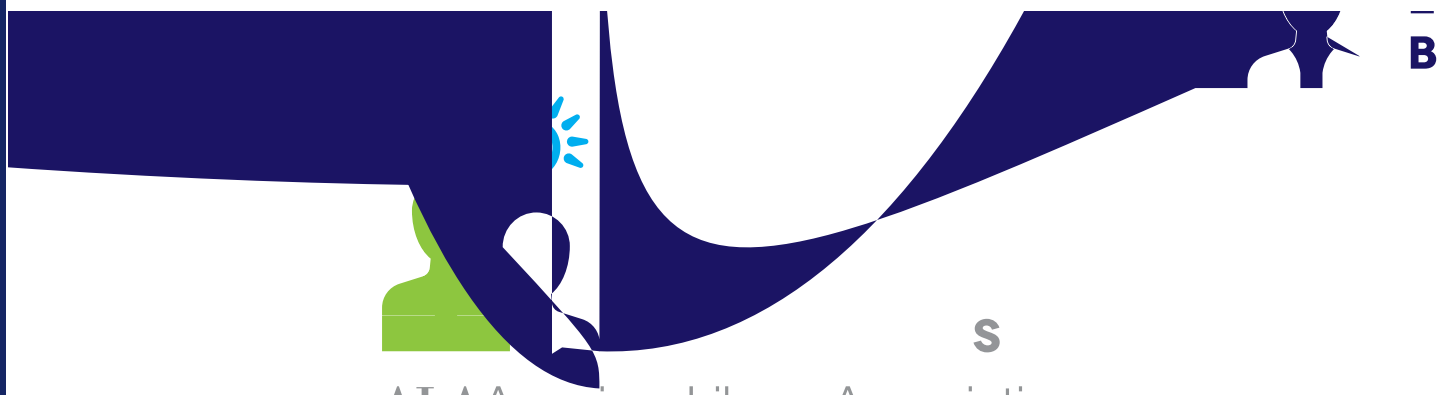
FEBRUARY 2022



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INTRODUCTION

Libraries Are a Valuable Economic Resource

America's libraries contribute to economic vitality in virtually every community across the country. With a history of bridging gaps in access to information resources and education, libraries are an important infrastructure that can be leveraged to tackle economic divides. Libraries excel at addressing many of the unseen barriers to economic advancement by: building digital skills; offering literacy, ESL, and GED classes; providing internet and technology access; supporting Green Card and citizenship application processes; connecting people with affordable health care; offering early education programs; giving youth of all economic backgrounds the opportunity to engage with STEAM learning, coding, and makerspaces; and more.

As a component of community economic vitality, any library can and should support local small business owners and entrepreneurs. In fact, almost 1 in 2 libraries in the US provide free services to entrepreneurs who wish to start and grow their business.[1] This ranges from offering free access to market trends databases to hosting business coaching classes, providing incubation space, and in some cases, providing seed capital through business plan competitions. Simply acting as an entry point to the entrepreneurial ecosystem by connecting individuals to partner agencies and resources as well as organizing relevant information is a crucial contribution to local economies—and something at which many libraries already excel.

Libraries Support a Diverse Range of Entrepreneurs

Similarly, the nation's nearly 17,000 public library locations can be leveraged to support small businesses and entrepreneurs from underrepresented groups and/or low-income communities, including those in rural and remote locations. Libraries already serve as a trusted resource for and in these communities and are familiar, centrally located institutions through which small business

resources and training can be offered in an accessible, community-oriented way. Library support for entrepreneurs of color, women- and immigrant-owned businesses, startups in lower-income neighborhoods, and others is critical because these groups face

which result in measurable disparities. A National Community Reinvestment Coalition research report notes, for example, that: "There are tremendous gaps in black and Hispanic business ownership relative to their population size. Although 12.6% of the U.S. population is black, only 2.1% of small businesses

fostering an engaged community of library users and supporters. In the process of advocating for entrepreneurs in their communities, libraries continuously seek resources and build capacity, staying on the cutting edge of innovative tools and best practices for locally relevant entrepreneurship. Libraries also make the case for themselves as reliable partners by leveraging their resources to get involved in larger economic development and vitality conversations. This willingness to engage with local economic challenges and opportunities and to develop new library services is critical to advocating for libraries with local, state, and national stakeholders, partners, and patrons and highlights why libraries are worthwhile of investment.

"Someone came up to me and said, 'You know, librarians know everything,' and I just chuckled, and I said, 'No, but they definitely know where to look.' And we are smart enough to know that we did not have expertise in all of these areas."

—DIANE LUCCY, RICHLAND LIBRARY

How to Use the Playbook

All libraries, no matter the size of their sta or budget, have a role to play in their community's small business ecosystem. As a connector and resource hub, libraries are equipped to support entrepreneurs and small business owners. This Playbook has been collaboratively developed by the Libraries Build Business cohort (learn more below) to share promising practices, models, and strategies to get you started with your small business initiative. We provide ideas and considerations for developing your program, reaching your target audience, and sustaining these for implementing small business programs, broadly applicable to a variety of populations and communities, and lots of examples and inspiration. Best of all, you're not doing this alone! We have a growing peer learning network of library workers interested in small business and entrepreneurship services. **The Community is a great place to ask questions, share resources, and network with others around the country. Join us!**

1. **Getting Started**
   expand your library's business efforts.
2. **Building and Expanding the Program**—offers ideas for potential service models, examples of innovative programs, tips on building partnerships, and other aspects of building a successful library small business initiative.
3. **Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion**—provides guidance on how to help your library's business efforts reach new populations.

4. Monitoring and Evaluation

re-entering the workforce from jail or prison, primarily Spanish-speaking sidewalk vendors, rural entrepreneurs, tribal members, and minority-owned tech startups. Learn more about each of the LBB cohort libraries and their projects in Appendix A.

LBB cohort libraries are offering programs and services such as: business incubators, co-working and maker spaces; classes and workshops including Business 101, ESL for Business Owners, Web Design and Marketing, and Accounting; mentorship and one-to-one training with small business owners, entrepreneurs, and local partners; specialized equipment and technology; promotion and marketing assistance; as well as research and reference services, including assistance navigating legal and business licensures and requirements. Libraries Build Business projects are thoughtfully designed with consideration of

assessments. Similarly, the Libraries Build Business Playbook will guide your library through

and evaluation tools, including an LBB-developed theory of change, evaluation framework, and a toolkit of resources that your library can use to track progress and drive impact. We hope that you

in this Playbook while adding your own library's voice and expertise to the conversation.

Existing Support for Small Business and Entrepreneurship

Often referred to as the "engine" or "heartbeat" of the economy, small businesses contribute

more likely to seek external funding, in the form of loans or lines of credit, both were less likely to receive it compared to White-owned businesses.[8] And, in a survey of small business owners expectations, Gusto reported that while half of small business owners were worried that their businesses could fail, the concern was even greater among minority business owners, with more

owned businesses estimating that they could fail within the next year without additional support.[9]

Given the importance of small businesses to the overall economy, multiple agencies and organizations have been created to assist small businesses. At the state and local level, they operate

along with other services and resources. Major players include:

- The **Small Business Administration** (SBA), a federal agency, created in 1953, helps small business owners and entrepreneurs by providing counseling, capital, and contracting expertise

  partners and other business centers.
- **Small Business Development Centers** (SBDCs) provide business consulting and training to small business and entrepreneurs through over 1000 centers nationwide. SBDCs, funded in part by the SBA, are hosted by universities and colleges, as well as state economic development agencies and private partners.[10]
- **U.S. Chamber of Commerce**, a business federation founded in 1912, represents the interests of more than 3 million businesses, industry associations, as well as state and local chambers. Funded by members' dues, the roughly 4,000 chambers with at least one staff member at state and local levels focus on issues and advocacy relevant to their individual membership.[11]
- **SCORE**

in different ways. Additionally, when seeking funding from a lender, SCORE mentions business reference librarians, among others, as people who can help a business locate the comparative

evaluate and approve small business loan applications.

In short, more so than ever, small businesses are a vital part of the nation's economy. Nevertheless, some groups of entrepreneurs face additional barriers to success. Organizations and agencies exist to assist these and other business owners, and libraries are an important part of this entrepreneurial support ecosystem. This wider small business support network—which looks a bit different from community to community—is referenced throughout the playbook. For libraries to offer the most effective assistance, we must see ourselves as a part of this bigger whole.

Notes

1. John Carlo Bertot, et al. (2015): "2014 Digital Inclusion Survey: Survey Findings and Results." Information Policy & Access Center (iPAC), University of Maryland.
2. Amber Lee, et al. (2019): "Disinvestment, Discouragement and Inequity in Small Business Lending." National Community Reinvestment Coalition. Available at: https://ncrc.org/disinvestment/.
3. https://www.sba.gov/sites/ .
4. Guilford, Gwynn & Cambon, Sarah Chaney. "The Economic Recovery Is Here. It's Unlike Anything You've Seen." *The Wall Street Journal*. June 2, 2021. Available at: https://www.wsj.com/articles/the-economic-recovery-is-here-rebound-jobs-stock-market- .
5. .

GETTING STARTED

Next, conduct a **needs assessment** for your community and **market research**[2] what additional supports and assistance would

This information will help you discern common challenges as well as gaps in support and will inform the development of your library's business program.

You can also reach out to potential partners, stakeholders, and allies to begin **community asset mapping,**

elected o cials, library leadership, community members, funders, and partner organizations.

who they are, what role they play in your work, determine strategies to make your case for public libraries as an integral part of your community's economic success, and know when and what you will be asking of them. In the process of "selling" the role of the public library to stakeholders, be prepared to share small business success stories and feedback from surveys, focus groups, small business coaching appointments, and other small business-related services in order to bolster your "case". Consider engaging with stakeholders in the

BUILDING AND EXPANDING THE PROGRAM

provide a broad range of opportunities to help cultivate the entrepreneurial mindset, ranging from peer learning cohorts, to self-paced study, to online training programs, to multi-part

businesses.

For libraries to best meet the needs of small business owners, they need to think like entrepreneurs. As you launch or expand your library's business program, craft your institutional welcome for business owners with intentionality and prepare staff to engage with the entrepreneurial mindset. There are a variety of questions and ideas an aspiring or existing small business owner or entrepreneur will have and want to explore. Depending on where they are in the process, library resources can support them in starting from scratch—exploring an idea, starting paperwork, and conducting market anBheach AslenrnaiaanBl19.6(an)8.1 (,)sme on in the progcss o

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One-to-One Consultation and Reference Support

Libraries can offer business owners one-on-one meetings with a reference

EXAMPLE:

lessons, homework, and accountability checks. Self-paced programming is ideal for small libraries with limited staff capacity, as patrons can work independently.

in your community who are innovating, creating jobs, and contributing to a dynamic local economy. This series can focus on their journey to and through entrepreneurship and/or the strategies that led to the successes and failures that helped them learn and grow. It can also help to foster a sense

who have the opportunity to see themselves represented in the stories of their peers and build relationships through conversation and sharing.

Mobile Business Stations

With the support of the **Wyoming Library to Business program**, Wyoming libraries are building business stations that consist of a rolling desk with a new laptop, webcam, headphones, and portable projector. Business owners and entrepreneurs can use the stations for meetings and videoconferencing, to record content, or to access business support software. These business stations can be built entirely on a mobile cart, as not all libraries—especially those in small and/or rural communities—have a dedicated space for a business center. The cart can be reserved, along with the meeting room space, as needed. And, carts can easily be stored or moved if the space is being used for story time, staff meetings, or events.

Perhaps one of these innovations would work at your library? Or, maybe you have an innovation of your own to share with the Libraries Build Business Community?

Building Partnerships: Engaging with the Local Business Support Ecosystem

as everyone involved has a lot to gain from the exchange. The library has a distinctive role to play in the small business ecosystem as a partner, access point, and connector to resources and services. Libraries by their nature are seen as community anchors that can bring various community interests together in partnership. Establishing external relationships can increase the reach of your library business program, boost your budget, and enrich the experience of program participants. Doing structural work early in the partnership process, such as (formally

your project on track.

When working with a new partner, build rapport by getting to know one another and by sharing your organizational goals. See if there are natural ways to collaborate. Some partners will help with resources, while others can assist with promotion and marketing. There are a lot of ways a partner

so be prepared to talk with pot70003008F00970096009700800E00E18 08etin7008008E00E18 role t

talking with partners, the Providence Public Library, for example, was able to identify a gap in services for the local business community and began offering sessions at the library on patents and trademarks. This was of particular value to the Secretary of State's

people came to the library for help with patents, the library could direct them to the Secretary of State's

library's central place and visibility in the community

needed their service, but who may not have found it so easily otherwise.

Regular communication will be critical to the success and health of your partnerships, and in turn, your programs. Bringing everyone together to share updates and discuss challenges will allow time for troubleshooting and ensure that no balls get dropped in planning and executing a program. Broward County Library, for instance, instituted regular check in calls with all partner agencies when they noticed a lagging registration rate for upcoming business programs. When the library startsC/P :14oegwith all partnipsp drogrng

Somewhat differently, the Sea un Vendedor Ambulante Exitoso/Successful Street Vending

eight vendors to serve as paid consultants on the project to contribute perspective and content, and test and review materials and curriculum. Vendor leaders also engage in outreach and promotion of the program in their vending community. This had

CASE STUDY

Invest in Marketing

Gwinnett County Public Library in Georgia used a professionally made video to recruit participants to the **New Start Entrepreneurship Incubator**

offering paid membership to the chamber of commerce—a barrier for many low-income entrepreneurs—increases the diversity in the Chamber membership.

- **Participants who completed Gwinnett County Public Library's New Start Entrepreneurship Incubator program** in good standing were given a laptop to keep. Additionally, they had an opportunity, if they chose to take part, to secure startup capital for their business by pitching their idea to Launchpad, a Shark Tank-like panel of local business leaders and potential donors. Though participation in the Launchpad was optional, it was an incentive which also addressed the issue that formerly incarcerated people typically have very limited access to capital.

- **Everyone who completed Spokane County Library District's Small Business Boot Camp program** was eligible for a micro-grant award to use toward business expenses. Participants in the program used their funds in many ways, such as: to purchase an enamel kiln for an art business; to expand marketing and advertising for a dentistry business by producing oral health

What incentives could be relevant for your library's small business program? Are there incentives that you can offer with no or little cost to the library? Could partners or grant funds help? How would these incentives help meet both participant and community needs? Be creative!

Now that you have learned about how to get started as well has how to build and expand your library's business program, we're ready to dive into the next components. First (and perhaps foremost)—how can you ensure that your library's small business initiative is reaching and best serving the people that need it?

Note

1. https://www.nfte.com/entrepreneurial-mindset/.

EQUITY, DIVERSITY, AND INCLUSION

Integrating equity, diversity, and inclusion principles and practices was a central focus of the Libraries Build Business initiative. As noted earlier, particular groups—ranging from rural entrepreneurs, to women, to the formerly incarcerated—have a relative lack of support and resources when it comes to making the leap into business. Thus, libraries and others have a vital role to play in boosting these groups.

Libraries Build Business Programs and EDI

or not in touch with. Second, the library took an inventory of their disparate services to see how they could expand their business offerings to more groups through partnerships or other creative solutions. As a result of this evaluation, the library added a business and entrepreneurship focus to their English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) classes, combining two of the library's long-standing services into a new program that has met a great need in their community.

Entrepreneurship can be a vital path toward economic stability for individuals from diverse backgrounds and with different lived experiences. It can also help to build a strong local economy that is responsive to the community. In this way,

start or grow their business ventures. With strategic partnerships, libraries can also make referrals and help entrepreneurs get connected. This sense of belonging and inclusion is vital to sustaining

Immigrants

Like the NSEI program in Georgia, the **Sea un Vendedor Ambulante Exitoso/Successful Street Vending program** at the Los Angeles Public Library aimed to target a traditionally underserved group. In this case the library wanted to reach out to a diverse population of immigrants, from predominantly Spanish-speaking countries, and including indigenous populations, with varying levels of literacy and cultural backgrounds.

operating hours, particularly for smaller and rural libraries, can represent barriers for those

implemented a new service prior to the pandemic called **Open Access**, through Bibliotheca Open Plus software. This service allows registered patrons in good standing to come into the library after hours at their convenience and use library resources. The library granted the same access to participants in their small business program so they could use the business center makerspace after regular library hours as well.

n n n

In sum, when developing your own library's small business programs and resources, considering equity, diversity, and inclusion can help both broaden reach and enhance success. In this area as well, it's okay to start small—you don't need to serve anyone and everyone perfectly all at once.

community, start there!

MONITORING AND

Introduction to M&E

Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) is a fundamental tool for informing the development and growth of library small business initiatives and enhancing their impact. The M&E process is an iterative

framework that outlines a standardized method for measuring the effect of programs and

and will generally maximize your library's effectiveness. M&E can be used to test and demonstrate the effectiveness of various models, as well as improve the impact that libraries have on their small business community. Ultimately, M&E can help libraries to strengthen their position as change agents and advocates for underrepresented and low-income entrepreneurs—helping libraries to not only to create better programs, but also to demonstrate their importance to stakeholders and funders.

To succeed with M&E you will need to:

- **Learn how M&E works** and how to start using it at your library: this Playbook can help!

The Importance of M&E Frameworks

An M&E framework provides a uniform structure to assess the performance and effectiveness of the various components of the Theory of Change. The M&E framework gives libraries a way to understand if their initiatives are having the desired effect. Having a clearly organized approach to evaluate projects maximizes their impact by highlighting their successes and areas for improvement.

A typical M&E framework is made up of the following elements and used to evaluate each of the Theory of Change components (inputs, outputs, outcomes):

1. **Indicators:** Indicators are the signals that demonstrate if a program is having the results you desire (or not). Connecting back to the previous example, an indicator from inputs could refer the number of networking events held in a given timeframe.
2. **Unit of Measurement:** A unit of measurement explains what values or numbers you will use to

   number of attendees.
3. **Instrument:** How will the unit of measurement data will be collected? Data about the networking event example would be reported by the library (i.e., library staff would keep track of the number of networking event attendees).
4. **Frequency:** How often will this data be reported?
5. **Owner:** Who will be responsible for the collection and management of this data?
6. **Report/Audience:** How will the information collected be reported and who is the intended audience?

The LBB M&E Framework is shared as an example in Appendix C.

TIER 1 Tip

Write down your goals and objectives. What activities and resources will you employ to try and reach them?

Want to get started? Print out the LBB Theory of Change and M&E Framework templates or make them your own to start drafting your objectives and identifying your inputs, outputs, and outcomes. The Theory of Change and M&E Framework will help you organize your thoughts and align your plans with the intended goals. They'll also help you develop your measurement instruments. See examples of each of these tools in Appendix C.

Overview of Monitoring and Evaluation Instruments

Monitoring and Evaluation instruments are the methods by which you measure the results of what

the impact it has had on their lives. Four key measurement instruments are: surveys, interviews,

Appendix C.

These can be adapted to and used for your programs. Below we offer some suggestions on how and with whom to administer these instruments to get quality feedback.

Surveys can be useful to gather data from two groups: small businesses and library staff. Small business surveys can help libraries understand what entrepreneurs need from the library or the impact of library small business programming and resources on them. Libraries can use surveys at different times in the project cycle, including in planning, implementation, and follow-up phases. For example, a library could deliver a survey to all participants enrolled in a small business initiative once at the beginning of the program to establish baseline benchmarks, and once at the end to see

from the survey can help your library determine how to improve your programs for future small

resources your library needs to continue delivering your small business programs and conducting M&E.

Interviews are used to understand things like what the community needs, or how library small business programming has impacted participants in more depth. Rather than just getting the facts (as with a survey), interviews will give you the opportunity to hear someone's story. Even just a few interviews can enrich your understanding greatly. Your library could, for example, conduct

end of the program. These interviews should last approximately 30 minutes and can be conducted in-person, by phone, or Zoom. What's learned in these interviews could help your library improve your program for future cohorts, and provide better small business services and resources for the

things like the level of awareness that exists about your library's small business programs, and how

How do I create a survey?

You can use ready-made surveys like the ones from this Playbook or Project Outcome to get started. Both can be adapted to your specific needs. Project Outcome also provides resources and training support to analyze and apply results.

If you're starting from scratch, the M&E sections in this Playbook should provide you with an overview of how to approach data collection. For more specific instructions on how to create a survey, you can refer to these two links: How to Create a Survey in Survey Monkey and How to Create a Survey in Google Forms.

stakeholders perceive those programs. For Tier 2 and Tier 3 programs, aim to conduct one-on-one

Focus groups

individuals) to understand community needs as well as responses to your library's current business offerings. Focus groups can be especially useful for assessing similarities and differences in people's perspectives and can lead to richer conversations as participants inspire one another to share. Online focus groups could also be used to understand how libraries across the country are implementing monitoring and evaluation systems, M&E culture within libraries, and related challenges.

Reporting forms are designed to track library resources and small business programming over time. For LBB, we used reporting forms on a quarterly basis to understand overall trends and themes among the cohort. Your library may consider using reporting forms to track equipment, technology, resources, and program offerings, as well as program attendance, response, and changes.

CASE STUDY

Using Community Feedback to Improve Programming

> After surveying and conducting focus groups with stakeholders in the community, Baltimore County Public Library launched Entrepreneur Academy to train aspiring entrepreneurs on ways to launch and grow their business. Participants were surveyed on the 1st, 4th, and 7th week of their training to gather feedback on which events and programs were the most helpful. After receiving feedback on the need to provide resources to those

It is also critical that participants are explicitly told that their participation is voluntary and that

"informed consent." Informed consent is important so that individuals choosing to participate in any study or survey have fully understood what their involvement will entail before participating. For more information on how to add a consent statement to a survey, you can refer to this resource: Adding a Consent Statement or Privacy Notice. For surveys in particular, once the data collection process has begun it is important to regularly monitor response rates to ensure that enough people have responded in order for the data to be meaningful and representative. This said, if you struggle to receive responses, you should not be discouraged: even small amounts of data can be incredibly helpful in informing your future decisions.

Prepare your data for analysis, by "cleaning" the dataset. This typically entails sorting through data and removing or correcting any incorrectly entered responses, duplicates, or corrupted entries. Cleaning data is an important step in the analysis process to improve the quality of the dataset and in turn improve the quality of the insights derived from the data. To analyze your data, you may use a combination of quantitative and qualitative analysis. **Quantitative** analysis is most often used to analyze results of surveys, reporting forms, and other measurement instruments that generate numeric data. It can help you to create charts, infographics, and other powerful representations of the scope and impact of your programs. **Qualitative** analysis is a method for collecting and making sense of subjective data. This method can give insights into things like participant opinions, perceptions, or experiences. Focus groups and interviews will yield qualitative data. Data collected from these instruments can be analyzed to identify common themes and patterns (as well as differences) among responses.

Creating Incentives and Buy-In

Libraries Build Business cohort members found that using incentives helped to boost survey response rates. If you can, o□er an incentive to people who take the time to fill out your survey such as a ra□e drawing, gift card, or door prize. Keep surveys short, and let respondents know how long it will take them to complete. Baltimore County Public Library learned that creating buy-in is also important. That is, make sure to highlight the purpose of the survey and how the data will be used: what benefits will collecting this data have to the participants, the library, or the community? Laramie County Library System, in turn, learned that setting clear goals for the short-term and long-term, and working to build buy-in from the most important stakeholders is key to M&E success. "Establish personal relationships with community partners and people in the community. This will allow you to measure and collect data much more easily," advises

what's working well, and what to change for future programming or services. What you've learned can be shared with stakeholders to encourage participation, investment, and general interest. Findings will also inform any adjustments you make to your M&E instruments and process. These reports can also show growth and trends over time; they provide your library documentation of what was tried and how the community responded.

"Keeping [survey] responses anonymous can respect the privacy of respondents and address their potential privacy concerns."

—JULIE BROPHY, BALTIMORE COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY

When libraries use M&E successfully to monitor and improve their equity, earning potential, prosperity, and interconnectedness within communities. Library services have the potential to be transformative, and integrating a culture of measurement, monitoring, and evaluation into daily library operations can help make this a reality.

SUSTAINABILITY

Once you have launched or expanded your library's small business offerings, how will you ensure that these efforts can be maintained into the future? Sustainability encompasses both keeping projects going and keeping them relevant. While funding is generally considered a crucial element

Continuous Improvement and Assessment

Firstly, engaging in a cycle of continuous improvement and incorporating time for evaluation

essential because it creates space to make adjustments and try new things that will help your

Using Lessons Learned from Your Program to Improve

GWINNETT COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY

As the **New Start Entrepreneurship Incubator** team reflected on and evaluated their experiences with the first cohort of participants, they decided to make a few key changes to the program model before launching the second cohort. The following adjustments were made in the spirit of continuous improvement with feedback from stakeholders. In order to stay relevant and provide quality services the project team:

- Moved virtual sessions to in-person sessions to foster engagement and participation.
- Built in accountability measures, such as releasing the curriculum month by month upon completion of an evaluation. This change also resulted in better ongoing feedback since participants had to check in and complete the forms to get the next month's materials.
- Built-in incentives. Business books were purchased to use as program incentives—people who attended class would receive the book. if they completed the course successfully, they received a laptop to keep.
- Introduced office hours to create additional supports and opportunities to address concerns or questions about the curriculum. The office hours provided time for students to encourage one another, as well.
- Engaged an outreach coordinator with a social work background in the program. Based on the experience with the first cohort, the project team recognized the depths of the challenges faced by participants and the significant resources (beyond business help)

Responding to the Unexpected

Even successful initiatives will falter and lose relevance if they don't evolve. Both internal and external factors can prompt change. How many public libraries, for example, were regularly providing virtual programming and services prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, as opposed to

responsive to what's happening in the community—whether changes are the result of a natural evolution or unexpected circumstances. To respond to a challenge, assess the following:

- What does my community currently need?
- How can the library respond?

- What resources and services are available in the library and in the community?
- How can we adapt our offerings or delivery model to connect with stakeholders and community members?

In South Carolina, when things shut down due to COVID-19, the Richland Library began to hold weekly meetings with the small business community to talk about their needs. In 2020, the library held over 20 virtual meetings with local government and business leaders to discuss how the community could meet the immediate needs of underrepresented entrepreneurs. During this time, the library maintained a website for small business owners and that was constantly updated by library staff when new information about loans and grants became available.

As the immediate crisis stabilized, the business community still needed support. The library-

have an opportunity to talk about the status of their organization, what they have upcoming in terms of training, and to share how the library can collaborate or help promote that. The meetings

“for example, our Entrepreneur-in-Residence was looking to do a program on cybersecurity, and

practices will help ensure that changes in your own staff will not derail your progress and will facilitate a more seamless transition.

Forming intentional partnerships is a great way to combine resources amongst organizations in order to further a shared goal. This is especially true for small libraries with limited in-house staff. As detailed earlier, partnerships allow you to extend your reach to new audiences and expand the breadth and depth of business expertise on offer. Partnerships can be great for programs because they can make it possible for your library

Scaling a Successful Model

The **Wyoming Library to Business** project is a statewide initiative intended to scale the business services o□ered by the Laramie County Library System. To coordinate this e□ort, project manager Rachael Svoboda wanted to take everything she had learned in building the library business program and make it "plug and play," so that any library, even the smallest branches, could provide business outreach services.

To do this, libraries across the state invested in business stations and recording studios to o□er entrepreneurs space and equipment to work on their business. With the support of the Wyoming State Library, and a growing online network to share resources and ask questions, the county libraries worked together to o□er business services across the state. Rachael also spent time with each library training them on the services and resources to demonstrate their relevance.

the industry (such as new businesses entering), or by spotting opportunities (which might involve expanding into a new market segment). The information available in these library resources and databases can help entrepreneurs make informed decisions that boost the growth and success of their business. Examining how your existing library business resources might be useful to people at

your reach.

Finally, scaling your business services can offer an opportunity to expand an already successful model to more branches or other libraries. With some effort and creativity, it is often possible to share the core components of a program and to adapt them to a new context. Read more on how the Laramie County Library System did this in the text box above.

In sum, consider: Are there ways your library could leverage existing programs or resources to serve new groups? Could your library use these same resources to serve businesses owners at a different stage of the entrepreneurship journey? Or could your model, program, or resources be used by other libraries?

Advocacy and Buy-In

Another very important practice that fosters sustainability is encouraging your program participants to share their experiences and recommend the library to their business colleagues. Be an advocate for your small business initiatives and get the word out through marketing

and promotional efforts on your library's website, social media outlets, and print publications. Visit business associations, the chamber of commerce, and other organizations active in the entrepreneur ecosystem. Finally, document and share your successes with those with whom you seek buy-in, including tracking the number of requests for business related information, which can be used to inform leadership of the growing needs and interests of library patrons.

leadership, now recognize your library's efforts as a valued, relevant part of the small business ecosystem. Buy-in from business owners and entrepreneurs means that they'll look to you for education and resources. Buy-in from partners makes them eager to collaborate with you. Buy-in from your own library administration and funders means you'll be able to count on funds and support to sustain, expand, and promote your work.

As discussed earlier, basic data collection on your impact goes a long way towards gaining funding and other support and making the case for your library's offerings to library administration and

served is some of the most powerful content you can collect and include in your own proposals or when cultivating partnerships. Providence Public Library, for one, started capturing program feedback to share with stakeholders and now has a "bank" of data and stories demonstrating impact

proposals. Making these investments does require time and effort but has the potential to pay dividends in terms of long-term sustainability.

and the International Downtown Association to launch a **four-part free digital readiness series** to help small business owners develop the skills they need to succeed online, with sessions on getting found online, reaching more customers, selling online, and running a business remotely. Other Google tools include **Google Think** to explore search trends and consumer insights and marketing strategies, and **Google Alerts** to monitor the web for news and information that matches the

The Urban Libraries Council's **Closing the Entrepreneurship Gap: Tools for Libraries** is a regularly-updated toolkit that includes strategies and resources for libraries offering entrepreneurship support. The toolkit builds on the work of ULC's Entrepreneurs and Small Businesses action team and Strengthening Libraries as Entrepreneurial Hubs collaboration with the Kauffman Foundation.

Ice House Entrepreneurship Program by the Entrepreneurial Learning Institute is an eight-part training course that introduces diverse audiences to an entrepreneurial mindset. Funded by CISCO Systems' Entrepreneurship Institute and the E1 tAwningM(ariontion with thmouIwningM()oiing3ugoiing3ugoiingu

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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with support from Google.org, and the American Library Association for creating the vision for and funding this initiative and this resource, as well as the opportunity to invest in and strengthen small business and entrepreneurship support in public libraries and a national community.

For more information about Libraries Build Business, this publication, or to join the LBB Community, please contact Megan Janicki (mjanicki@alawash.org) or visit our website: ala.org/advocacy/workforce/grant.

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Telephone 202-628-8410 | Fax 202-628-9419 | **www.ala.org/wo**

Gwinnett County Public Library, Lawrenceville, GA

New Start Entrepreneurship Incubator

The goal of the New Start Entrepreneurship Incubator is to engage individuals returning from jail or prison in learning what is needed to run a successful business with support of successful entrepreneurs and business mentors. Hear more in the IG Live Interview.

Adam Pitts
Branch Manager

Atlas Logan
Branch Manager

Ann Serrie
Volunteer Coordinator

Ron Gauthier
Community Partnerships Manager

Andrea Devereux
New Start Outreach Coordinator

Independence Public Library, Independence, KS

Cultivate Indy

Cultivate Indy is a small business center and program that works to cultivate entrepreneurial skills for low-income and minority communities living in rural Kansas that provides state-of-the-art tools, training, and networking opportunities. Hear more in the IG Live Interview.

Brandon West
Development Coordinator

Providence Public Library, Providence, RI

Small Business Hub

Small Business Hub offers help to local small business owners and budding entrepreneurs by providing classes, special programs, resources, and referral help, with specialized programming for immigrants and English learners. Hear more in the IG Live Interview.

Christopher Bourret
Education Director

Ann Poulos
Librarian, Information Services

Bethany Plummer-Ricci
Grants Manager

Beatrice Pulliam
Director of Technology and Information Services

Richland Library, Columbia, SC

Entrepreneurial Launch Pad

The Entrepreneurial Launch Pad supports emerging businesses with a focus on efforts to assist and encourage minority and woman-owned businesses. Our three-pronged approach provides free access to Entrepreneur-in-Residence (EiR) experts, customized learning and networking, and the Entrepreneurial Library of Things. Hear more in the IG Live Interview.

Diane Luccy
Business and Careers Manager

Mary Kate Quillivan
Arts and Media Manager

Spokane County Library District, Spokane, WA

Small Business Boot Camp

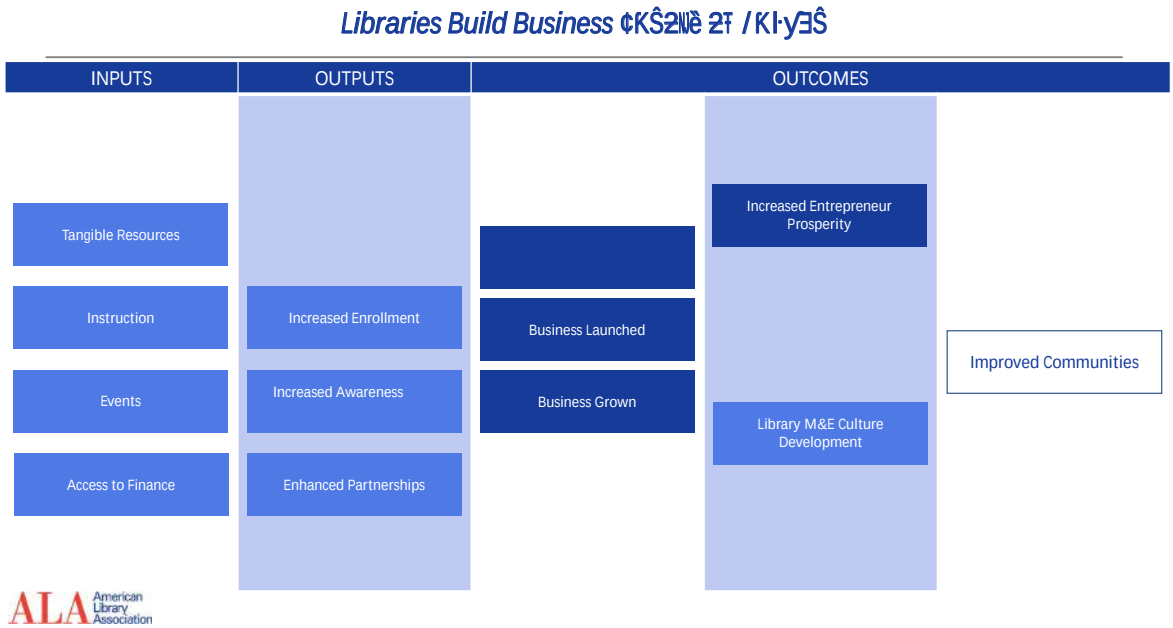
Small Business Boot Camp

APPENDIX B

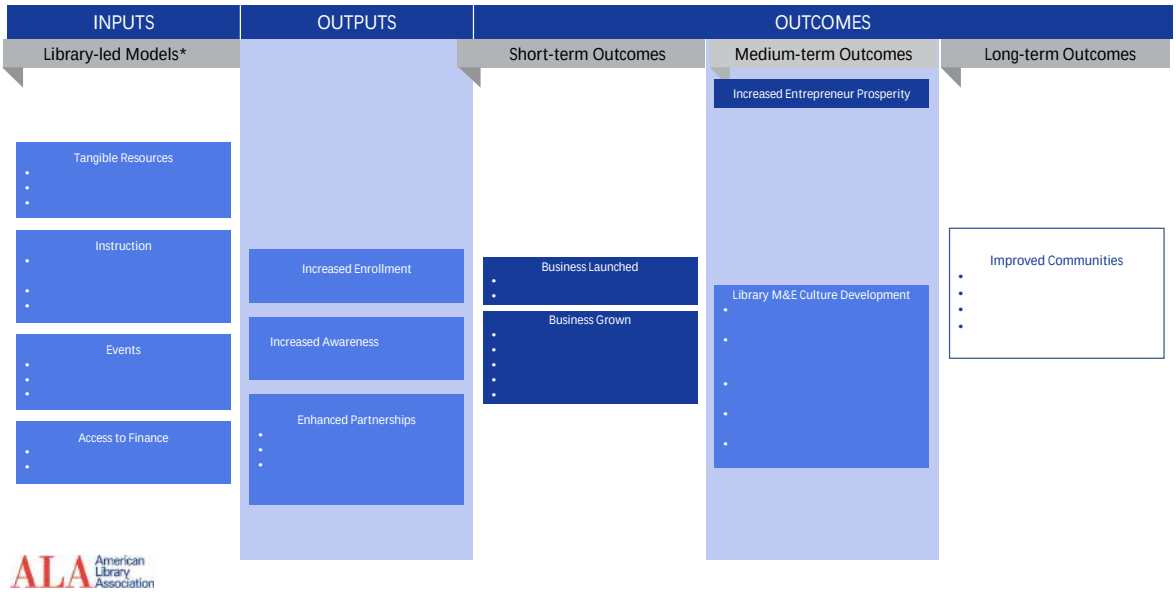
APPENDIX C
LBB MONITORING AND EVALUATION INSTRUMENTS

information about the M&E Framework and Theory of Change. These materials were collaboratively developed with ALA, Cicero Group (ALA's M&E Partner), and the LBB cohort.

M&E Resource 1:
The LBB Theory of Change and M&E Framework



Libraries Build Business Theory of Change (Detailed)



Libraries Build Business M&E Framework Development

The LBB M&E framework was developed using the LBB Theory of Change as basis to determine what to evaluate. The Theory of Change generated actionable practices to help achieve the goals of the LBB initiative. The M&E framework was then built around these practices to measure their impact. See below for an example.

M&E Resource 2: Small Business Survey

The following survey is available online as a Google doc.

Thank you for completing this survey. You will be asked questions about your business, and how your experience with your library's small business programs/resources have affected your business. All responses you provide will remain ŎƧƴŬŘŜƴƒƨƖƖƒ and will be used to improve your library's support for small businesses.

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Appleton Public Library Baltimore County Public Library Broward County Library Ferguson Municipal Library Gwinnett County Public Library	

0 - Not at all Likely	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10 - Extremely Likely

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	Strongly Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neutral	Somewhat Agree	Strongly Agree
I feel confident that I know how to run a successful business.					
My English business language skills are strong.					
I feel motivated to pursue my business ideas.					
My library helps small businesses become successful.					
I feel successful as an individual.					

My business is less vulnerable than other similar businesses.						
My business can handle a major interrupt on to its sales.						
My business can quickly recover from a major interrupt on to its sales.						

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Owner's Contribut on:	_____
Grants/Awards:	_____
Loans:	_____
Equity Investments:	_____
Other (Please specify):	_____
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	Never	Rarely	Some t mes	O f en	Very O f en
...use your library's resources for small business?					
...a t end small business events or programs hosted by your library?					

This last set of ques t ons is for classi f ca t on purposes only.

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Male Female Other (Please specify): _____ Prefer not to answer

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Yes No

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Asian American Black of African American Hispanic Natve American or Alaskan Natve Natve Hawaiian or Other Pacifc Islander White or Caucasian Other (Please specify): _____ Prefer not to answer

мyф ² ƘƛŎƘ ƻŦ ǘƘŜ ŦƻƭƭƻǿƛƴƎ ōŜǎǘ ŘŜǎŎƝƛōŜǎ ȅƻdzƝ ǘƻǘƚ·ƭ ƚ·ƴƴdzƚ·ƭ ƘƻdzǎŜƘƻƭŘ ƛƴŎƻƳŜƘ *(Please select all that apply.)*
Less than $15,000 $15,000 to $24,999 $25,000 to $49,999 $50,000 to $74,999 $75,000 to $99,999 $100,000 to $149,999 More than $150,000 Prefer not to answer

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1	4	7	10	13
2	5	8	11	14
3	6	9	12	15 or more

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Thank you for completng this survey! Your responses are very helpful and will be used to improve small business support from your library.

"Today we are going to talk about your experience using our resources and programs to help grow your small business. The goal of our conversa t on is to understand how you have perceived those resources and programs, and if there are ways that they can be improved.

Before we begin, does anyone have ques t ons?

Okay, let's get started."

1. To begin with, we understand that businesses can be at di f erent phases of their journey. A business could be just an idea, a startup that is just ge t ng its legs under it, an established business looking for opportuni t es to grow, etc. At what point would you say you are in this process?
    a. PROBE: What did it take for you to get where you are now?
    b. PROBE: Where would you like to take the business next?

2. As part of our services, we o f er small business programming to entrepreneurs and small business owners to provide them with the resources and tools they need to lead a successful business. As someone who has par t cipated in our small business programming, how relevant and useful was the content in helping you improve your business?
    a. PROBE: How much did you learn that was new?
    b. PROBE: How did the program and its resources meet your needs as a small business?
    c. PROBE: How did the program and its resources not meet your needs as a small business?
    d. PROBE: What pieces of the program did you not f nd useful and/or relevant?
        i. Why?
        ii. How could the program be changed to meet your needs be t er?

3. Outside of our small business programming, what other library resources have you used to help grow your business?
    a. PROBE: Did you start using these resources before you par t cipated in the small business programming?
    b. PROBE: Are there any resources you want/need but the library does not currently have available?

4. By par t cipa t ng in our business programming and using our other resources, how do you think you have improved your skills as a business owner?
    a. PROBE: What speci f c skills have you been able to improve?

5. How has your enjoyment of running a business changed since you began using the library's services?
    a. PROBE: How has your business grown since you completed our small business program and began using our resources?
    b. PROBE: How has your comfort and confidence in running a business changed?

6. Switching gears a little bit, I want to talk about your business's ability to handle major interruptions to its sales and how this may have changed since you went through the program. With the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, many businesses experienced challenges. It is important to both us as a library and to the community that all small businesses are able handle big events such as this. Based on your experience with the library's services and programs, how has your business improved its ability to prepare for another major catastrophic event like COVID-19?
    a. PROBE: How have you improved your ability to recognize a major catastrophic event?
    b. PROBE: How have you made your business less vulnerable?
    c. PROBE: How have you improved your ability to handle major interruptions to business sales?

7. Along that same vein, how has your business's ability to withstand an economic shock improved?
    a. PROBE: How has your capacity to respond to a major disruption changed?
    b. PROBE: How has your ability to recover from a major disruption changed?

8. Prior to participating in the small business programming and to using our other business resources, what was your perception of the library's business resources and programs?
    a. PROBE: Was your view predominantly negative or positive?
        i. Why?

9. After participating in the programming and using the business resources, how have your perceptions of the library changed?
    a. PROBE: Is your view predominantly negative or positive?
        i. Why?
    b.

M&E Resource 4: Elected O□cials Interview

This interview is also available online as a Google doc.

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- The "why" is an essential part of everything we are learning. When asking follow-up questions, as often as possible, push for the "why" behind each answer
- Probe to understand any core values, assumptions, biases, or influences (cultural and other) that contribute to the way the elected official discusses the topics
- If a topic from a question or probing question has already been discussed before the question was asked, move onto a different question or probing question—do not ask questions that have already been answered
- You likely will not be able to ask all the questions in this interview. This is both okay and expected. Please do not rush through the questions—allow time for the elected official to provide quality responses
- You may go "off-script" if other questions arise based on the elected official's responses

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M&E Resource 5: Library Sta□ Survey

This survey is also available online as a Google doc.

Thank you for completng this survey. You will be asked questons about your library's support for small business, and how your library tracks its progress to contnuously improve. All responses you provide will remain ǒƨyǓŘŜƴəl·ƒ and will be used to improve your library's support for small businesses. As you respond to the questons, please do so from the perspectve of only your library that delivers small business resources and/or programming.

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Appleton Public Library	Los Angeles Public Library
Baltmore County Public Library	Providence Public Library
Broward County Library	Richland Library
Ferguson Municipal Library	Spokane County Library District
Gwinnet County Public Library	Topsham Public Library
Independence Public Library	Yakama Naton Library
Laramie County Library System	Other: _____

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Very Large (500k+ service area)
Large (<500k service area)

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	Strongly Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neutral	Somewhat Agree	Strongly Agree
My library's staf have the relevant skills and expertse to provide needed support to small businesses.					
My library has the resources to provide needed support to small businesses.					
My library is fully commited to providing support for small businesses.					
My library is fully commited to improving its support for small businesses.					

Convenings		
Other (Please Specify): _____		

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MCΦ tfŜI-ăŜ fƛăŭ ŭKŜ ŭƨLJƛŎă ŭKI-ŭ I-NJŜ ŎƨØŜNJŜŘ ƛƴ ŭKŜ ŜØŜƴŭăκăŜăăƛƨƴã ŭKI-ŭ èƨdzNJ fƛōNJI-NJè KƨăŭŜŘ ŭKƛă LJI-ăŭ IjdzI-NJŭŜNJΦ tfŜI-ăŜ ōŜ I-ă ăLJŜŎƛŬŎ I-ă LJƨăăƛōfŜΦ

MTΦ Iƨǿ YI-yè ăYI-ff ōdzăƛƴŜăăŜăκŜƴŭNJŜLJNJŜƴŜdzNJă KI-ă èƨdzNJ fƛōNJI-NJè ădzLJLJƨNJŭŜŘ ŭKƛă fI-ăŭ IjdzI-NJŭŜNJΦ	
Existing small businesses/entrepreneurs (i.e., those whom your library has supported prior to this last quarter and continues to support)	_____
New small businesses/entrepreneurs (i.e., those whom your library began supporting this last quarter)	_____
¢h¢! [Y	_____

MYΦ LƴŭKƛă fI-ăŭ IjdzI-NJŭŜNJΣ Kƨǿ YI-yèΦΦΦ	
...small business referrals has your library made to community partners?	_____
...requests for community partners 2 s 2 ş y be L	M

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"Today we are going to talk about your measurement and evaluation efforts. Our goal of this conversation is to get an understanding of how you're implementing a measurement and evaluation system at your library, and to understand the culture of measurement and evaluation at your library.

Before we begin, does anyone have questions?

Okay, let's get started."

1. As you begou ŏ سخي o beD quŎs fment andsaluaton æa سجه tB -

5. Changing gears a li t le bit, how e fec t ve have your M&E ac t vi t es been in measuring your program's impact?
    a. PROBE: Have you experienced any scenarios where the M&E framework or data collec t on tools were not e fec t ve in measuring your program's impact?
        i.

LIBRARIES BUILD BUSINESS

ALA American Library Association

With feedback from public libraries, the ALA can make improvements and updates to this and future resources and publications, providing high-quality, relevant materials to library professionals.