



## MEMO

**To:** Federation Task Force Members  
**From:** Tracy Cook, Lead Consulting & Learning Librarian  
**Subject:** Remaining funding questions to consider  
**Date:** February 15, 2023

We have two funding specific questions to discuss – equitable funding and additional funding. These are the final funding questions we have from our original meeting.

1. Should we consider asking federations to consider an equitable split of money or continue with dividing the money equally between libraries?
  - a. Consider what equitable means to you – does it mean giving more to larger libraries? Does it mean dividing the money evenly as a percentage of a library's overall budget? Does it mean giving funding to libraries that are in need?
  - b. Most federations subtract administrative costs of running the federation from the total amount awarded to the federation. These costs include money for meetings/retreats, stipends for coordinators, and any projects that benefit the federation. Once those funds are subtracted from the total, the remaining money is divided evenly between the eligible public libraries in the federation.
  - c. One federation – Sagebrush – has given slightly more funding to the two federation libraries that had the smallest budgets. Should we recommend other federations consider a similar approach? Why or why not?
  - d. Should we recommend something different – perhaps considering percentages rather than dividing evenly?
2. Given the role of federations and unmet needs, do you have any other recommendations for funding for federations? What are they? Why do you recommend that?
  - a. Consider the ideas from federation members about more funding to purchase digital resources like Hoopla or help with IT support for libraries.
  - b. There isn't much additional funding for federations within the existing budget. Increasing the funding would involve asking the Commission or the Montana Library Association to request additional funds through a legislative process. Perhaps the wisest course of action is to send this question back to each federation. Coordinators can then advise the State Library on whether they want to request additional funds during the 2025 legislative session.