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# **DIMENSION III:**

## **Inclusion-centered Leadership Practices in Building Community Partnerships Module**

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*“Get ready to get uncomfortable. Get ready to look at a different point of view, a different perspective. Get ready to think differently.”*

– a *Serving Communities* library director

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# ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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*“...Serving Communities Framework and Curriculum helped me focus on a path that serves the community best, [to improve services] to portions of the community that I am not already serving, that we could really expand our service and really incorporate services to underserved communities and people.”*

— a **Serving Communities** library director



# SERVING COMMUNITIES CURRICULUM

## Overview

The *Serving Communities Curriculum* seeks, for you and your library staff, to:

1. enhance state, public, and county library leadership skills and competencies to intentionally plan for and provide equitable, culturally-responsive library services and resources for all members of the community with special focus on underserved community members that are not currently using the library; and
2. foster the co-development of these services and resources in partnership with government, community leaders, and organizations dedicated to addressing community issues affecting the lives of all community members.

The *Serving Communities Curriculum*, the *Serving Communities Framework*, and the *Serving Communities: A Glossary for an Inclusive Library* are the result of a two-year program funded by the Institute of Museum and Library Services (imls.gov). Together, these materials provide library directors and leadership staff with the information they need to be actively aware and purposeful in co-creating equitable culturally-responsive library services and programs with vulnerable, underserved community member groups. A focus is on presenting actionable science information that is meaningful to adult learners in the community. (These materials are online at [www.webjunction.org](http://www.webjunction.org) and [www.cornerstonesofscience.org](http://www.cornerstonesofscience.org).)

## Actionable Science-based Community Issues

As you consider the *Serving Communities Framework*, *Serving Communities: A Glossary for an Inclusive Library* and the *supporting modules*, all of these materials are designed to help you be actively aware and purposeful for creating equitable access to actionable science information and services responsive to community needs, particularly to underserved communities who do not or are unable to access your library. To succeed at broadening community participation, an inclusion-centered library leader needs to also broaden their skills, attitudes and practices. This includes:

1. developing a shared language with community member groups;
2. knowing your audience and understanding their reticence to the library and their distrust of “science;” and

3. even within the library’s financial and staff constraints, through partnerships, willingness and interest, prioritizing equitable access to actionable science information and services that are relevant and needed by community member groups.

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*“The **Framework** is a self-assessment tool. You are able to determine where you are and chart a path for personal improvements.”*

– a *Serving Communities* library director

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## Serving Communities Framework for Library Directors

The *Serving Communities Framework* for library directors is a resource for state, public, and county library directors and leadership staff. It supports your work to:

1. determine your current inclusion-centered attitudes and practices;
2. visualize your aspirations for yourselves (as inclusion-centered leaders), your library, and your community; and
3. develop your path forward for creating a more inclusion-centered library.

The *Serving Communities Framework* identifies the skills and competencies that library directors need to create a library that is responsive to community well-being (especially for people that are underserved). Library leaders need to be confident and have the skills to build a coalition of community members that is able to co-create actionable science-based programs and services for adult learners that are relevant and needed by them.

Supporting the *Serving Communities Framework* are five modules designed to enhanced your inclusion-centered skills, attitudes, and practices. They include:

**Module 1:** Personal Inclusion-centered Leadership Practices Module

**Module 2:** Inclusion-centered Leadership Practices in Library Organizational Culture Module

**Module 3:** Inclusion-centered Leadership Practices in Building Community Partnerships Module

**Module 4:** Inclusion-centered Leadership Practices in Community Member Experiences Module: Actionable Science Information for Adult Learners

**Module 5:** Creating a Shared Language Module: Putting the Glossary for an Inclusive Library into Action

# SERVING COMMUNITIES

## A FRAMEWORK FOR INCLUSION-CENTERED LIBRARY LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT



# INTRODUCTION

Public libraries need meaningful, strategic sustainable partnerships with community organizations and local government and these community institutions need public libraries. Partnerships are both personal and business endeavors as they involve ongoing time, support, and cultivation by a library's senior leadership and staff.

## Why Partnerships are Useful

1. partnerships extend and expand the resources and capacities of partners to serve broader and more diverse groups;
2. partners can amplify their goals, key messages, and accessibility to actionable science resources, programs,

and services;

3. partners can access broader connections, and services within the community; and,
4. together they can have a greater impact on users, their families, and communities to address issues affecting their quality of life.

## The Benefits of Inclusion-centered Actionable Science Community Partnerships

Investing time and effort into creating and nurturing partnerships is essential for all involved. Examples of benefits include:

PUBLIC LIBRARIES	COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION & GOVERNMENT INSTITUTIONS	COMMUNITY MEMBERS
Partnerships can expand the library's reach and resources, enabling access to expertise, funding, and networks that are otherwise unavailable.	Partnerships can expand the reach and resources of organizations and government. Partnerships enable access to expertise, funding, and networks.	Resources and services are amplified and can be accessed in the library as well as within the community where members live.
They can foster a collaborative environment where ideas are exchanged, and innovative solutions are developed to address community needs.	They can foster a collaborative environment where ideas are exchanged, and innovative solutions are developed to address community needs.	Through strategic collaborations, libraries can effectively bridge gaps and ensure equitable access to information and opportunities for all members of the community.
They can strengthen community engagement and trust, demonstrating the library's commitment to serving diverse populations.	They can facilitate introductions to diverse community member groups, and help connect and create meaningful collaborations between those community members and the library.	The development of ongoing and sustainable access supports community well-being and trust.
By leveraging relationships with government, for-profit, and nonprofit entities, libraries can amplify their impact and deliver more comprehensive and tailored programs and services that benefit all members of the community.	Partnerships increase visibility and broaden distribution channels of critical information and resources to communities.	Through co-development opportunities, community members get ongoing access to meaningful, relevant actionable science information, programs and services they want and need within the library and community.



The ***Inclusion-centered Leadership Practices in Building Community Partnership Module*** is focused on three themes of community partnership development:

1. understanding your current inclusion-centered leadership skills, attitudes, and practices for developing and sustaining community partnerships;
2. strategies to further enhance your relationship with government that may expand actionable science services to the community; and,
3. community partnerships can assist the library to better understand the wants and needs of underserved community members around actionable science and help facilitate the co-development of library policies, programs, and services.

### THEME 1

#### Assessing your personal community partnership attitudes and practices

The ***Benchmarking your Building Community Partnerships Worksheet*** is designed to help familiarize you with the ***Serving Communities Framework***. As you re-examine your community partnerships attitudes and practices, the activity will help identify your current competencies and strategies for deepening your approach to building and sustaining partnerships that benefit underserved adults in your community.

### THEME 2

#### Deepening library relationships with government

Strengthening the relationship between libraries and government (e.g., local, county, state, etc.) is an effective strategy for your library:

1. “to get a seat at the table”;
2. to serve as an essential institution to government agencies that support community resilience;

3. to strengthen ties, credibility, and visibility with diverse community members; and,
4. to provide access to programs and services that community members want and need.

Deepening relationships with government allows libraries to better engage with underserved adults around needed actionable science resources and supports. By proactively working with government agencies and staying informed about community priorities and initiatives, libraries can better align their inclusion-centered, underserved, and actionable science goals with broader community objectives, ultimately enhancing their impact and relevance.

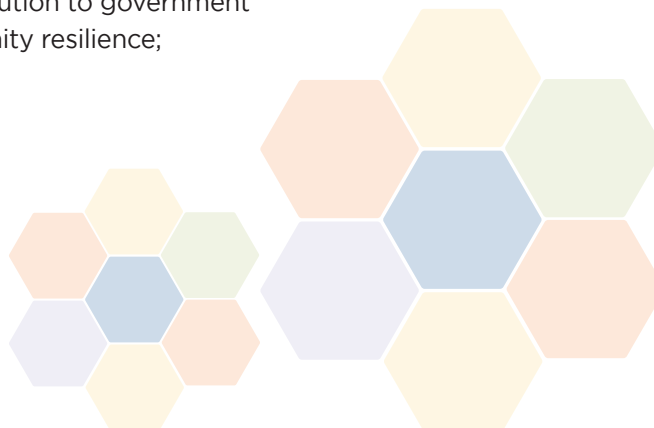
### THEME 3

#### Developing actionable science community partnerships that meet the needs of underserved adults

There are several reasons for exploring community partnerships with organizations that address actionable science issues and who work with diverse ethnic and cultural groups. These include:

1. credibility;
2. continuity;
3. support at multiple levels; and,
4. access to community.

These partnerships are critical to the sustainability of programming and services as well as funding. Since mandates and staff change all the time, partnerships help support continuity, demonstrate commitment, and provide assurance and trust to the community groups you and your library seek to serve.



# DIMENSION III

## Inclusion-centered Leadership Practices in Building Community Partnerships Module

**FOCUS:** The library leader’s engagement and involvement with new and existing community partners in order to enhance understanding of community needs and develop library programming, services and policies that is inclusive of everyone and accessible to marginalized groups.

*“We are each other’s harvest; we are each other’s business; we are each other’s magnitude and bond.”*

— Gwendolyn Brooks

### Dimension III, Competency 1

#### INVESTS IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND PARTNERSHIPS TO ADDRESS SCIENCE-BASED ISSUES AFFECTING MARGINALIZED GROUPS AND COMMUNITY WELL-BEING

1.	AWARE		INTENTIONAL		DEMONSTRATING	
	Library Leader Attitudes & Practices	Indicators	Library Leader Attitudes & Practices	Indicators	Library Leader Attitudes & Practices	Indicators
1.	<p><b>1. Recognizes</b> that relationships between you and management, local government, and other key public serving entities are essential to community well-being and library strategic goals.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Awareness of</i> current relationship status between you and management and local government.</li> <li>• <i>Awareness of</i> strategic areas of importance for local government regarding community well-being.</li> <li>• <i>Awareness of</i> need to identify commonalities and opportunities to guide collaboration around science-based community issues.</li> </ul>	<p><b>1. Participates</b> in local government and public serving entities decisions and planning that impact community well-being and increase access.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Regular communication</i> about prioritizing racial equity and inclusion and community access.</li> <li>• <i>Identification of actionable shared values and goals</i> around racial equity and inclusion and community access.</li> <li>• <i>Involvement in difficult conversations</i> to generate solutions for improving community services, access to services, and creating safe spaces for all community members.</li> <li>• <i>Investment of resources</i> toward strategic goals related to improving community services, access to services, and creating safe spaces for all community members</li> </ul>	<p><b>1. Partners</b> with local government and other key public serving entities to impact community well-being.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Recognition</i> and funding by local government as an essential community institution with shared goals for community well-being.</li> <li>• <i>Participation in developing</i> local government’s priorities, goals, and visions for the community.</li> <li>• <i>Investment in partnership</i> with local government to address issues related to community well-being.</li> </ul>
1	→ 2	→ 3	4	→ 5	→ 6	7 → 8 → 9



“The **Framework** has been useful to gauge where I am at with my community.”

– a *Serving Communities* library director

**Dimension III, Competency 2**

**CREATES EVIDENCE-BASED METRICS TO ADDRESS EQUITY, INCLUSION, AND ACCESS**

2. AWARE		INTENTIONAL		DEMONSTRATING				
Library Leader Attitudes & Practices	Indicators	Library Leader Attitudes & Practices	Indicators	Library Leader Attitudes & Practices	Indicators			
<p><b>2. Recognizes</b> that relationships between you and management and an array of community administrators is essential to serving the broader community and having a diverse, equitable, inclusive, and accessible library.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Awareness of</b> current relationship status between you and management and DEIA community agencies and administrators, including current outreach and engagement efforts.</li> <li>• <b>Awareness of</b> strategic areas of importance for DEIA community agencies and administrators regarding community well-being.</li> <li>• <b>Awareness of</b> social justice and racial equity organizations in the community about ways to identify common areas of interest and collaboration.</li> <li>• <b>Awareness of</b> ways in which you and management can co-lead or support DEIA community administrators in improving community well-being.</li> </ul>	<p><b>2. Participates</b> with DEIA community organizations in decision making and planning to impact community well-being.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Meets with DEIA organizations and administrators</b> regularly to communicate personal and organizational position on racial equity and community access.</li> <li>• <b>Works with DEIA organizations to act upon racial equity and community access</b>, including listening to DEIA organizations’ concerns and committing to overcome those concerns.</li> <li>• <b>Commitment and investment of resources</b> (staff, space, money) to address DEIA organizations’ concerns and needs, using community-defined criteria to identify suppliers that reflect the communities to be served.</li> </ul>	<p><b>2. Partners</b> with DEIA community organizations and administrators to impact community well-being.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Recognized by, engaged with, and trusted</b> by DEIA community organizations to support community well-being.</li> <li>• <b>With community administrators: evaluates intended and achieved outcomes</b> indicative of community well-being and engagement.</li> <li>• <b>Builds capacity</b> to address equity, inclusion, cultural responsiveness, and access to community assets.</li> <li>• <b>Applies physical, human, and information resources</b> of the library to improve the long-term welfare of the community.</li> </ul>			
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9

*“Inclusion-centered leadership requires intentional internal organization practices that result in the delivery of library programs and services to all members of a community. Library leadership integrates their lived experiences and sphere of influence to make operational decisions that produce equitable access to library resources for all.”*

— Cynthia Randall, Cornerstones of Science

**Dimension III, Competency 3**  
**BUILDS A BROAD-BASED COALITION OF COMMUNITY MEMBERS**  
**ABLE TO CO-CREATE SCIENCE-BASED PROGRAMS AND SERVICES THAT ARE**  
**RELEVANT, WANTED AND NEEDED BY ALL**

3. AWARE		INTENTIONAL		DEMONSTRATING	
Library Leader Attitudes & Practices	Indicators	Library Leader Attitudes & Practices	Indicators	Library Leader Attitudes & Practices	Indicators
<p><b>3. Recognizes</b> the importance of relationships between you and management, local government, and DEIA organizations to address shared science-based community issues.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Awareness of</b> local government and community organization outreach or engagement efforts that can be modified to address science-based community issues.</li> <li>• <b>Awareness of</b> current outreach or engagement effort that can be modified to deepen engagement with DEIA administrators, local government, and community around science-based community issues.</li> </ul>	<p><b>3. Participates</b> with local government and community organizations to solve science-based community issues relevant to the community.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>A shared mission</b> statement related to science-based community issues.</li> <li>• <b>Identification of support and resources</b> around science-based community issues and investment of those resources.</li> <li>• <b>Use of organizational capacity</b> to address priorities around science-based community issues.</li> <li>• <b>Development of evaluation tools</b> to measure the impact of their shared mission, activities, and impacts.</li> </ul>	<p><b>3. Partners</b> with local government and community organizations to solve science-based community issues relevant to the community.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Has stable, effective, and trust-based partnerships</b> with local government and community organizations related to science-based community issues.</li> <li>• <b>Sustainable programming</b> and information around relevant community issues.</li> <li>• <b>Assesses, evaluates, and modifies programs, services, outcomes, and impacts</b> with input and support from all members of the community, organizational and government partners.</li> <li>• <b>Cross-organizational (library, government, community organizations) investment</b> to support science-based community initiatives.</li> </ul>
1 → 2	→ 3	4	→ 5	→ 6 → 7	→ 8 → 9



# **Inclusion-centered Leadership Practices in Building Community Partnerships**

## **THEMES and WORKSHEETS**



# THEME 1

## REFLECTIVE PRACTICE: Understanding Your Actions to Building Successful Community Partnerships

*“Reflective practice describes the inward activity that is performed in an outward fashion during dialogue with staff and community partners and all members that live in the community. One questions oneself, and through the process of understanding one’s actions, one is able to develop a theory of actions ... In this process, one can become more sensitive to one’s own reasons for action, while developing the ability to understand the actions of others.”*

— Swanson, 2010

### The Process of Reflective Practice: A Critical Tool for Inclusion-centered Leadership

Reflective practice causes someone to focus on a leadership action (e.g., how it is performed, how it is received by others, understanding your reason for that action while understanding the actions of others and finally, your intention going forward – change, no change).

### Why is This Important?

Library directors have a myriad of issues that need to be addressed, activities that need to be performed, and decisions that need to be made. Often, we are not intentional. Rather, we are reactive. It can be easy to become too focused on the work within a situation.



To be an inclusion-centered leader is to be intentional. To be intentional is to understand your leadership actions while understanding the actions of others. Reflective practice allows you to **Zoom In** on your leadership actions and **Zoom Out** to look at the bigger picture. Each of the **Serving Communities Framework Dimensions** align with the steps of reflective practice. In reflecting upon your **Current Inclusion-centered Leadership Style** segment, the **Dimension I – Personal Inclusion-centered Leadership Practices Module** helps you focus on self-assessing your current skills, practices, and attitudes within your operational decision-making processes. The **ZOOM IN: Self-Assess** segment, the **Dimension II – Inclusion-centered Leadership Practices in Library Organizational Culture Module**, assists you in taking a step back to reflect on the effects and impacts of your decision-making processes on your staff, the values you hold as you allocate limited resources, and the policies community members are experiencing when using your library. The **ZOOM OUT: Consider Other Perspectives** segment, the **Dimension IV – Inclusion-centered Leadership Practices in Community Member Experiences Module**, provides strategies for you to practice consideration and integration of community member perspectives in library programs, services and policies. Finally, the **Practice/Experiment/Change** segment, the **Dimension III – Inclusion-centered Leadership Practices in Building Community Partnerships Module**, helps you reflect upon the fact that your library is part of a community network and shows you how to create the process of co-developing and implementing them with partner organizations and local government agencies.

Think about your current partnerships with organizations and your government agencies. Are your partnerships transactional or transformative? Are they time and funding limited or sustainable? We all have a little voice inside our heads that reminds us of all the things we could have done differently in certain situations. Reflect on your current leadership skills, practices, and attitudes

towards your community partnership experiences, such as:

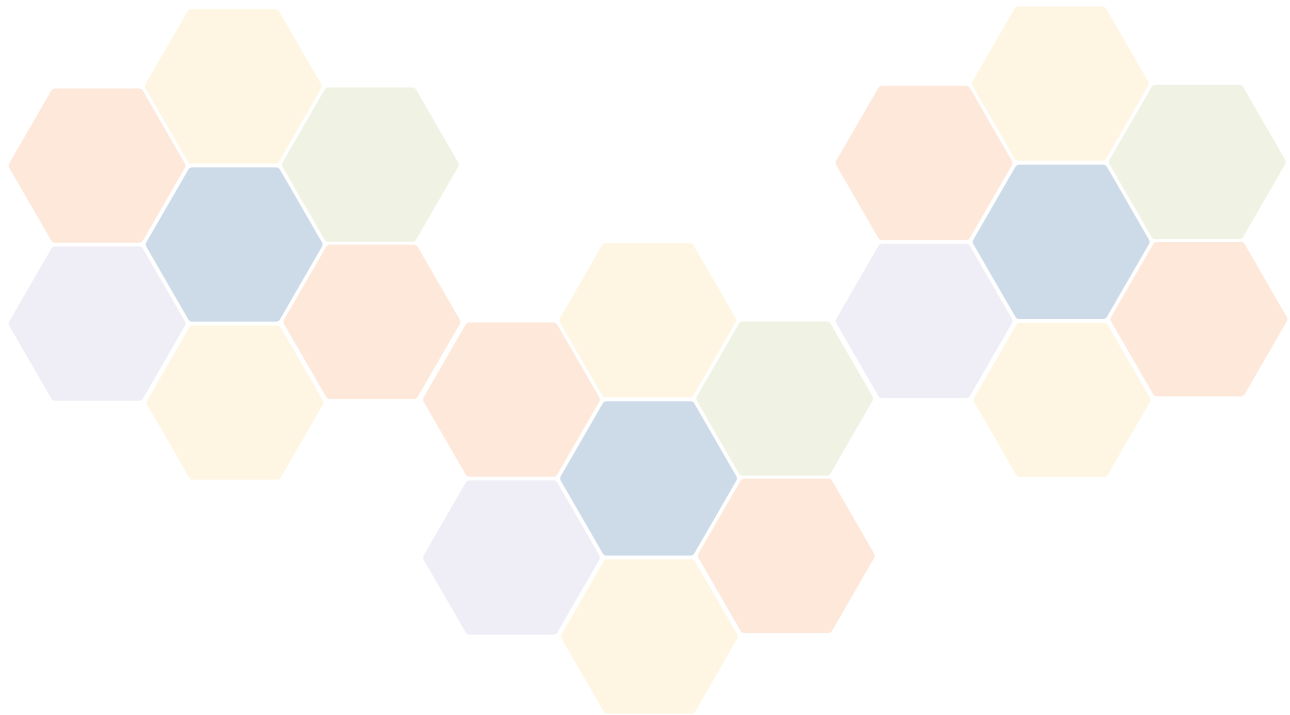
1. how might you improve them?;
2. why do you want to improve them?; and
3. can you think of one or two actions that would improve these relationships that you have already begun to develop to move them forward?

There are many reasons why community partnerships work or have not worked. Taking a step back and reflecting can help to challenge some of your assumptions, and help you see things from a new perspective. It is also critical to your inclusion-centered leadership practice that you are aware of the fact that staff, colleagues, as well as the community partners and

members you work with, are also operating and making decisions from their own assumptions. The quicker you (and everyone) are aware and can identify these diverse perspectives, the quicker you can collectively come to consensus within the co-development and implementation process.

A simple, productive, and cost-effective way for self-improvement, both personally and professionally, is to take **10 minutes** to reflect on your inclusion-centered skills, attitudes, and practices for building community partnerships to help you to think about areas that you can work on as well as what you are doing well.

**Make the time because it will be worth the effort.**



# WORKSHEET 1

## Benchmarking Your Inclusion-centered Leadership Practices in Building Community Partnerships

### Objectives

- Become familiar with the *Serving Communities: A Framework for Library Leadership Development*
- Assess your current inclusion-centered library leadership practices, and identify desired changes
- Create a Reflective Practice routine

### What You Need

- A hard copy of the *Serving Communities: A Framework for Library Leadership Development*

### Time

120 minutes

### Discover

Begin to familiarize yourself with the *Serving Communities Framework: Dimension III – Inclusion-centered Leadership Practices in Building Community Partnerships Module*. Download a copy of the *Serving Communities Framework* at [www.cornerstonesofscience.org](http://www.cornerstonesofscience.org) for a complete copy to help in this activity. In *Dimension III*, there are three core

**Competencies.** Each Competency is broken into three levels of **Attitudes and Practices** that a library director and a leadership team use to make decisions. The **Attitudes and Practices** of each leader will vary along this leadership spectrum in the following ways:

**AWARE:** Recognizes and understands ways to identify how equitable and inclusive library leadership practices are (e.g., strengths and gaps in leadership skills in library culture and services).

**INTENTIONAL:** Intentionally creates a deliberate plan to address gaps or strengthens in equitable services, library culture, and engagement with community partners and members.

**DEMONSTRATING:** Uses your leadership skills to partner with staff, community partners and members to sustain and broaden participation by diverse communities to library services and meaningful actionable science information.

As you read through these **Attitudes and Practices**, there are **Indicators**. These are descriptors to help you describe and visualize the results/outcomes of your current and aspirational inclusive-centered leadership attitudes and practices.

Across the bottom of each **Dimension**, there is a 1-9 **Proficiency Scale** of each set of **Attitudes and Practices**. These numbers capture the range of leadership confidence and abilities.

### Instructions

#### STEP 1

Turn to page 17 of the *Serving Communities Framework to Dimension III – Inclusion-centered Leadership Practices in Building Community Partnerships Module*. For each of the three **Attitudes and Practices** (rows), place a circle around the number in the continuum (at the bottom of the page) that best represents your current level of inclusion-centered community partnership building skills, attitudes and practices.

#### STEP 2

Using a different colored pen from the one you used in Step 1, determine your aspirational inclusion-centered community partnership building skill, practice, attitude, and pathway forward by circling the one **Attitude**,

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Inclusion-centered Leadership Practices in Building Community Partnerships Module					
<p><b>FOCUS:</b> The library leader's engagement and involvement with new and existing community partners in order to enhance understanding of community needs and develop library programming, services and policies that is inclusive of everyone and accessible to marginalized groups.</p> <p><i>"We are each other's harvest; we are each other's business; we are each other's magnitude and bond." — Gwendolyn Brooks</i></p> <p><b>Dimension III, Competency 1</b>  <b>INVESTS IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND PARTNERSHIPS TO ADDRESS SCIENCE-BASED ISSUES AFFECTING MARGINALIZED GROUPS AND COMMUNITY WELL-BEING</b></p>					
1.	AWARE	INTENTIONAL	DEMONSTRATING		
Library Leader Attitudes & Practices	Indicators	Library Leader Attitudes & Practices	Indicators	Library Leader Attitudes & Practices	Indicators
<p>1. <b>Recognizes</b> relationships between you and management, local government, and other key public serving entities are essential to community well-being and library strategic goals.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Awareness of</b> current relationship status between you and management and local government.</li> <li>• <b>Awareness of</b> strategic areas of importance for local government regarding community well-being.</li> <li>• <b>Awareness of</b> need to identify commonalities and opportunities to guide collaboration around science-based community issues.</li> </ul>	<p>2. <b>Participates</b> in local government and public serving entities decisions and planning that impact community well-being and increase access.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Regular communication</b> about prioritizing racial equity and inclusion and community access.</li> <li>• <b>Identification of actionable shared values and goals</b> around racial equity and inclusion and community access.</li> <li>• <b>Involvement in difficult conversations</b> to generate solutions for improving community services access to services, and creating safe spaces for all community members.</li> <li>• <b>Investment of resources</b> toward strategic goals related to improving community services, access to services, and creating safe spaces for all community members</li> </ul>	<p>3. <b>Partners</b> with local government and other key public serving entities to impact community well-being.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Recognition and funding</b> by local government as an essential community institution with shared goals for community well-being.</li> <li>• <b>Participation in developing</b> local government's priorities, goals, and visions for the community.</li> <li>• <b>Investment in partnership</b> with local government to address issues related to community well-being.</li> </ul>
1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9			



**Practice** and **Indicator** that best represents where you would like to be over the next year.

**Competencies** and specific **Indicators** best describe your current inclusion-centered leadership attitudes and practices? In what areas do you consider your current inclusion-centered leadership attitudes and practices not as strong?

**STEP 3**

**CURRENT:** Reflect on the emerging patterns. Complete the table below. Within **Dimension III**, what

Dimension III	Current Dimension	Current Competency
Strong Indicator		
Not as Strong an Indicator		

**ASPIRATIONAL:** Reflect on the emerging patterns. Complete the table below. Within **Dimension III**, what **Competencies** and specific **Indicators** do you consider as achievable? In what areas do you consider your inclusion-centered leadership attitudes and practices as difficult to achieve?

Dimension III	Aspirational Dimension	Aspirational Competency
Achievable Indicator		
Difficult to Achieve Indicator		

**STEP 4**

Within **Dimension III**, choose one current and one aspirational Proficiency Level that most interests you and that you believe is achievable.

**STEP 5**

Identify current actionable science information resources, supports and services that could be used to strengthen your community partnerships.

**STEP 6**

Use the worksheet on the next page to help you identify the steps that will allow you to move your inclusion-centered leadership practices and attitudes in building community partnerships to the next level.

# WORKSHEET

## Dimension III:

### Inclusion-centered Library Leadership Practices in Building Community Partnerships Module

**Directions:** From the completed benchmarking tables, use this worksheet to identify the steps that will allow you to move your current inclusion-centered leadership practices and attitudes in building community partnerships to the next level.

**Current Proficiency:**

**Aspirational Goal Proficiency:**

Describe what you learned and would like to change about your current community partnerships that could assist you with providing actionable science information resources, supports and services to diverse community member groups:

**So that:**

(Describe the benefit for you, your staff or organization, and community from this partnership.)

**Measurable Result:**

(Describe how it will be evident to others.)

**Action Steps:**

Identify 1-3 actions you will take over the next 6 months to reach your goal and note approximately when they will occur.

1.

2.

3.

**What support will you require, and from whom?**

## ACT

**Action 1:** Act on steps outlined on this *Inclusion-centered Leadership Practices in Building Community Partnerships Worksheet*.

**Action 2:** Make *Reflective Practice* a weekly 15-minute operational decision using the *Serving Communities Framework* as a guide to address one inclusion-centered leadership question, issue, or situation.

## THEME 2

# Deepening Library Relationships with Local Government Agencies

### Introduction

You have the opportunity to rewrite the narrative and assumptions that government agencies may have about your library. Eighty-six percent (86%) of public libraries receive some amount of funding from their local governments. This is acknowledgement that government officials understand the role and value of public libraries. They understand the library is an essential institution that can have a vital role in addressing actionable science issues, community resilience, and overall wellbeing.

### Discover

Public libraries and government agencies often collaborate to enhance community services, maximize resources, and address local needs. Here are some real-world examples of such partnerships:

#### 1. Digital Literacy Programs

##### **EXAMPLE: Libraries partnering with local government technology initiatives**

- **Program:** A city government collaborates with their public library to provide digital literacy workshops, helping residents learn essential computer skills, navigate the internet safely, and use government e-services.
- **Impact:** Increases digital inclusion and ensures residents can access online resources.

#### 2. Job Training and Employment Services

##### **EXAMPLE: Workforce development partnerships.**

- **Program:** A public library teams up with local employment agencies to offer job training sessions, resume-building workshops, and job fairs.
- **Impact:** Assists job seekers in improving their employability and connecting with potential employers.

#### 3. Health and Wellness Initiatives

##### **EXAMPLE: Public health collaborations**

- **Program:** A library partners with a local health department to provide health screenings, vaccination clinics, and informational sessions on public health issues.
- **Impact:** Enhances public access to health services and education, contributing to a healthier community.

#### 4. Early Childhood Education and Literacy

##### **EXAMPLE: Collaborations with early childhood programs**

- **Program:** A library works with local government early childhood programs to offer story times, parent-child workshops, and book lending services tailored for young children.
- **Impact:** Supports early literacy and school readiness for young children.

#### 5. Disaster Preparedness and Recovery

##### **EXAMPLE: Emergency management partnerships**

- **Program:** A library partners with emergency management agencies to serve as information hubs during disasters, offering resources on preparedness, response, and recovery.
- **Impact:** Provides critical information and support to the community during emergencies.

#### 6. Civic Engagement and Voter Education

##### **EXAMPLE: Collaborations with election offices**

- **Program:** A library collaborates with their local election board to provide voter registration drives, informational sessions on voting procedures, and serve as polling stations.
- **Impact:** Encourages civic participation, and ensures residents are informed about the voting process.

#### 7. Environmental Sustainability Programs

##### **EXAMPLE: Partnerships with environmental agencies**

- **Program:** Public libraries team up with environmental protection agencies to host workshops on recycling, energy conservation, and sustainable living practices.
- **Impact:** Promotes environmental awareness, and encourages sustainable practices within the community.

#### 8. Housing Support Services

##### **EXAMPLE: Partnerships with housing and social services**

- **Program:** Libraries collaborate with local housing authorities and social services to provide resources and support for homeless individuals, including access to shelter information, social services, and job search assistance.
- **Impact:** Offers critical support and resources to vulnerable populations.

#### 9. Cultural and Recreational Programs

##### **EXAMPLE: Partnerships with parks and recreation departments**

- **Program:** Libraries partner with parks and recreation departments to offer cultural events, recreational activities, and community programs such as concerts, art exhibits, and fitness classes.
- **Impact:** Enriches the cultural and recreational life of the community.

#### 10. Legal Aid Services

##### **EXAMPLE: Collaborations with legal aid organizations**

- **Program:** Public libraries work with legal aid organizations to provide free legal clinics, workshops on tenants' rights, and information on navigating the legal system.
- **Impact:** Improves access to legal assistance and information for residents.

## WORKSHEET 2

# A Library Meet-and-Greet Tour with Government Agency Officials

### Objectives

- To create a seat at the table with a variety of local governmental agencies
- To promote the library as an essential community institution
- To diversify partnerships and collaborations with local government agencies who may be able to broaden community member participation and expand programs and services

### What You Need

- A copy of the *Library Meet-and-Greet Preparation Worksheet*
- A copy of your library's strategic and action plan
- Research and other background information you have collected on local government agencies and representatives

### Time

2-4 hours

### Discover

There are many ways that public libraries and government agencies can work together to address community needs and improve the quality of life of their residents.

Local government agencies need to believe and experience the fact that libraries do and can play a more vital role in their community's resilience and economic development.

The *Library Meet-and-Greet Preparation Worksheet* is designed for you to outline:

1. important background research and information of both the agency's strategic goals, programs, and services as well as the background and interests of the officials;
2. a partnership goals and objectives;
3. identification of appropriate overviews and informational materials;
4. talking points about the library that the government agency officials might find interesting;
5. key questions for you to ask that will encourage a discussion of mutual interests and directions for the community; and,
6. your thoughts post meeting including how the meeting went, how easy the conversation was, how prepared you were and their level of interest. Remember

this is truly a meet-and-greet if neither of you have ever met before. You will probably meet together for no more than one hour. Therefore, it will be important to be prepared to quickly broaden their perspectives of the library, help them see how the library might be of help to them, and agree that having a seat at the table will help disseminate information and connect members to other community supports.

### Instructions

On the *Library Meet-and-Greet Preparation Worksheet* complete the following steps:

#### STEP 1

##### Goal of the Meet-and-Greet

What 1-2 things do you want the local government agency to know about your library as an essential community institution? What are the 1-2 things you want to learn more about the local government agency, its programs and services, and its mission and vision? How will you know that this was a meaningful meet-and-greet? What are your definitions of success?

#### STEP 2

##### Gather Important Background Information of the Agency and its Officials

What is the name of government agency you are interested in meeting with? Gather background information on the current mission, vision, programs, and services of that government agency, and identify who is responsible for the creation and implementation. Identify key strategic goals and initiatives that the agency is currently focusing on that align with the vision of your library. Do you know, or do you know someone who knows, this(se) individual(s) that could give you additional information as well as possibly make introductions?

#### STEPS 3 & 4

##### Alignment of Library's and Government Agency's Goals and Objectives

**Goal:** Choose one goal that your local government agency is working on that aligns with a goal at your library (e.g., broadening participation, engagement with specific underserved community members, a specific actionable science issue).

**Objective:** Identify a measurable action that the library can pursue toward that overall goal. For example: The

library will partner with local emergency and public health agencies to assume the role of cooling facilities where and when needed to provide places for residents, especially the elderly, poor, or otherwise vulnerable, to come inside to cool off. The library wants to:

1. be seen by the community as a welcoming safe space to all;
2. broaden participation and use of the library to community member groups who normally do not use the library;
3. be directly recognized as an essential community institution; and,
4. want to expand services to provide support to these local government agencies in the dissemination of public health information and social services during a time of extreme heat.

## STEP 5

### Library Information That Will Resonate

Put together a library information packet of no more than three (3) documents that best convey critical information, such as:

1. measurable results and library data;
2. overview of your library that describes the types of programs and services that highlight why the library is and should be considered an essential community institution;
3. stories about who you serve and the benefits to the community; and,
4. a one-page outline of the vision and benefits of a deeper partnership and/or specific services your library can provide the government agency to positively reach their community goal.

## STEP 6

### How Can the Library Be of Service to the Government Agency

Broaden their perspectives of the library. Identify and prepare talking points to ensure the local government agency official(s) understands your library, your mission and vision, the power of your library and its staff, and who you serve and why.

## STEP 7

### Establish a Rapport

It will be important that you listen and understand their strategic goals, what they want to accomplish, and who they are as an agency and as individuals. List key questions that will allow you to learn more about them, their goals, their thoughts of the library, and possible interest in exploring a partnership around a shared community goal.

## STEP 8

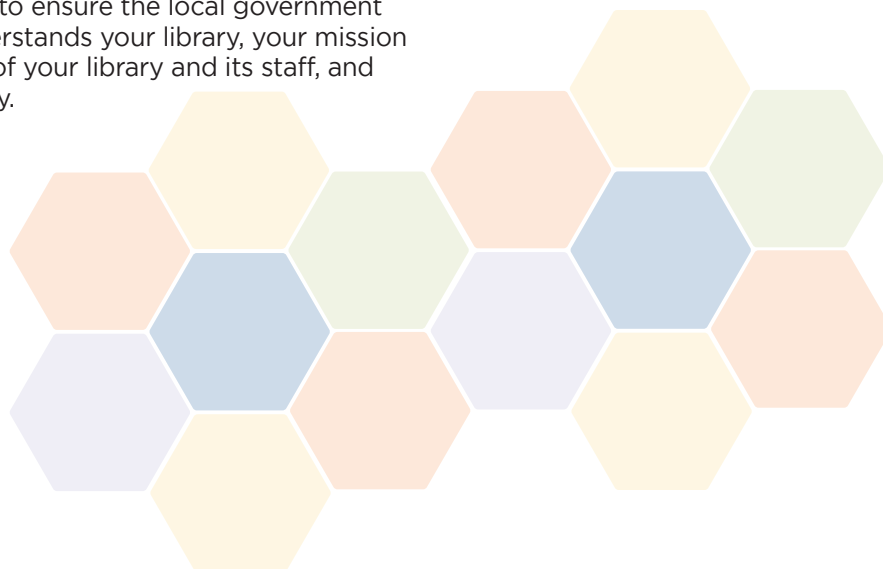
### Schedule the Meet-and-Greet

Schedule a one-hour in-person (preferably) or virtual meeting. Give yourself the time and space to prepare for the meeting. Try to schedule the meeting during a day and time that is not your busiest as you want to be focused and engaged with the person you are meeting with. Location can be an opportunity for you to showcase the library, if the individual is interested in seeing the library in action. In these instances, be sure there is a program or service as well as a diverse group using the library, particularly adult users.

## STEP 9

### Reflect on the Results of the Meeting

Write down your thoughts post meeting including how the meeting went overall. Was it an engaging conversation? Was the information you compiled on the agency helpful? What other topics came up that you did not prepare for? Describe any other key observations. Describe the next steps the library and agency want to pursue. This reflection will help prepare you for the next meet-and-greet.



## LIBRARY MEET-AND-GREET PREPARATION WORKSHEET

### STEP 1: Goal of the Meet-and-Greet

What are 1-2 things you want the local government agency to know about your library as an essential community institution?

What are 1-2 things you want to learn more about the local government agency, its programs and services, and its mission and vision?

How will you know that this was a meaningful meet-and-greet? What are your definitions of success?

### STEP 2: Gather Important Background Information of the Agency and its Officials

Name of Government Agency:

Key strategic goals and initiatives that agency is currently focusing on that also align with your vision:

Name(s) of agency officials you want to meet:

Do you know, or do you know someone who knows, this(se) individual(s)?

### STEPS 3 & 4: Alignment of Library's and Government Agency's Goals and Objectives

**Goal:** Choose one goal that your local government agency is working on that aligns with a goal at your library (e.g., broadening participation, engagement with specific underserved community members, a specific actionable science issue).

**Objective:** Within the identified goal, identify measurable actions to achieve that overall goal.

### STEP 5: Library Information That Will Resonate

List no more than three (3) documents that best convey critical information (e.g., measurable results and library data, overview of your library defining the types of programs and services that highlight why the library is and should be considered an essential community institution). Provide stories about who you serve and the benefits to the community. Prepare a one-page outline of the vision and benefits of a deeper partnership and/or specific services your library can provide the government agency to positively reach their community goal.



## LIBRARY MEET-AND-GREET PREPARATION WORKSHEET (continued)

### STEP 6: How Can the Library Be of Service to the Government Agency

Your intent is to broaden their perspective of the library and how the library can be of service to the agency. Identify and list the key targeted talking points you want to make sure the local government agency official(s) understands about your library, your mission and vision, the power of the library as a place and its staff, who you serve and why.

### STEP 7: Sincerely Establish a Rapport

Begin to build and/or deepen the relationship by understanding the strategic goals, what do they want to accomplish, and who they are as an agency and as individuals. List key questions that will allow you to learn more about them, their goals, their thoughts of the library and possible interest in exploring a partnership around a shared com-munity goal.

### STEP 8: Schedule the Meet-and-Greet

Day: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_ Location: \_\_\_\_\_

### STEP 9: Reflect on The Results of the Meeting

Write down your thoughts post meeting including how the meeting went overall, was it an engaging conversation, were the preparations that you described above the right information, what other topics came up that you did not prepare for and any other key observations. This reflection will help prepare you for the next meet-and-greet meeting.

## Reflect

Look at your current relationships with the government agencies. Do any government agencies directly recognize the library as an essential institution? If so, how might the library further develop the programs and services with them?

## Act

If you believe that you need to deepen the relationship, it might be time to host a meet-and-greet with your partners to enhance and deepen your relationship through communication, reminding them of what is happening in the library and ways to continue the partnership.

## THEME 3

# Developing Actionable Science Community Partnerships that Meet the Needs of Underserved Adults

### Introduction

Developing and supporting partnerships with government and community organizations requires vision, time, and cultivation by you, library senior leadership, and staff. Just like your organization, potential partners will have their own agendas, expectations, and limitations in financial and staff resources. In the first instance, true partnerships must benefit all parties. Successful and sustainable partnerships will depend on your clarity of purpose, mutually defined roles and responsibilities, and regular, effective communication.

### Tips for Successful Actionable Science Partnerships

#### Clarify your purpose

A clear purpose and shared understanding of partnership goals, activities, benefits, and expected outcomes is essential to a successful partnership.

#### Define roles, responsibilities, and work processes

There is a need to establish a mutual understanding of each partner's roles and responsibilities, as well as a mutual recognition of the financial and time commitments to an ongoing partnership.

This understanding will address things like:

- Who will represent each organization?
- What role will the organization's directors play?
- Over the next year, what will we work on together, and what resources will be needed?

#### Communicate

Clear and regular communication among representatives of each organization is essential. Good communication recognizes the role of each partner. It provides opportunities to discuss and resolve challenges as they arise.

#### Create win-win situations

It's important to identify your library's interests to improve service to underserved adults, and to describe the potential benefits when you propose a partnership. Potential partners will be doing the same thing. Know that leading with *how the collaboration will benefit the partner* will resonate more with them—and generate more buy-in—than leading with how it will benefit the library.

Partnerships are most successful when they are mutually beneficial. The more you are able to describe how the partnership will create a win-win situation, the more potential partners will be interested in building a relationship with your library.

#### Assess and reassess your partnerships

Like all relationships, partnerships can be nurtured, evaluated, and improved. Working with partners on periodic assessments can help sustain trust, build respect, and address any possible issues. These conversations can also help you understand how to deepen the relationship in meaningful ways.

#### Build momentum

It's OK to start small. When your staff and community see tangible results of small, successful endeavors, their enthusiasm can help build momentum. Initial successes can also create opportunities for you to deepen your collaborations or invite new partners to participate and accomplish even more.

### Community Partnerships that Benefit Underserved Adult Learners: A Step-by-step Guide

Developing partnerships to improve library programs and services for underserved adults seeking actionable science information requires careful consideration of several factors.

Firstly, defining the type of partnership you want to establish is crucial. This could involve collaborating with local science institutions, universities, community organizations, or science initiatives to co-create programs, share resources, or deliver joint services.

Secondly, it's essential to assess your library's internal skills, abilities, goals, and values, as well as the resources available to devote to the partnership. This includes evaluating staff expertise, assessing available funding or grants, and identifying any potential barriers or challenges that may need to be addressed.

Thirdly, the commitment of library leadership and staff is critical for success. This commitment involves dedicating time, resources, and effort to support partnership activities, engage with the audience, and ensure the sustainability of programs and services over the long term.

In successful partnerships, the benefits often significantly outweigh the effort invested, both in tangible outcomes such as increased access to resources and enhanced program offerings, as well as intangible benefits like strengthened community relationships and expanded networks of support. By following a structured approach and leveraging the expertise and resources of partner

organizations, libraries can maximize the impact of their programs and services for underserved adults seeking actionable science information.

**STEP 1**

**Think partnership, not program**

Potential partners will need to understand the library’s motivations for a partnership that delivers actionable science information to underserved adults. It is important to be honest about the qualities of the partnership you want to create and why.

Transformative partnerships serve as catalysts for positive change within communities, empowering libraries to extend their reach and impact as influential community leaders. Libraries have demonstrated that they can leverage collective resources and expertise

to address pressing social, educational, and economic challenges. These partnerships facilitate the development and implementation of innovative programs and initiatives that directly benefit residents, fostering a sense of inclusivity, empowerment, and well-being. From providing access to essential services and resources to organizing educational workshops and cultural events, transformative partnerships contribute to building stronger, more resilient communities where individuals thrive, and collective aspirations are realized.

By focusing on the holistic betterment of the community rather than solely on institutional gains, libraries can cultivate meaningful relationships and establish themselves as indispensable pillars of community development and enrichment.

<b>Characteristics of Sustainable Partnerships</b>	
<b>A partnership IS NOT sustainable when...</b>	<b>A partnership IS sustainable when...</b>
<b>It only benefits one</b> of the partnering organizations.	<b>It’s a win-win</b> for all organizations involved.
<b>A lack of trust and respect</b> negatively impacts the partnership by creating uncertainty. Lack of reliability and transparency limits the potential of shared programs.	<b>Mutual trust and respect</b> allow the individuals and organizations to take risks, express intellectual curiosity, experiment, and share lessons learned as well as give/take constructive criticism.
<b>One partner pays</b> for or donates products or services to the other without reciprocity.	<b>Each organization contributes</b> staff and financial resources to the partnerships in order to create something together.
<b>There is a lack of recognition of the partnerships.</b> This undermines sustainability, limits the overall value of the initiative to the community, and weakens the relationship.	<b>There is communication about the partnership.</b> Partnerships share data, lessons learned, and best practices with as broad a network as possible. The partnership is promoted, not kept secret. An open, public partnership allows others in the community to join the effort, bringing additional resources, learning from the partnership, and even adopting what has been developed.
<b>The library is thinking program, not partnership.</b>	<b>The library is thinking partnership, not program.</b> The value of shared accomplishments is greater than what each partner could have achieved individually.

### Partnership characteristics and behaviors

A successful partnership will exhibit the following shared characteristics and behaviors.

#### Aspirations

Partners share a common definition of their aspirations related to an issue or topic of interest to the partners and the community.

#### Intentionality

Partners have a clear understanding of each organization's motivations and goals, as well as the commitment of each organization's leadership.

#### Authenticity

The partnership is based on sincerity, passion, and a shared belief in the value of the relationship and the importance of the issue you work on together.

#### Accountability

Partners are committed to pursuing meaningful issues, setting realistic expectations for change, making progress, and keeping promises as they follow through on responsibilities.

#### Learning

Partners share information and learn from one another. Both learn and grow as they build their vision, visualize end goals, define the “win-win” relationship, and experience the value of the partnership in the short and long term.

#### Engagement

As partners explore opportunities together, they may engage in a variety of ways: one-on-one, as part of a network of organizations with similar missions or interests, and/or in a dialog with multiple organizations and the community about issues of importance to all.

#### Shared vision and benefits of partnership

The rewards of partnership can be profound. Along with a discussion of your shared vision, it is important to discuss potential benefits from the viewpoint of each partner, so both of you will understand the other's motivations and see what success will look like from your partner's perspective.

#### Capacity building

A partnership can increase both the short- and long-term capacity of each organization. New organizational capacities and individual capabilities can take different forms, including increased library programming related to issues impacting underserved adults, organizational network development, and staff professional development (building knowledge, practicing outreach, developing communication skills, etc.).

#### New funding opportunities

A partnership can increase access to potential funding and in-kind services and support. Donors, foundations, and other sources of charitable giving will be looking at the quality of a collaboration when they consider supporting a program. Funders may prefer to support a strong partnership rather than a new and possibly redundant program that can seem fragmented or competitive.

#### Stronger networks and public support

In your community, a strong partnership can build grassroots connections, increase credibility, and generate positive public perceptions. Your library may earn a new “seat at the table” in key community meetings, and greater visibility can increase awareness of your interest in addressing pressing local issues.

#### Positioning of the library as a local leader

A successful partnership can begin to position your library as a hub for learning in the community. The library's role as a community hub is one of the primary assets the library can bring to a partnership, while partners bring specialized resources, expertise, and knowledge. Over time, community leaders and members—as well as potential new partners—can begin to see your library as an ideal venue for programs, and library staff as strong allies in the scientific community's efforts to get needed resources and information to the public.

## STEP 2

### Identify potential partners

*What are potential partners thinking?* Potential partners are a lot like public libraries. They too operate with similar constraints, limited money, small staffs, and big goals. More than likely, they will come back to you with a cautious response because of constraints, along with a win-win requirement and an overall determination of whether the partnership will succeed or not. They too will have strong expectations and goals for a partnership.

There are a number of questions you should consider before meeting with potential partners. Examples include:

- Will the partnership be able to achieve its immediate goals?
- Does each partner have the same definition of success? How will success be evaluated and measured?
- Will the partnership support the mission or increase the credibility of each organization?
- What is truly gained by this relationship? Will the results of the partnership represent the best way to use the limited time and resources of both organizations?

**Partnership logistics**

Preparing to engage in an actionable science partnership can involve the following:

**Outreach**

You can start conversations with potential partners by reaching out via phone or email, or through a mutual friend or colleague. Partnership opportunities can begin at any level of the library, or they can be initiated by the other organization. Based on your confidence level, the time available, and understanding of the organizations you've identified, you may choose to meet with potential partners individually or to bring a number of organizations together to discuss goals and opportunities. Remember, the important thing is the quality of partnerships, not the quantity.

Because partnerships mean commitment of staff time and resources, it will be important for the decision-makers in both organizations to be directly involved in the formation of the partnership from the beginning.

**Prepare for success**

Whether you meet with potential partners one-on-one or as a group, it is critical to prepare for the meeting and define what will make it successful. Be careful not to focus on how the library can benefit; rather, focus on what you can accomplish together to work with underserved adults in your community. The first meeting is about getting to know each other and identifying common values and visions. If you can accomplish this up front, you'll be laying the foundation for a solid partnership.

**Follow up**

Strong partnerships begin and end with communication and mutual respect. Establish a channel for communication so you can share timetables and information, define roles and responsibilities, and discuss how decisions will be made together. Open communication will lend clarity to the partnership and build understanding and trust. Meet on a regular basis. Promptly share any notes and documentation of decisions and actions. And follow through on your commitments.

**Inclusion-centered actionable science community partnerships: What are they?**

The primary goal of inclusion-centered actionable science community partnerships with public libraries is to ensure that all voices are heard, valued, and represented in decision-making processes, regardless of race, ethnicity, gender, age, ability, or socioeconomic status. They actively seek to identify and address systemic barriers to participation and access, fostering environments that are welcoming, inclusive, and accessible to all community members. By fostering

collaboration, dialogue, and collective action, inclusion-centered community partnerships can create more resilient, equitable, and thriving communities for all.

Libraries can develop actionable science community partnerships that meet the needs of underserved adults and that serve the interests of the libraries.

Examples include:

**Addressing Disparities**

Underserved adults are disproportionately affected by health, environmental, and social disparities that have scientific underpinnings. Actionable science partnerships can help libraries address these disparities by providing targeted information, resources, and support services that empower underserved adults to make informed decisions and take action to improve their well-being and quality of life.

**Community Engagement and Empowerment**

Actionable science partnerships engage underserved adults as active participants in the scientific process, fostering a sense of ownership and empowerment. By involving underserved communities' libraries can amplify their voices, build capacity, and promote community-driven solutions to pressing issue.

**Educational Opportunities**

Actionable science partnerships provide underserved adults with opportunities for lifelong learning, skill development, and personal enrichment. By offering science-based programs, workshops, and activities tailored to the needs and interests of underserved populations, libraries can promote science information literacy, critical thinking, and empowerment, opening doors to new opportunities and pathways for advancement.

**Health and Well-being**

Many underserved adults face health challenges and environmental risks that can be addressed through actionable science partnerships. Libraries can collaborate with health agencies, environmental organizations, and community partners to provide access to information, resources, and support services that promote preventive health practices, environmental stewardship, and resilience in underserved communities.

**Equity and Inclusion**

Underserved adults often face barriers to accessing scientific information, resources, and opportunities. By developing partnerships that prioritize the needs of underserved populations, libraries can promote equity and inclusion in science education, research, and engagement, ensuring that all community members have equal access to information and resources.



Inclusion-centered community partnerships are collaborative initiatives that prioritize diversity, equity, and inclusion to address actionable science community needs. These partnerships can bring together an array of organizations, government agencies, businesses, and residents to work collectively towards issues affecting community members, particularly those that are disproportionately affected.

### Types of Inclusion-centered Actionable Science Community Partnerships

#### Health Literacy

Libraries can collaborate with healthcare providers and community organizations to provide actionable information on preventive care, chronic disease management, and navigating healthcare systems. Together they can address health disparities, address disease outbreaks, conduct vaccination campaigns, support smoking cessation programs, and promote healthy behaviors.

#### Citizen Science Projects

By collaborating with scientific institutions, libraries can facilitate citizen science projects that engage community members in addressing issues that are affecting their lives. For example, they can collect data on local biodiversity, air quality, flood risks, or water pollution. They might work with researchers to investigate the impact of pollution on public health, and develop strategies to reduce exposure and improve community well-being. Projects, such as monitoring wildlife populations, tracking climate change indicators, or mapping environmental hazards, empower underserved adults to participate in actionable science and address issues important to them.

#### Disaster Preparedness

Libraries can partner with emergency management agencies, first responders, and disaster relief organizations to address health disparities, prevent disease outbreaks, and promote healthy behaviors. Together, they can provide training sessions, workshops, and informational resources on disaster preparedness, evacuation procedures, and emergency response strategies that address the impact of natural disasters such as hurricanes, wildfires, or floods.

#### Digital Inclusion Programs

Teaming up with technology companies and community centers, libraries can offer digital literacy training, computer access, and internet connectivity programs to bridge the digital divide and empower underserved populations to access online resources and opportunities.

#### Financial Literacy

Collaborating with financial institutions and non-profit organizations, libraries can assist underserved adults with

budgeting, saving, investing, and debt management to promote financial literacy and economic empowerment.

#### Mental Health Awareness

Libraries can collaborate with mental health professionals and support groups on mental health awareness, coping strategies, and accessing mental health resources and services in the community.

#### Environmental Conservation and Restoration

Libraries can collaborate with conservation organizations, environmental agencies, and local experts to provide actionable science services to underserved adults that protect biodiversity, preserve ecosystems, restore habitats, and mitigate the effects of climate change. Together they can promote environmental resilience and stewardship.

#### Other Immediate Actionable Science Issues

Food insecurity; drug addiction and overdosing; Alzheimer patient-caregiver information, support and services.

### STEP 3

#### Implement a partnership

Implementing a partnership involves translating shared goals and strategies into tangible actions and outcomes that benefit both the library and its collaborators. Libraries can start by establishing clear timelines, milestones, and performance indicators to track progress and ensure accountability. Effective communication and coordination are crucial throughout the implementation process, facilitating the exchange of ideas, resources, and feedback. Regular meetings, workshops, and collaborative planning sessions enable partners to address challenges, refine strategies, and capitalize on emerging opportunities. Additionally, libraries can leverage existing platforms and networks to promote partnership activities and engage the broader community in their initiatives. By fostering a culture of collaboration, innovation, and continuous improvement, libraries can realize the full potential of their partnerships, and create lasting positive change within their communities.

### STEP 4

#### Partnership assessment and recognition

The need to be completely honest about all aspects of the partnership begins the moment you reach out to potential partners. Partnerships are about the cultivation and management of relationships. Make recognition and reflection are part of every interaction. This kind of communication allows you and your partners to keep moving forward, knowing where you stand, and where you are going together. Within the context of a meeting, the leader can encourage conversations of assessment and recognition.



**Definitions and measures of success**

How will you know if your partnership is successful for your community? Examples of ways to view success include:

**Meaningful connections are made.**

Your partnership connects your community with ideas and experiences that are engaging and meaningful.

**Relevant issues are addressed.**

The activities conducted through the partnership reflect the community's needs and interests in intentional ways.

**Momentum builds.**

The community can see tangible results of the partnership's initial endeavors, and that enthusiasm builds momentum. You and your partners have new opportunities to deepen collaborations, include new partners, and accomplish more.

**Partnership effectiveness is measurable.**

To measure your success, you'll need to look at specific indicators. It is important, that all partners want to evaluate the success of the partnership as well as the program outcomes. This review allows for better communication, transparency, and enhances program and services. The definition and level of success will be unique to each partnership.

As with project evaluation, defining success starts at the beginning of the partnership with identified activities and outcomes. The *Partnership Effectiveness Table* below is modified from Cheryl L. King's *Partnership Effectiveness Continuum: A Research-Based Tool for Use in Developing, Assessing, and Improving Partnerships*. This self-assessment is designed to provide clear descriptions of indicators that can be assessed, helping you develop and maintain effective partnerships. A downloadable version is online at [www.stemlibraries.org](http://www.stemlibraries.org).

Measuring Partnership Effectiveness		
Indicators	Criteria	Range from highly effective to ineffective
<b>Mission and beliefs</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A shared mission and set of beliefs serve as guides for the work of the partnership.</li> <li>• Collaboration among partner organizations is characterized by trust, mutual respect, and effective interaction.</li> </ul>	
<b>Shared goals for partnership</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are clear and measurable</li> <li>• Address common needs</li> <li>• Are mutually beneficial</li> </ul>	
<b>Shared leadership</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Share accountability for achieving partnership goals</li> <li>• Share decision-making</li> <li>• Participate in meetings</li> </ul>	
<b>Agendas and logistics</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Jointly created and supported</li> <li>• Pursue priorities that accomplish short-term objectives</li> <li>• Are resourced (e.g., time, people, budget)</li> </ul>	
<b>Action plans</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Articulate specific actions</li> <li>• Provide timelines, roles, and responsibilities</li> </ul>	
<b>Progress measures and assessments</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Performance measures assess progress</li> <li>• Data is used to assess partnership effectiveness.</li> </ul>	

# WORKSHEET 3

## Community Partnership Evaluation

### Objectives

- To identify and evaluate potential partners for collaboration on library programs and initiatives that provide actionable science information to underserved adults
- To develop productive, transformative partnerships
- To recognize that in partnerships, the community comes first, and then the library
- To choose partnerships that build relationships and expand each other's organizational capacities and community awareness.

### What You Need

- Completed *Worksheet #3: Setting an Inclusion-centered Library Goal and Action Plan* found on pages 32-34 in the *Serving Communities: Dimension II – Inclusion-centered Leadership Practices in Library Organizational Culture Module* (optional but recommended)
- An identified actionable science issue your library is interested in engaging underserved adult learners around
- A list of community organizations that provide support and services around the identified actionable science issue and/or directly work with the underserved community members your library is interested in engaging and serving

### Time

4 to 8 hours (**NOTE:** depending on the level of clarity you and your library have about the actionable science issue you want to address and the underserved community member group you want to serve.)

### Discover

The *Community Partnership Evaluation Worksheet* is designed to help you take a deeper dive on how to determine transformative partnerships that are successful, sustainable, and able to provide expanded meaningful support to community members around actionable science issues that matter them. This worksheet will also help you identify the types of resources and commitments to the partnership and will be important information for any potential partner.

### Instructions

#### STEP 1

##### Review the Community Partnership Evaluation

Worksheet (see page 30) to determine the types of information you need when evaluating potential community partners.

#### STEP 2

##### Determine Library Direction

Take some time to either review the completed *Worksheet 3: Setting an Inclusion-centered Library Goal and Action Plan* found on pages 32-34 in the *Serving Communities: Dimension II – Inclusion-centered Leadership Practices in Library Organizational Culture Module*, or begin to consider ways you can broaden the participation of underserved adult learners in an existing library program and/or service.

#### STEP 3

##### Reflect on What Makes You and Your Library a Good Partner

Looking at the *Community Partnership Evaluation Worksheet*, complete Column 3: What does your library bring to the partnership? What are the pros, cons, partnership criteria and overall level of good fit of your library to the community organization?

#### STEP 4

##### Visualize Success

Now complete Column 4: Collectively, what are the definitions of success for the library, partners and community member groups? This will be very helpful in identifying the partnership criteria most important to you, the ability to broaden participation, and what the library brings to the partnership.

#### STEP 5

##### Create a Community Partnership List That Aligns with Your Vision of Success.

Start by doing a web search of the community partners who are focused on the identified actionable science issue and the underserved community member group you would like to engage with. Create a short list of the top three (3) community partners, and highlight your overall considerations and reasons for partnering with them now.

## STEP 6

### Meet-and-Greet

Your first meeting with community partners should be focused on:

1. simply getting to know each other;
2. your interest in learning more from them on actionable science issues affecting community member groups;
3. possible areas community partners believe the library can provide support and/or services; and
4. possible areas of collaboration.

Your first meeting's goal and agenda are comprised of two parts:

### PART 1

**Learn About Each Other's Organizations**, who they serve, how they serve and why. This meeting is also for the community partner(s) to understand the functions and roles of the library.

### PART 2

#### Explore Partnership Possibilities.

Provide a one-page overview on an actionable science issue, who you would like to engage, and why. It will be important to make the overview about the issue and community members first, and not about the library. The overview will be beneficial to you as a succinct, clear set of talking points and for the representatives from the community organization to quickly understand what you want to accomplish and to visualize if they have the same goal. Expect that this document will change during and after the meeting.

**It is important to try and keep trying.** It is very likely that you will need to talk with multiple community organizations as partnerships are about shared goals and all parties benefiting from the collaboration.

A good example of a program/service that could be broadened is that many libraries provide librarian support to help users navigate online health websites like National Institutes of Health Medline, the Mayo Clinic, or WebMD.



# Building Community Partnership Table

**Organization your library is interested in building a partnership with:**

**Possible actionable science theme of interest to the library and prospective organization:**

Top three (3) organizations your library is interested in collaborating with	What are the pros, cons, partnership criteria, and overall level of good fit with library?	What does your library bring to the partnership? What are the pros, cons, partnership criteria, and overall level of good fit of library to the organization?	Collectively, what are the definitions of success for the library, partners, and underserved audience?
<b>Name of Community Organization 1</b>	Pros: Cons: Key partnership criteria: Overall fit with your library: <b>Commitment of resources</b> Financial: Staff: Other (expertise, facilitate introductions, other community supports):	Pros: Cons: Key partnership criteria: Overall fit with partner: <b>Commitment of resources</b> Financial: Staff: Other (e.g., meeting space):	Community member group: Community organization: Your library: Ability to address needs: <b>Commitment of resources</b> Collectively: Roles/responsibilities:
<b>Name of Community Organization 2</b>	Pros: Cons: Key partnership criteria: Overall fit with your library: <b>Commitment of resources</b> Financial: Staff: Other (expertise, facilitate introductions, other community supports):	Pros: Cons: Key partnership criteria: Overall fit with partner: <b>Commitment of resources</b> Financial: Staff: Other (e.g., meeting space):	Community member group: Community organization: Your library: Ability to address needs: <b>Commitment of resources</b> Collectively: Roles/responsibilities:
<b>Name of Community Organization 3</b>	Pros: Cons: Key partnership criteria: Overall fit with your library: <b>Commitment of resources</b> Financial: Staff: Other (expertise, facilitate intros, other community supports):	Pros: Cons: Key partnership criteria: Overall fit with partner: <b>Commitment of resources</b> Financial: Staff: Other (e.g., meeting space):	Community member group: Community organization: Your library: Ability to address needs: <b>Commitment of resources</b> Collectively: Roles/responsibilities:
<b>Overall Considerations</b>			

## Reflect

### Ask yourself and your team:

1. What do they think of the possible Action Plan?

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2. Who should we speak with about unintended consequences?

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3. Who are the key partners or groups?

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4. What is the best way to proceed with the action plan?

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## Act

**Action 1:** Commit the time and resources to make the action plan succeed.



# CALL TO ACTION

## Final Thoughts

The key takeaway is that public libraries building partnerships with government agencies and community organizations will benefit underserved adults. Take a few moments to evaluate how these organizations view your public library. Become aware of what they need to respond to the actionable science issues affecting the community you both serve, effectively and efficiently. Be proactive in communicating with them, in a variety of ways, to highlight the critical roles your library plays as an essential community institution.

## With Yourself

**Just 10 minutes a day.** Give yourself the time to reflect on a key takeaway you found in these activities. In what ways does this understanding define or impact the way you build and nurture partnerships that engage underserved adult learners? What are your motivations, interests, and vision for yourself as an inclusion-centered leader that develops strong partnerships? The basis for change and action can only be made from a place of understanding and ability to develop your own theory of action.

This reflective practice allows you to consider your own beliefs while understanding the action of others. This creates the initial steps for building partnerships. This approach will only work if you put the time in to develop your own understanding and sensitivities to being an inclusion-centered leader. Not taking this time means you will continue to do things in the same way and not be able to fully understand the needs and actions of others.

## With Your Staff

**Start the conversation with your staff.** Every library staff member, volunteer, friends group, and library board

is, or has the potential to be, an inclusion-centered leader and can use their sphere of influence to affect change. The first step is to begin the discussion about what inclusion-centered partnerships look like to them, and provide the opportunities to explore these concepts, their goals and aspirations as individuals (personally and professionally) and collectively within the library organization. The activities in this ***Inclusion-centered Leadership Practices in Building Community Partnerships Module*** are appropriate for everyone. These activities are also a great place to start the conversation of what an inclusion-centered library should look like and how it should function.

We encourage you to share the ***Serving Communities Framework, Glossary and Leadership Modules*** with all that have a part in the operational decision-making, development and implementation of your library policies, services, programs, and community engagement activities.

## With Diverse Community Members and Partners

**Inclusion-centered leadership is founded on the principles that as a library leader you:**

1. value racial, ethnic and cultural differences;
2. demonstrate flexibility in leadership style such that you engage diverse community members and partners in shaping library practices and vision; and,
3. leverage your sphere of influence to advocate for library engagement in the development and access of relevant science-based community library programs and services that matter to adult learners. We hope that the ***Serving Communities Framework*** and professional development modules assist in your pathway forward to inclusion-centered leadership.





# RESOURCES

## Partnership Case Studies

Allen, Scott G., Larra Clark, Michele Coleman, Lynn Silipigni Connaway, Chris Cyr, Kendra Morgan, and Mercy Procaccini. 2019. Public Libraries Respond to the Opioid Crisis with their Communities – Summary Report, OCLC & Public Library Association.

Bertot, J. C., & Jaeger, P. T. (2016). Library Partnerships with First Responders: A Case Study of the Anne Arundel County (MD) Public Library. *Public Library Quarterly* 35(4), 279–294

Burke, R. E. (2018). Libraries Partner with Law Enforcement Agencies. *Public Libraries* 57(3), 25–30.

Durrance, C., & Pettigrew, K. E. (2001). Partnerships for Neighborhood Learning in Libraries: Community-Based Research and Action in Three Urban Neighborhoods. *Journal of Education for Library and Information Science* 42(4), 284–298

Kelly J. & Stroupe, J. (2016). Partnerships for Progress: Public Libraries and Local Governments Working Together. *The Library Quarterly* 86(4), 383–400

“Libraries Transforming Communities: Turning Outward Case Studies,” from the American Library Association and the Harwood Institute for Public Innovation, 2014–2015.

Real, B. (2014). Public Library Partnerships for Migrant Outreach: A Case Study. *Public Library Quarterly*, 33(3), 238–255.

Ryan, J. C. (2009). Partnerships in Action: A Model for Expanding Services to the Homeless. *Public Libraries*, 48(1), 28–34.

Schmidt A. G. (2019). Developing Multicultural Library Services through Collaborative Partnerships: A Case Study of the Calcasieu Parish Public Library. *Public Library Quarterly*, 38(1), 70–81.

## Partnership Development Tools

*Action Guide for Re-envisioning Your Public Library* from The Aspen Institute, 2014.

Alabi, J. (2018). Strategies for improving library services to people with disabilities. *The Library Quarterly* 88(4), 327–338.

Bryant, Rebecca, Brian Lavoie, and Amanda K. Rinehart. 2023. Building Research Data Management Capacity: Case Studies in Strategic Library Collaboration. OCLC Research. Dublin, OH.

*Communities Have Challenges. Libraries Can Help. A Step-by-Step Guide to “Turning Outward” to Your Community*, from the American Library Association and the Harwood Institute for Public Innovation, 2015.

Community Collaboration Toolkit Communities of Collaboration

Dresang, E. T., & Gross, M. (2005). *Library services for underserved populations*. Westport, Conn: Libraries Unlimited.

Garmer, Amy K. Garmer (2014). *Rising to the Challenge: Re-envisioning Public Libraries*. Aspen Institute.

Green, Susan (2020). Is Everyone Welcome at Your library. *Rural Libraries and Social Wellbeing*.

Houghton, M. A., & Smith, D. E. (2015). *Serving homeless patrons in public libraries: A practical guide*. Chicago: ALA Editions.

Kusimo, P. S. (2015). *Lanham Maryland Library services for multicultural patrons: Strategies to encourage library use*. Rowman & Littlefield.

Lehr, Jane I. et al (2007). “The Value of ‘Dialogue Events’ as Sites of Learning: An Exploration of Research and Evaluation Frameworks,” *International Journal of Science Education* 29:12, 1467–1487.

*Partnerships: Frameworks for Working Together*, from the Compassion Capital Fund National Resource Center, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2010.

*Putting Community in Collective Impact* (video) by Rich Harwood. Collective Impact Forum, 2014.

“Taking Community Partnerships to the Next Level,” a webinar presented by Audrey Barbakoff for WebJunction, 2018.

Trott, B., & Montiel-Overall, P. (2014). *Serving Spanish-speaking patrons: A practical guide*. Chicago: ALA Editions.

### **Partnership Evaluation Tools**

King, Cheryl L. (2014). *Partnership Effectiveness Continuum: A Research-Based Tool for Use in Developing, Assessing, and Improving Partnerships*. Waltham, MA: Education Development Center, Inc.

“Measuring Partnership Effectiveness,” a downloadable version of the tool provided in the Partnership Assessment and Recognition section of this toolkit.

