



Guidelines

Date posted: January 21, 2014

Deadline for Online Submission: March 6, 2014

Questions?

Read the [FAQs](#)

Contact the American Library Association (ALA) staff at 1-800-545-2433, ext. 5045, or publicprograms@ala.org.

I. Program Description

Libraries Transforming Communities is an initiative of the American Library Association (ALA) supported by a grant from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. The *Libraries Transforming Communities* project addresses a critical need of the field by developing and distributing convening and conversation facilitation training and learning resources that will build the practice of community engagement in library services, position libraries as innovative change makers, help the library profession to transform the ways it provides service to users and ultimately benefit communities nationwide.

The Libraries Transforming Communities Public Innovators Cohort will participate in an 18-month team-based professional development opportunity presented by the American Library Association and the Harwood Institute for Public Innovation. The experiences of this cohort of up to 50 individuals representing teams from 10 public libraries nationally will provide models for use in diverse settings, and participants will become ambassadors to the field for the role of libraries as innovative community change agents. The cohort's work will be closely followed, and their innovation experiences will provide needed information on the potential of this work for the field.

This project will train you and your team in the following core competencies and the ability to:

- Identify community issues rooted in people's shared aspirations;
- Strategically share this knowledge with your community to build public will for action;
- Develop strategies that align with local context;
- Create community conditions that enable change;

- Identify the right community partners to work with; and
- Develop networks for innovation and learning.

This project will support your library to develop the culture it requires to embed the Harwood practice into your community engagement. Specifically this means that by the end of the Libraries Transforming Community Public Innovation training, your library will:

- Develop understanding and commitment among staff, volunteers and board on the need to be turned outward;
- Create an internal library capacity for ongoing innovation and learning that uses the community as reference point;
- Apply the practice to key library functions (e.g., program planning, communications, strategic planning);
- Clarify the primary purpose of the library in driving community change; and
- Create and implement a community engagement plan.

II. Eligibility

- This opportunity is open to public libraries located in the United States and its territories.
- Individuals and organizations other than public libraries are not eligible to apply.
- Late, incomplete, and ineligible applications will not be reviewed.

III. Award Information

Ten public libraries across the country will be selected to participate in this program.

Benefits for libraries

Libraries selected for the project will receive the following:

- \$8,000 subgrant to support participation in the initiative (anticipated library expenses may include travel, some meals, planning, promotion, implementation costs).
- An intensive 18-month Public Innovators Cohort experience that will include training and coaching for your library team to develop and implement a community engagement plan.
- Cohort training at the intensive three-day Public Innovators Lab, May 20-22, 2014.
- Lodging and some meals for the Public Innovators Lab.
- One five-hour virtual innovation space meeting in October 2014.
- Two 1.5-day in-person "Innovation space" meetings (January 2015 at the ALA Midwinter Meeting and June 2015 at the ALA Annual Conference);
- 6 Webinars:
 - Hosting & Leading Community Conversations (June 2014)
 - Theming & Using Public Knowledge (July 2014)
 - Hosting & Using Innovation Space (August 2014)
 - Partner Selection & Managing Relationships (October 2014)
 - Calibrating Community Conditions & Implications (November 2014)
 - Sweet Spot of Community Change (February 2015)
- Monthly coaching and peer dialogue calls with Harwood Institute coach and cohort peers to support implementation work.
- Coaching support to assist with creating and implementing a community engagement plan.
- Communications support in the form of template press releases, PSAs, template social media messaging, and a best practices in media relations online learning opportunity.

- Access to a robust community of practice in the field through dedicated groups in ALA Connect (ALA's professional networking/collaboration site for working groups and communities of practice), as well as the Harwood Institute public innovators corps.

Requirements for Libraries

- Full team participation. Teams are 3-5 people, including the library director, one additional manager, staff members, and up to two community members with an understanding of the library and community to work with the library during the project (e.g., a library trustee, board member or active friends group member). **Team members must be identified in the library application by name, title and affiliation.**
- Participation by full team at the May 20-22, 2014, Public Innovators Lab
- Participation by a minimum of two team members in 6 live webinars.
- Participation by a minimum of two team members at three innovation space meetings.
- Participation by a minimum of two team members in monthly coaching and peer dialogue calls.
- Internal team work to create a community engagement plan and operationalize the plan during the project period.
- Serving as ambassadors for the work and mentors to the field (including participating in the community of practice, responding to periodic requests for information from *Libraries Transforming Communities* project staff)
- Participation in the evaluation and reporting process, including responding to periodic surveys that will gather substantive feedback on your team's experience with the program and submission of a final report to ALA by October 15, 2015.

IV. Application and Submission Information

Complete the online [application](#) by **March 6, 2014**.

Questions about your applications? Call the ALA Public Programs Office: 312-280-5045 or 800-545-2433, x 5045 or email: publicprograms@ala.org

ALA will accept applications for **Libraries Transforming Communities** between **January 21 and March 6, 2014**.

Getting started

KEY DATES FOR PARTICIPATION IN THE PROJECT		
Date	Title	Location
May 20-22, 2014	Public Innovation Lab cohort training	TBD
October 2014 (Specific date to be announced May 2014)	Virtual Innovation Space meeting	Virtual
January 30, 2015	In-person innovation space meeting at the 2015 ALA Midwinter Meeting	Chicago
June 26, 2015	In-person innovation space meeting at the 2015 ALA Annual Conference	San Francisco
June, July, Aug, Oct, Nov.	Webinars	Virtual

2014, Feb. 2015		
Monthly	Coaching and peer dialogue calls (times to be determined with cohort input at the Public Innovators cohort training)	Virtual

To begin the application process, go to: <https://apply.ala.org/ltc/>

To apply for the Libraries Transforming Communities Public Innovators Cohort, you must complete the following steps:

1. Register or Log In
2. Complete Project Director Information
3. Complete the Project Team Information
4. Write the Proposal Narrative
5. Certify Authorization to Submit Application
6. Review and Edit Your Application
7. Submit Your Application

1. REGISTER OR LOG IN

To complete the application, you need to register your account on apply.ala.org.

Note: If you have applied for recent opportunities with the Public Programs Office, such as the Muslim Journeys Bookshelf or StoryCorps @ your library, you already have an apply.ala.org account, and may use the same email address and password.

- 1. A - LOG IN
If you already have an apply.ala.org account, click the Sign In button on the project home page.
- 1. B - REGISTER
If you have not yet registered, you may do so at this time. Click the Register button on the project home page. Registration is free, private, and requires only an email address.

2. COMPLETE PROJECT DIRECTOR INFORMATION

First, you must complete the Project Director Information. *Note: The Project Director is the primary point of contact for the project at the applicant library.*

To complete step 2, provide all of the information that is requested on the Project Director Information screen. You must then save the information.

After clicking the "SAVE" button, you will be able to return to the application at any time and log in, using your e-mail address and password. This will allow you to edit, save, and return to your application as needed prior to the March 6, 2014, submission deadline.

3. COMPLETE THE PROJECT TEAM INFORMATION

First, provide the number of full time employees on staff at your institution in the space provided.

A library team consists of the project director, plus two to four other team members. Enter these team members' names, contact information, and optionally their institutional affiliation, if their institution is different from that of the project director. Team members will be displayed in a table as you enter them. To edit an entry, select the Edit check box in that team member's row, and then click Edit/Delete. To delete an entry, select the

Delete check box, and click Edit/Delete. The form requires that you include at least two team members, and no more than four.

4. WRITE THE PROPOSAL NARRATIVE

Before you compose the narrative part of this proposal, we strongly recommend that you read these guidelines carefully. If you do not, your proposal is unlikely to be competitive. You may save your work at any time with the Save button, however, we suggest writing the narrative in a word processing program (such as Word), and cutting and pasting it into the online application narrative section.

4.A–PROPOSAL NARRATIVE: Please write a brief narrative describing your plans for creating and implementing a community engagement plan. Responses to each question may not exceed 300 words. Be sure to address the following points:

1. As part of this project your team will be producing and implementing a community engagement plan. How will you define your community? Describe your community, including geography, socio-economic characteristics, ethno-cultural makeup and other relevant information.
2. Describe where your library is in community engagement, what you hope to achieve as a next step and how being involved in this project will help you.
3. Describe the extent to which your library is involved in formal partnerships and networking in your community, providing specific examples.
4. Describe the top innovation that your library has led/implemented in the past two years.
5. Describe why this opportunity interests you and your library, including specific opportunities or challenges that you hope to address through this community engagement work, and specific site, branch or location where you intend to base the work.
6. Have you or have members of your team participated in any learning sessions or training in the Harwood Institute approach? (Yes/No) If so, please detail your experience.

5. CERTIFY AUTHORIZATION TO SUBMIT APPLICATION

An application to host the Libraries Transforming Communities Public Innovators Cohort program is an application for a grant from the American Library Association, funded by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. ALA is required by law to ask applicants to identify a certifying official, who is authorized to submit applications for funding on behalf of the organization. To complete this section, you must enter all of the information that is requested.

When you have completed this section, click the Review button to review your application.

6. REVIEW AND EDIT YOUR APPLICATION

The Review and Edit page summarizes all the information that you have entered, including your Project Director Information, Project Team, Proposal Narrative, and Authorizing Official. From this page you can:

- review and edit each section,
- save the entire application and log out of the system, or
- move ahead to submit your application.

7. SUBMIT YOUR APPLICATION

Once you have completed all parts of your application, you may submit it at any time by selecting the "Submit" button on the Review screen. **All applications must be submitted by 11:59 p.m. Central Time on March 6, 2014.** Applications submitted after that time will be considered ineligible.

Note: After you have submitted your application, you can no longer alter it. The application will then be submitted for review.

You will receive via e-mail a confirmation of the submission of your application. At the confirmation page you will be able to print out a copy of your full application, which you should keep.

V. Application Review

Proposal reviewers will evaluate applications using the following criteria:

- Library readiness/willingness to use a team approach to engage its community in new ways.
- Library ability to commit the time of staff (and volunteer leaders, when appropriate) to meet requirements of the cohort experience.
- Demonstration of the presence of a culture of learning and innovation culture in the library.
- A track record of library-led community engagement.
- Extent of existing networks and partnerships appropriate to library capacity/staff size.
- Clear articulation of how the "turning outward" approach as described in the FAQ's might benefit the library and its community.
- Other criteria such as geographic, socioeconomic and population density indicators, whether the library is an urban, suburban, rural or tribal public library, and other considerations may influence selection. Because there are only ten grants available, ALA will strive to create a cohort of participating libraries that represents a cross section of public librarianship nationally.

VI. Award Administration Information

- Application Deadline: March 6, 2014
- Grant Notification: April 4, 2014
- LTC Public Innovators Cohort experience: May 2014 – October 2015
- Final Reports Due: October 2015

VII. Points of Contact

If you have questions about the program, contact:

Public Programs Office
American Library Association
1-800-545-2433, ext. 5045
publicprograms@ala.org

VIII. Other information

Application completion time

ALA estimates that the average time to complete this application is three hours per response. This estimate includes time for reviewing instructions, researching, gathering, and maintaining the information needed, and

completing and reviewing the application. Additional time needed to complete the proposed program plan will vary by library and complexity of plan.