

## PLP Innovation and Technology Opportunity Grant Program Application

Library Name: Monterey County Free Libraries

Project Title: Library of Things: Outdoor Adventures

Select category you are applying under:

Category A: Innovation and Technology Opportunity Grant

Category B: Grant Replication Program

If Category B is selected, enter the name of the grant you are replicating:

1. Please provide a one paragraph project summary.

Monterey County Free Libraries (MCFL) is seeking to enhance the existing Library of Things available for circulation, by adding recreational items to the collection. The availability of these items will create greater accessibility to Monterey County outdoor spaces and provide ways for Monterey County residents of all income levels to utilize and enjoy the world-renowned outdoor spaces available in Monterey County on their own, or with their families and friends.

2. Explain how this project fits with the library's strategic directions.

Monterey County Free Libraries is committed to serving as a Connection Hub by fostering meaningful community connections to resources and relationships that support all community members in fulfilling their potential. This project will deepen our commitment in providing our communities with greater access to materials and services that can enhance community wellness.

3. Please provide a detailed description of the proposed project including the population served and the demographics of that population.

MCFL staff serve a population of 231,537, spread out over 3,000 square miles. The majority of the population is Hispanic or Latino (58.7%). Research conducted by MCFL's Racial Equity Committee found that MCFL serves communities with the highest Hispanic/Latino populations, who have the lowest California Healthy Place Index scores. Low California Healthy Place Index scores are an indicator of a person's overall life expectancy and well-being. MCFL believes in the importance of getting outside and the mental health benefits that being in nature can provide. This project serves all Monterey County Residents, but particularly those in lower

income brackets who may not be able to afford the items selected for purchase as part of this grant proposal, and those in more rural areas with less access to resources.

Implementation of the California State Parks Passes program enabled people with MCFL library cards to access these spaces, and this service has proven to be very popular. However, there is still a need to enhance the outdoor experience for MCFL users throughout the county. MCFL will has begun to circulate Hiking Backpack Kits as well as Disc Golf Kits, but to further enhance these offerings, MCFL has identified items to be added to the Library of Things that would enable County residents to get the most from the outdoor spaces. These items are easily contained within reasonably sized kits for ease of storage and transportation and include croquet, badminton, pickle ball, ring toss, bocce ball, and soccer. Through loaning out these items, MCFL aims to achieve greater accessibility and desire to utilize outdoor spaces in Monterey County among residents, as well as foster a connection to those spaces.

4. What are the goals and objectives of the project?

The goal of this project is to foster meaningful community connections to resources and relationships that support all community members in fulfilling their potential. Through loaning out outdoor recreational items, MCFL aims to achieve greater accessibility and desire to utilize outdoor spaces in Monterey County among residents, as well as foster a connection to those spaces.

5. Please include your project timeline (include detail of activities).

- First 60 days: Order and receive Library of Things materials outlined in grant
- December 2024 - January 2025: Materials are cataloged and added to Koha, bilingual marketing materials are created and sent to branches for distribution.
- February 2025: Cataloged materials are sent out to the assigned branches for public circulation
- Final Reports submitted to PLP by June 30<sup>th</sup>, 2025

6. Please indicate how you will evaluate success of your project.

We will evaluate the project based on usage (circulation) as well as user satisfaction based on surveys.

7. Please detail your project budget. (Note: Indirect costs are not allowed).

\$1,250 – Compensation for staff time for cataloging and purchasing  
\$5,000 – Library of Things: Outdoor Adventures materials

8. Please indicate how the project will be sustained after the grant term is over.

