



Job Title: Consulting Librarian

Location: Northern Waters Library Service, Ashland, Wisconsin

Reports to: Director

FLSA Status: Exempt

Approved by: NWLS Board of Trustees

Under the supervision of the Director, the Consulting Librarian serves as a strategic partner to NWLS member libraries. The Consultant:

- Oversees professional development opportunities for NWLS member libraries and collaborates with other library systems and the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction (DPI) on statewide continuing education initiatives.
- Works directly with public library directors to monitor and support Public Librarian Certification requirements and ensure certifications remain current.
- Provides consulting to member library staff and volunteers on a wide range of library service, governance, and operational issues.
- Provides guidance and support to member libraries in marketing, communications, and social media strategy to effectively promote services, demonstrate community impact, and strengthen public awareness of library value.
- Provides professional, responsive, and courteous administrative support, training, and consulting services to NWLS member libraries and system staff.

General Functions and Responsibilities: (This job description is meant to describe the general content and requirements of the position. It is not intended to be an exhaustive statement of duties or requirements.)

- Assess and respond to member library continuing education needs.
- Develop, coordinate, implement, and evaluate professional development opportunities for member libraries and system staff.
- Serve as NWLS's lead contact for Public Librarian Certification; validate Continuing Education Activity Reports in compliance with Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction (DPI) requirements; maintain certification records and monitor director recertification timelines.
- Collaborate with regional and statewide partners to expand and strengthen professional development offerings.
- Provide consulting support to member libraries in:
 - Adult services and programming
 - Youth services and summer learning initiatives
 - Inclusive services and accessibility planning
 - Outreach to underserved populations
- Foster collaborative problem-solving, peer networking, and resource sharing among member libraries.
- Support workforce development partnerships, literacy services, and community engagement initiatives.
- Promote and support implementation of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) strategies tailored to rural library contexts, including inclusive collection development, space planning, and program design.

- Assist member libraries in effectively communicating their value to stakeholders through marketing, messaging, and outreach strategies.
- Support libraries in promoting services to rural and underserved populations and maintain strong awareness of rural service models and sustainability challenges.
- Attend local, regional, and national meetings, conferences, and training programs relevant to the position.
- Perform other duties as assigned by the Director.

Knowledge, Skills and Abilities

- Ability to build and sustain trusted relationships with library directors, trustees, and staff.
- Ability to analyze library data and translate findings into actionable strategies.
- Strong facilitation and presentation skills in both in-person and virtual settings.
- Ability to manage multiple projects and prioritize effectively.
- Comprehensive knowledge of public library principles, procedures, technologies, service goals, and the philosophy of public library service.
- Comfort working in a hybrid/remote environment with high self-direction.
- Ability to work collaboratively as part of a team while also maintaining independence and initiative in assigned responsibilities.
- Commitment to equity, inclusion, and rural community sustainability.

Physical Requirements

- While performing duties of this job, the employee is occasionally required to: use the hands to write, grasp, and keyboard; talk; hear; sit, stand, walk, bend, twist, reach with hands and arms; lift and/or move up to 40 pounds.
- Specific vision abilities required by this job include distance vision, close vision, color vision, depth perception, and the ability to adjust focus.

Mental Requirements

- Analytical Skills: Identify problems and opportunities through thoughtful analysis, considering alternative courses of action before making recommendations.
- Problem-Solving Skills: Develop feasible, practical, and sustainable solutions by recommending proactive actions designed to prevent or mitigate issues in member libraries.
- Communication Skills: Effectively communicate complex information in both written and oral formats, engaging in productive dialogue while maintaining a professional, positive, and respectful demeanor.
- Time Management: Manage multiple projects and competing priorities efficiently, setting clear priorities to meet established deadlines.
- Comprehension: Ability to understand, interpret, and follow written and verbal instructions, policies, and guidelines.
- Professional Inquiry: Ability to ask thoughtful questions, seek clarification, and request guidance when appropriate to ensure informed decision-making and collaborative outcomes.

Work Environment

- Primarily operates within a hybrid/remote work environment with frequent communication via email, messaging, phone, helpdesk, and video conferencing.

- Maintains regular and proactive in-person presence at member libraries throughout the eight-county service area.
- Must be willing to travel to member libraries, meetings, workshops, and conferences, including occasional evening, weekend, and overnight commitments.
- Must be willing to perform emergency or time-sensitive tasks outside normal business hours when necessary.
- Possession of a valid Wisconsin driver's license and reliable transportation for travel across a large geographic service area is required.

Education, Experience and Certification

- Bachelor's Degree plus three years of progressively responsible library experience **or** a Master's Degree in Library and Information Science from an accredited college or university.
- Three to five years of administrative or supervisory experience is preferred.
- Demonstrated experience in professional development, training, or instruction.
- Experience working in rural public libraries, with demonstrated knowledge of rural community dynamics, marketing and advocacy strategies, and the implementation or support of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) initiatives.

Hours: Full time, 40 hours per week.

Approved by the Northern Waters Board of Trustees on March 21st, 2026.