

TOOL

1

WHY DO WE WORK TOGETHER?

Determining goals

Why work with a partner? Because together, we make a greater impact. With this tool, we consider the big-picture goals of our library programming—helping to create communities that are connected, knowledgeable, creative, civically engaged, healthy, economically vital, welcoming, joyful, and caring (or all of the above!)

KEY TAKEAWAYS

After using this tool, you should be able to identify:

A

Your library's
current impact
areas

B

Your library's
impact area
goals

C

Your library's programming
or partnership objectives
for meeting these goals

IMPACT AREAS: DEFINITIONS AND NOTES

Below are the definitions of nine “impact areas,” with space to add notes on your work in each area and their importance to your library.



CONNECTED communities promote “social capital” by helping their members establish the kinds of social connections, relationships, and networks that facilitate communal trust, cooperation, and reciprocity, along with collective action. *Keywords: neighborliness, bonding, solidarity, shared values, social integration*



WELCOMING communities promote the inclusion of newcomers, value cultural diversity, and take actions that help all of their members feel a sense of belonging. *Keywords: inclusive, nondiscriminatory, accessible, respectful, accepting, diverse*



KNOWLEDGEABLE communities prioritize learning for its own sake, provide access to reliable information on a wide range of topics, and help their members develop the critical thinking capacities needed to make factual, evidence-based decisions. *Keywords: thoughtful, deliberate, reasoning, understanding, informed*



HEALTHY communities promote equitable access to healthcare, the attainment of healthy living and working conditions, and other actions that improve health outcomes and help all of their members lead physically and mentally healthy lives. *Keywords: active, equitable, robust, safe, secure*



JOYFUL communities create spaces where people can come together to have fun, be entertained, enjoy each other’s company, celebrate one another’s lives, and affirm both their histories and the futures they are making together. *Keywords: entertainment, pleasure, community spirit, pride*



CREATIVE communities provide opportunities and resources for artistic self-expression, enable the pursuit of creative livelihoods, and help their members participate in all manner of cultural productions. *Keywords: artistic, nurturing, inventive, imaginative, productive*



CARING communities promote prosocial values and behaviors, encourage their members to treat others with compassion and empathy, and help individuals develop a sense of social responsibility. *Keywords: kind, just, tolerant, considerate, sharing, charitable*



CIVICALLY ENGAGED communities promote a vibrant public sphere, and encourage their members to play an active role in civic life and community governance—whether through participation in political processes, group and association membership, or community service. *Keywords: democratic, participatory, transparent, responsible, dutiful*



ECONOMICALLY VITAL communities seek to create the conditions that can lead to economic development, increased individual and collective financial wellbeing, and the equitable use of community goods, services, and natural and human resources. *Keywords: fair, equitable, lively, prosperous, growing*

9 Impact Areas

“Library programming can make communities more . . .”

INSTRUCTIONS: Following are nine “impact areas” in which your library’s programming may already be making a difference in your community. Either alone or with your team, reflect on which of these areas your existing programs fall into. You may wish to list specific programs under the icons; note that some programs may fall into multiple impact areas.



Connected



Civically engaged



Welcoming



Knowledgeable



Healthy



Joyful



Creative



Economically vital



Caring



CREATING A NEW PARTNERSHIP?

Consider the following:

in what areas have community members expressed a desire to have more support for from the library?

What partnerships with organizations, groups, or individuals do we already have established that might help us begin addressing these community desires?

What organizations, groups, or individuals could we work with to begin addressing our community's needs?



ASSESSING OR STRENGTHENING AN EXISTING PARTNERSHIP?

Ask yourself:

In which of these nine areas does our partner work? Note that many partners will work in multiple areas.

How successful is our work with this partner in those impact area(s)?

Are we contributing to our partner's impacts? How?



PLANNING FOR YOUR LIBRARY'S FUTURE?

These questions may help:

Thinking about the sum of our partnerships, how many of these areas do we tackle?

Which areas remain uncharted terrain? Should we become active in these areas? If so, how?

What community impacts are we striving for, and how can our programs or partnerships be tweaked to reach those goals?