



Library Innovation Studios: Transforming Rural Communities Your Invitation to Submit an “Application of Interest & Commitment” to Participate

Application Deadline: July 10, 2017

This document is a summary of the Nebraska Library Commission’s *Library Innovation Studios: Transforming Rural Communities* project. It is intended to provide answers to anticipated questions and to provide the information and opportunity to enable rural and/or small accredited public libraries in Nebraska to submit an “Application of Interest and Commitment” to be considered as one of the thirty participating libraries. The deadline for the first of two cycles is scheduled for July 10, 2017. We anticipate that twelve to twenty libraries will be selected in the first cycle. The deadline for the second cycle has not been determined but will likely occur in 2018.

The Nebraska Library Commission (NLC) along with partners University of Nebraska—Lincoln, Nebraska Innovation Studio, Nebraska Extension, and Regional Library Systems, are excited about the *Library Innovation Studios: Transforming Rural Communities* project, which was recently awarded a National Leadership Grant of \$530,732 by the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS). The project will begin July 1, 2017 and conclude June 30, 2020.

The project uses Library Innovation Studios (makerspaces) hosted by libraries to support community engagement and participatory learning experiences by providing access to technological and innovative learning tools not readily accessible locally. This strengthening of the maker culture in rural areas is expected to stimulate creativity, innovation, and the exchange of ideas to facilitate entrepreneurship, skills development, and local economic development.

The multi-faceted project will:

- Establish local Community Action Teams in thirty rural and small communities;
- Purchase equipment and related materials for four rotating Innovation Studios;
- Develop instructional materials and user equipment certification processes;
- Employ sustainability strategies for permanent studios;
- Provide training on the use of the equipment, focusing on Train-the-Trainer strategies;
- Assist with local marketing efforts and programming/events, including open houses and maker showcases; and
- Host annual inventors showcases in Lincoln.

These three goals guide the project:

- Rural community residents will be empowered with the tools and guidance to explore, collaborate, create, learn, and invent;
- Libraries will transform their rural communities through participatory learning spaces, while establishing themselves as strong community catalysts for community change; and
- Libraries (and communities) nationwide will have access to a replicable model.

Libraries can learn more about the project and the application/selection process by joining the following webinar:

NCompass Live, June 7th at 10:00 a.m. (Central Time)
Library Innovation Studios: Transforming Rural Communities:
A project introduction and a review of the application process

To sign up for the webinar, visit:

<http://nlc.nebraska.gov/scripts/calendar/eventshow.asp?ProgId=16351>

If you can't tune in live, you may access a recorded version beginning June 8. Archived *NCompass* sessions can be found at: <http://nlc.nebraska.gov/ncompasslive/ncarchivelist.asp>

Benefits and Services for Participating Libraries

- Community engagement training, tools, templates, and facilitation support.
- Library Innovation Studio equipment for a hosting period of approximately twenty weeks, including components from the following categories:
 - Digital fabrication (3D printer, 3D scanner, laser cutter, vinyl cutter, CNC router);
 - Electronics (prototype kits, microcontrollers, robotics);
 - Textiles (wearable technologies, embroidery/sewing machine);
 - Digital media creation (filmmaking/digital photography);
 - Music technology;
 - Specialized software and subscriptions; and
 - Basic hand tools and other accessories.
- Opportunity to “try it before you buy it.”
- Opportunity for the community to see the benefits of a makerspace.
- Train-the-Trainer session at Nebraska Innovation Studio in Lincoln prior to hosting period.
 - Compensation (28 cents per mile) for one vehicle to travel to Lincoln.*
 - Lodging (direct billed to NLC) for up to five people.*
- Local Train-the-Trainer session for additional staff/volunteers.
- Troubleshooting videos and instructions, as well as access to project staff virtually or in-person as needed.
- Annual Inventors Showcase in Lincoln following the library’s hosting period.
 - Compensation (28 cents per mile) for one vehicle to travel to Lincoln.*
 - Lodging (direct billed to NLC) for up to two rooms.*
- Access to project staff including Nebraska Library Commission, Nebraska Extension, and Nebraska Innovation Studio.
- Connection to the Nebraska Innovation Studio.
- Connection to a network of makerspaces.
- Eligibility to receive one or more pieces of studio equipment at the end of the project.

* Level of grant support for travel expenses to Lincoln listed above are contingent on available grant funds. Participating libraries will be notified of support to be provided at least thirty days prior to expected travel.

Expectations of Participating Libraries

- Conduct community engagement activities to garner input, build consensus, and get buy-in from local partners related to makerspaces and the Library Innovation Studio.
 - Organize a Community Action Team and engage local organizations to gain support for the program, find volunteers and staff to coordinate local logistics, and participate in community engagement activities prior to the hosting period.
- Identify staff and recruit volunteers (minimum of five) for the two Train-the-Trainers opportunities. (Of these five, two must be trained at the Lincoln session and one of those must be library staff.)
- Prepare space for installation of equipment including:
 - Tables, carts, and/or counters to hold the components.
 - Tables and chairs for groups working together on projects
- Market the Library Innovation Studio prior to and during hosting period including:
 - Hold an open house after installation of studio.
 - Hold a maker showcase.
 - Outreach visits to community groups.
 - Distribute promotional material to target audience(s).
 - Conduct a drive to collect “consumables” (fabric, wood, etc.).
- Make studio components available to the public on a regular basis and report any issues to the project team.
- Schedule open studio hours, local training and user equipment certification sessions, and regular weekly programming hours to feature particular content areas.
- Assist users with equipment certification, enter new certifications into the database, and verify users are certified to operate equipment (applies to select components only).
- Encourage local users to showcase their creations/inventions at the annual Inventors Showcase following your local hosting period.
- Collect information and surveys from participants and during activities, as directed by project staff to aid with evaluation and assessment.
- Work with your Community Action Team to secure and maintain makerspace equipment in your library or within your community OR use the community engagement process to work with community partners on other important projects and initiatives that relate to library services.

Questions & Answers

Which libraries will be eligible to participate as one of the thirty libraries?

- The Nebraska Library Commission will consider any rural or small accredited public library to host the *Library Innovation Studios*. IMLS considers libraries with a *legal* service area of less than 25,000 as a small library. Using July 1, 2015 U.S. Census estimates, all but six communities in Nebraska would qualify as small. Those excluded from participation because of their size are the public libraries in Bellevue, Fremont, Grand Island, Kearney, Lincoln, and Omaha.
- To see if your public library qualifies based on accreditation requirements, check accreditation designation at <http://nlc.nebraska.gov/libaccred/standings.asp>. Public

libraries that do not qualify due to non-accreditation are blank in the Accreditation Designation column.

- Currently there are 168 eligible public libraries that fit both the “accredited” and “a legal service area of less than 25,000” criteria.

Will we keep the Library Innovation Studio for a full twenty weeks? Will we be able to choose the hosting period that works best for us during the three-year project period?

- Currently, the timeline and available hosting periods are “tentative” as the schedule depends on the project staff’s ability to select, purchase, and provide training at the initial Train-the-Trainer event, as tentatively scheduled.
- The tentative schedule anticipates the first four communities will be trained at the Nebraska Innovation Studio during the last week of September and each of the four libraries in the first cycle would get their studio “installed” in October or November, 2017. Currently, we anticipate hosting periods will vary from 18-21 weeks.
- We will ask participating libraries which times during the three-year period work best for them (and which might not). Although we will try to honor requests, we may not be able to accommodate all preferences.

How will the Library Innovation Studio equipment be rotated between the participating libraries?

- Four identical kits of Studio components will be assembled, which allows four public libraries to host a Library Innovation Studio at any one time.
- The first four libraries make up the first “hosting cycle,” or Cycle One. There are seven “hosting cycles” in total.
- Project staff members will deliver and install the studio components during a library’s “local installation/initial training window” (the first three or four days of the hosting period). To allow enough time for installations and local training, installations at the four libraries in a cycle will generally be held about two weeks apart.
- At the end of a library’s hosting period, project staff members will pick up the studio components and take the equipment directly to the next scheduled library for installation (except the set that will be used in Lincoln for the next cycle’s training).

What are Open Houses, Maker Showcases, and Annual Inventors Showcases?

- A **Library Innovation Studio Open House** should be held at the public library within the first three to four weeks of the library’s hosting period to showcase the equipment and components and feature demonstrations of the equipment. The open house is an opportunity to communicate important details about scheduled open studio hours, local training, user equipment certification sessions, and regular weekly programming hours to feature particular content areas.
- The local **Maker Showcase** will be a local community event held near the end of the hosting period, open to the public and featuring projects started and/or completed at the Studio (inventions, product improvements/alterations, art/textile pieces, audio/video creations, etc.). If library space is an issue, this could be scheduled at an alternative site within the community.

- Three **annual Inventors Showcases** will be held at the Nebraska Innovation Studio (NIS) in Lincoln, featuring inventions, products, and items made at the Library Innovation Studios (and other Nebraska makerspaces) across the state during the previous year. Each participating library will be expected to encourage local users of the Library Innovation Studio to showcase their creations/inventions at the annual Inventors Showcase that follows their community's hosting period.

What are the expectations of library staff and/or local volunteers serving as trainers for the equipment/components that make up the Library Innovation Studio?

A group of at least five local trainers (including at least one library staff member that is expected to attend both the training in Lincoln and locally) will attend Train-the-Trainers sessions at the Nebraska Innovation Studio in Lincoln, or later locally. Those trained in Lincoln will help project staff with on-site local train-the-trainer training. The local trainers will be expected to train users and help with certification during the twenty-week hosting period.

How can we learn more about the equipment and components that will be available during the hosting period at a participating public library?

- The components (still tentative) that will be featured in the Library Innovation Studios are grouped in “Stations” and can be viewed at <http://nlc.nebraska.gov/grants/InnovationStudios/Components/>
- You will note that there are “Stations” and “Mobile Stations.” Stations are those that will be installed as a unit and remain set up throughout the hosting period. Mobile Stations are those that will come in totes, cases, or other containers and should be set out for specific hours during the week and also available for check out for in-library use.
- Each Station includes the equipment that should be located together.
 - For instance, Station 1 features the 3D printer, a 3D scanner, and a desktop computer. These components work together as a unit and must be set up adjacent to each other.
 - Information provided for the components included in each station include:
 - The physical size of the machines;
 - The size of table that would work for the station's components;
 - Electrical and hard-wired Internet connection requirements;
 - Pictures of the equipment or item;
 - Sample photos of items that can be made with the device;
 - A video of how the machine operates; and
 - Important notes such as, “moving this machine will require recalibration.”
- Use the information to visualize and measure available space throughout the library so that you have an idea as to how much table and counter space you need and where you might want to locate various stations throughout your library.

Does the Library Innovation Studio have to be set up at the public library or can it be set up at another appropriate space within the community?

Yes, the studios will be installed at public libraries and will employ sustainability strategies to encourage participating libraries to house a permanent studio after the hosting period. The funding source is the U.S. Institute of Museum and Library Service National Leadership Grants

for Libraries. If local library space is limited, Nebraska Library Commission staff can provide assistance with creative layout and space repurposing solutions.

How much square footage does a library need to set aside to host the Library Innovation Studio and does it need to be set up throughout the hosting period?

It depends! You will certainly need space to accommodate the studio's components.

- A 20 x 20 sq. ft. meeting room that could temporarily be turned into a studio could work.
- Two 100 sq. ft. areas and a few 50 sq. ft. areas scattered around the library could work.
- A separate space for the digital media/music area would be best, but could easily be set up and taken down as needed.

Keep in mind:

- Some equipment should not be moved around after setup and calibration, so it should remain in position throughout the hosting period.
- Equipment should be in public spaces where it can be easily accessed.
- Some items described as Mobile Stations (like robotic or electronic kits), will be set out only at select times and when checked out for in-library use. These kits generally have small parts that should be monitored so they don't disappear.

See <http://nlc.nebraska.gov/grants/InnovationStudios/Components/> for equipment size and space recommendations for the various Studio Component Stations. A handy chart can be found at: <http://nlc.nebraska.gov/grants/InnovationStudios/EquipmentSpaceChart.pdf>

What if my library only has room for about half of the components associated with the Studio? Can we still participate?

- The project team would like to accommodate very even small libraries. To accomplish this, we are planning to accommodate four libraries with limited space—those that have only enough space to host about half the components at a time.
- Two of the cycles will accommodate five rather than the expected four libraries. In these cycles, the two libraries with limited space will each host half of the equipment during the first ten weeks and then swap the equipment with the other limited-space library so they can host the balance of the equipment during the last ten weeks.
- If you would like to participate but really do not have the space, you may indicate your interest to participate as a “Mini Studio” when you answer Question 10 in the application. Keep in mind that we can only accommodate four mini studios and they will only be available in two of the seven cycles.

What is the User Equipment Certification Process?

- Several pieces of equipment in the Library Innovation Studios will require a user to be certified on the machine prior to operating it.
 - To provide for the safety of the user and others around them;
 - To ensure that the equipment is used as intended and reduce the likelihood that equipment will be damaged or in need of adjustment/recalibration; and

- To provide for the orderly and consistent training of new users.
- Local trainers will
 - Learn the process to certify users; and
 - Enter certified users' name and information into the Studio certification database.
- Staff/volunteers monitoring equipment will verify that a user has received equipment certification before allowing the operation of equipment that requires certification.

If something breaks or stops working after the studio components are installed and our local trainers can't fix the issue, who do we call to address equipment that is not working?

Help will be available to you:

- First: virtually via videoconferencing with project staff.
- Second: on-site with project staff, if needed.
- Third: from the vendor, if needed.

Tell me more about the Community Action Team that we need to activate prior to our hosting period?

A main component of the grant is that the library serves as a community anchor and as a community catalyst working with community partners in a collaborative effort. Community Action Teams and the community engagement process is key to the success of the twenty-week hosting period and will serve as a model for replicability in other communities.

The library will be responsible for recruiting a Community Action Team composed of library staff and community members such as library board members, extension educators, chamber of commerce and economic development leaders, educators, community leaders, representatives of target audiences, and other stakeholders/volunteers/mentors with specific interests and talents. This team will be organized around ensuring that the Library Innovation Studio is a success and will be instrumental in sustainability efforts—examining ways of garnering investments and maintaining a permanent studio that meets the needs of the community.

Prior to the Library Innovation Studio's arrival at each library, staff from the Nebraska Library Commission, Nebraska Extension, and Regional Library Systems will facilitate the community engagement process using tools to garner input, build consensus, and get buy-in from the Community Action Team and local partners. This process will engage the local Community Action Team to serve local target populations with a focus on 'Making' and to address many purposes (e.g., engage residents in STEAM learning environments, demonstrate the library's role as a community catalyst for lifelong learning and business and entrepreneurship development, create new opportunities, and improve quality of life).

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