital learning.
- Offer or expand access to digital resources such as databases, eBooks, and learning platforms.
- Promote digital literacy programs and support services for returning citizens.

**Funding Availability.** Funding will support programming through **December 31, 2026**. The estimated total amount available under this RFP is up to **\$1,000,000**, with award sizes based on project scope and number of sites.

**Target Population.** The target population includes individuals under or previously under the custody of the CT Department of Correction and justice-impacted people seeking access to library resources. Libraries can also serve immediate family members of currently incarcerated individuals.

**Leveraging Existing Work**

Applicants are encouraged to describe any prior experience working with incarcerated or justice-involved individuals. IMRP will also facilitate coordination with technical assistance partners (e.g., San Francisco Public Library, Brooklyn Public Library) to support program implementation and capacity-building.

## **Proposal Requirements**

Applicants are asked to respond to each of the proposal requirements listed in the RFP. While a table of contents and formal formatting are not required, proposals should be organized in a way that addresses all required components.

**1. Project Abstract**

Applications shall include a clear and concise abstract of 500 words or fewer that summarizes the proposed project. The abstract should be written for a general audience and describe how participants will be recruited and outline the proposed service delivery model. If funded, the abstract may be shared publicly to describe the work.

**2. Title Page**

The title page shall include the project title, submission date, RFP name, and complete contact information (address, telephone number, and e-mail address) for the applicant organization and key personnel.

### **3. Organizational Overview**

Applicants must provide a brief overview of their organization. This should include a summary of your organization's history, current programs and services, populations served, your organizational mission, and any relevant experience serving justice-impacted populations.

### **4. Program Narrative**

The program narrative should describe the overall purpose, goals, and design of your proposed project. It should explain how your library plans to meet the goals outlined in this RFP, including any plans to develop or expand services. Be sure to describe how you will engage with community partners and address any anticipated challenges, along with strategies to overcome them. The narrative should also include a detailed budget outlining proposed costs for staffing, supplies, outreach, technology, other anticipated costs, and any in-kind services.

### **5. Statement of Any Limitations**

Applicants shall describe the needs that their proposal addresses, such as limited library or internet access for incarcerated individuals. Reference relevant research or local data to support your understanding of the problem.

### **6. Program Design and Staffing Capacity**

Applicants shall provide a detailed description of the program design, including location/branches, available staff and training needs, and points of contact for the program.

### **7. Evaluation Participation**

Applicants shall describe staff capacity and availability to participate in evaluation efforts, including any previous experience with external evaluation processes.

### **8. Implementation Plan**

Applicants shall submit a draft implementation plan with a general timeline indicating major tasks associated with the project, assigns responsibility for each, and plots completion of each task by month or quarter for the duration of the award, using "Year 1," "Month 1," "Quarter 1," etc., not calendar dates. IMRP will work with grantees to finalize implementation plans after awards are made.

### **9. Potential Impact**

Applicants shall describe the anticipated impact of their program, particularly how it may influence or inform equitable library access and reentry practices across Connecticut.

## Additional Considerations

Proposals should reflect, where possible, alignment with the **American Library Association's Standards for Library Services to the Incarcerated and Detained**. While completeness is important, we understand each library is different and aim to keep this process flexible and approachable. If needed, IMRP may request clarification or additional details after submission.

For questions about the proposal requirements or process, please contact [imrp@uconn.edu](mailto:imrp@uconn.edu) and include "*ReConnect CT: Digital Pathways program RFP*" in the subject line.

## Submission Timeline

|                       |                               |
|-----------------------|-------------------------------|
| Informational Webinar | October 24, 2025              |
| Questions Submissions | Until November 14, 2025       |
| Proposals Due         | November 21, 2025             |
| Review Period         | November 24-December 15, 2025 |

**To learn more, we hope you'll join us for an informational webinar:**

**Date:** October 24, 2025

**Time:** 11 am to Noon

**[Registration link](#)**

During the session, we'll cover:

- An overview of the ReConnect CT Digital Pathways program
- Eligibility criteria and the types of projects that may be funded
- How to submit a proposal and important deadlines