

Project Bulletin
(September to December 2021)

1. Project organization and planning

During this four-month period the project was launched. Activities included developing work plans for core project task, creating a 6-month project calendar and a schedule for the pilot libraries, preparing project contracts and contact roster, establishing CoS policies and procedures for the project (e.g., drawdowns, invoicing instructions, etc.), convening Zoom calls with contractors, the Project Team and sub-teams, Project Advisors, and potential collaborators, convening monthly Zoom sessions with our SLA Partners (CT, ID, MD), preparing a project Communication Plan (e.g., internal project & external formative engagement of the library community), and commencing with project publicity efforts (CoS page, press releases, etc.).

2. Project glossary and framework assessment

a) Work commenced on a project glossary. We needed to establish a common language so that we could communicate effectively with each other and in all materials the project creates. It is intended to be neutral (without qualifiers) and could be used, adopted and normalized by the library community and all stakeholders (e.g., local government, community organizations and cultural/racial/ethnic groups, etc.).

b) Work began to identify and analyze existing frameworks and relevant literature/research that will inform the development of the STEM Equity Framework including comparable materials created for and adopted by the library community & barriers they encountered. The purpose of the Framework is to articulate and guide the development of clear descriptions of STEM equity and literacy core competencies of library leaders (e.g., library directors, library managers including department heads, branch managers, and assistant/deputy/associate directors, etc.). A special emphasis will be to enhance the skills and confidence of library leaders to engage their local government, community leaders and underserved/underrepresented populations in their community.

3. STEM and DEI Exemplars

A brief survey was developed to uncover STEM and diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) excellence in public/county libraries around the county. It seeks to identify libraries offer (1) strong adult programming and services that assist them in understanding the science aspects of pressing community issues and enable them to use that knowledge to take action. Examples of these issues include declining public health, degraded water quality, food insecurity, etc. and (2) equitable, inclusive library programs and services for all members of the community. State library staff, including their Continuing Education Coordinators, assisted in creating the survey questions. The survey was released in mid-December. The results will inform the selection of the project's case studies.