



## **District 7 Special Interest Groups**

Created: June 2008

Last Revision: June 2008

### **Adam Wright**

*North Texas Regional Library System, Inc*

*Executive Director*

*6320 Southwest Blvd, Suite 101*

*Fort Worth, Texas 76109*

*817-377-4440*

*fax: 817-377-8020*

### ***Executive Overview***

The North Texas Regional Library System, Inc. (NTRLS) proposes that District 7 establish Special Interest Groups (SIG) for the purpose of networking among peers with similar interests. NTRLS sees four groups being created: Technology, Library Supporters, Children and Youth Librarians and Library Program Planners. NTRLS is uniquely positioned to assist in providing the required structure to make the SIGs a successful venture for all District 7 members.

## ***Background***

NTRLs is a non-profit regional library system funded through federal and private monies. The System provides consulting services, and continuing education and library services to 74 public libraries in the following counties: Archer, Baylor, Clay, Cottle, Denton, Erath, Foard, Hardeman, Hood, Jack, Johnson, Montague, Palo Pinto, Parker, Somervell, Tarrant, Wilbarger, Wise, Wichita and Young.

On a biennial basis, NTRLs must submit a long range plan to the Texas State and Library Archives Commission (TSLAC). This long range plan outlines how NTRLs will utilize the federal monies granted by TSLAC. A plan of service is then submitted on an annual basis providing even more detail on how funds will be expended. Grants have ranged from over \$900,000 to just under \$500,000.

NTRLs offers products and services through four main projects: Administration, Consulting, Continuing Education and Targeted Services. The Targeted Services project addresses community needs of member libraries because it focuses on providing services to the communities of the member libraries. It allocates System staff and other resources to carry out these services. The project also allocates a small amount of funds to help libraries establish services and program in their communities.

NTRLs is governed by a nine-member board of directors. Seven directors represent specific regions of the System while two are at-large bids. Each board member has had a long history with libraries and all understand the importance of books and education to their communities. NTRLs' Executive Director has been a librarian for 12 years and has worked with NTRLs libraries to develop their service offerings since 2002. NTRLs staff has a combined experience of over 50 years in assisting libraries.

NTRLs has always served public libraries in its geographic area. In recent years, its main funder, the Texas State Library and Archives Commission, has encouraged NTRLs to assist other types of libraries including academic, school and special libraries. The SIGs are one way for NTRLs to accomplish this objective. NTRLs also realized that a structure already existed in the Texas Library Association's districts to serve multi-type libraries so NTRLs sought a way to utilize the synergy existing between the two organizations. NTRLs hopes that the two organizations can work together to enhance the working lives of all District 7 members to better serve their target communities.

## ***Mission Statement***

*To create a networking foundation for librarians sharing similar interests to interact, share knowledge and benefit their users.*

## ***Objectives***

- To create four SIGs for librarians.
- To hold an annual regional conference for each of the SIGs
- To create an online networking environment where SIGs can interact with each other more readily.
- To enable librarians to meet and discuss with product and service providers in person.

## ***Project Scope***

It is recommended that this project be tried in FY2009 (September 2008 to August 2009) and then further evaluated at the 2009 Annual Assembly.

## ***Program Description***

In this section, we will describe the SIGs in more detail.

### **SIGs**

*Technology* – This SIG will focus on library technology. Any District 7 member who is interested in technology is invited to participate in this SIG.

*Library Supporters* – This SIG will focus on library supporter issues including library advocacy, fundraising, governance of support groups, etc. Members of friends groups and library foundations, library board members, volunteers, other lay supporters and library staff are invited to participate in this group.

*Library Program Planners and Presenters* - This SIG will focus on library programs, the people who plan them and the people who present them. Any District 7 member who is interested in library programming, both children and adult, is invited to join this SIG.

*Children and Youth Librarians* – This SIG will be focused on children and youth issues. Any District 7 member interested in youth and children issues is invited to join this SIG.

### **Governance and Organizational Structure**

SIG should fall under the auspices of the District 7 bylaws. Currently, these bylaws do not explicitly state that subgroups can be created under District 7. It should also be noted that the TLA bylaws allow for statewide special interest groups but do not include any provisions for districts to create them. In communicating with Patricia Smith, TLA's Executive Director, there was nothing preventing the establishment of special interest groups by the districts. It is recommended that District 7 modify their bylaws to allow for the establishment of subgroups.

### **Quarterly Meetings**

NTRLs recommends each SIG hold a quarterly meeting to discuss business and network with each other. These meetings will rotate around the district at locations that volunteer to host the meetings. These meetings will be administrated and coordinated by the SIG officers.

### **Annual Regional Conferences**

The idea for the SIGs developed from the regional conferences held by NTRLs in 2007 and 2008. After each of these conferences, many participants asked for a way to continue the networking started at the conferences. The SIGs were a natural evolution of this request. The annual conferences are a day long and are theme-based. For example,

there could be a keynote speaker with five tracks of break up sessions covering subjects related to the theme. Each conference will have its own unique flavor and format and will be organized by NTRLs with the assistance of a volunteer steering, or advisory, committee. NTRLs hopes that District 7 will provide the pool of volunteers needed to make each conference a success. Each conference will have an administration fee to help cover the cost of lunch and refreshments. Each conference will also have an exhibitor hall where product and service providers will set up tables. Every conference will feature an exhibit hall to enable attendees to meet and talk with exhibitors in person. Fees for exhibit spaces will be used to cover unpaid lunch, refreshment costs and other overhead expenses.

**Online Networking**

NTRLs will establish an online networking structure for each SIG to utilize. Each SIG will have access to the following applications.

**Listserv/Discussion forum** - this email discussion list will allow the SIG members to network via email.

**Website** – A simple website will be created for each SIG to share news and events.

**Peer Networking** – similar to an online social networking site. SIG users will be able to create profiles of themselves and then network with others by creating friends.

**Annual Brown Bag Facilitated Chat** – Each SIG will hold an online chat about a hot topic of the moment.

**Blog, Wikis and other Web 2.0 innovations** – NTRLs will be open to building other applications if SIG determines a need for them.

**District 7 Meeting**

NTRLs will assist with the planning and administration of the annual fall meeting.

**NTRLs Staff and Resources**

NTRLs will provide staff dedicated to the coordination of the SIGs. The CE/Programming Consultant will be responsible for the annual conferences. The Technology Consultant will work with the Executive Director to establish the online environment.

***Budget – Pilot Program***

NTRLs receives its funding in part from the Texas State Library and Archives Commission (TSLAC) and the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS). NTRLs will absorb the cost of all SIG activities in FY2009.

<b>Item</b>	<b>Maximum Cost</b>
4 Conferences	\$20,000
NTRLs Staff	\$39,929
<b><i>Total Expenses</i></b>	<b><i>\$59.329</i></b>

All income for the conferences will be cost recovery for the event food including lunch, refreshments and other overhead expenses.

***Team Responsibilities***

<b>Role</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Commitment(FT, PT, Consultant)</b>	<b>Duration</b>	<b>Source (Organization/Contractor)</b>
CE/Program Coordinator	SIG Administrator	PT	1 Year	NTRLS
Technology Consultant	SIG Online Networking Coordinator	PT	1 Year	NTRLS
Executive Director	Assists in needed areas such as District 7 Fall meeting	PT	1 Year	NTRLS
District 7 Officers	Assists in needed areas such as regional conferences and the planning of the District 7 fall meeting	PT	1 Year	District 7
District 7 members	Assists in needed areas such as regional conferences; attends SIG meetings and conferences; participates online	PT	1 Year	District 7

***Task Timetable –FY 2009 (September 2008 to August 2009)***

<b>Tasks</b>	<b>Start Date</b>
Children and Youth Conference for Librarians	August 2008
SIG online network tools established including websites, listservs, discussions and chat sessions	September 2008
Steering committee for the Library Supporters Conference meets at the NTRLs offices	September 2008
Advisory Committee for the Library Program Planners and Presenters (P3) meet at the NTRLs offices	September 2008
District 7 Fall Meeting	October 2008
Library P3 Conference for Librarians	November 2008
Steering committee for the TechNet Conference meets at the NTRLs offices	December 2008
SIG Peer networking tool established	January 2009
Library Supporters Conference	February 2009
Steering Committee for the Children and Youth Conference meets at the NTRLs offices	February 2009
TechNet Conference	May 2009
Children and Youth Conference for Librarians	August 2009