

ALSC Board of Directors
ALA Midwinter Meeting
Denver
February 10-12, 2018

Topic: Libraries Ready to Code (RtC) Update

Background: Libraries Ready to Code (popularly known as the RtC project) is spearheaded by the ALA's OITP. Mega Subramaniam is the ALA OITP Fellow for Libraries RtC and will provide an update on the RtC activities thus far.

Action Required: Information

Update

The RtC project was launched in 2016, and is currently in its third phase. All three phases were made possible through generous sponsorship by Google, Inc.

Phase I comprised a scan of the landscape of computational thinking (CT) and computer science (CS) activities and programs in public and school libraries across the United States. This scan identified priority areas including the identification of challenges and opportunities to plan, implement, and assess CT and CS programming and activities in US public and school libraries. The primary researchers for Phase I were Marijke Visser (Associate Director and Senior Policy Advocate at ALA OITP) and Linda Braun (LEO: Librarians & Educators Online), with an advisory board that consisted of public and school librarians, researchers, and faculty from library and information science (LIS) schools. Phase 1 resulted in a [white paper](#), a [policy brief](#), an [advocacy video](#), an [infographic](#), and the articulation of "RtC concepts" (which includes youth voice, community engagement, and facilitation of learning – details can be found in the white paper).

Two priorities emerged from Phase 1 scan: (1) pre-service librarians pursuing MLIS need to be exposed to the RtC concepts, and (2) in-service librarians and library staff need opportunities to incorporate RtC concepts into the development and implementation of CT and CS programming at their libraries.

Priority 1 above directed the development of Phase II of RtC. In [Phase II](#), six faculty at various MLIS and school librarian preparation programs across the nation received support and guidance to infuse RtC concepts into the design of their existing courses that are taken by students aspiring to work in both school and public libraries. Courses range from specific required courses that are offered as part of school library specializations such as *Digital Resources for Teaching and Learning* and *Multimedia Resources and Services* to courses offered to students interested in working in both

public and school libraries such as *STEM and Youth Learning in the Library*, *Design and Production of Multimedia*, *Youth Electronic Resources*, and *Youth Services Community Engagement*. There is also another course that was part of the redesign, *Promoting Rich Learning with Technology*, which is offered as part of the [Youth Experience \(YX\)](#) certificate program, pursued by current public librarians. This group of faculty regularly interacted with the RtC team for Phase II (Marijke Visser and Mega Subramaniam as project PIs, Linda Braun as the researcher, and Caitlin Martin as the external evaluator). The RtC team collected data in the form of faculty surveys, faculty interaction/discussion online and in-person, course artifacts, course syllabi, student surveys, and student focus groups, to evaluate the success and challenges of Phase II. The researcher and the external evaluator are currently conducting data analysis. There will be a white paper that will be published right before ALA Annual Meeting 2018 that will share how the faculty included RtC concepts in their courses, the challenges and opportunities faced by faculty and students in these courses, and the resulting seven RtC model syllabi that will serve as examples to other library faculty that are interested in infusing RtC into their syllabus.

The second priority that emerged from Phase I scan resulted in Phase III of the RtC. Phase III is currently underway. In Phase III, the focus is on in-service public and school librarians and library staff. Through the generous sponsorship of Google, a request for proposal was made available to public and school librarians across the nation to design, implement, and evaluate CT and CS programs. The RtC team received over 400 applications. The selection committee for Phase III grant comprised of representatives from ALSC, AASL, YALSA, and OITP. In October 2017, ALA announced more than \$500,000 in grants for 28 libraries (6 school and 22 public) in 21 states plus the District of Columbia to design and implement coding programs that foster CT skills development for young people from birth to 18. This cohort of libraries is also designing a toolkit with Google that can be utilized by other libraries that are interested in providing CT and CS programs and services to their community. The cohort activities are ongoing, with the cohort sharing experiences through a community of practice space, weekly webinars, weekly surveys, and regularly interacting with the RtC team and Google. This phase will be ending on October 2018, and will result in exemplary case studies of CS and CT in libraries, a toolkit, and advocacy materials for use with decision makers at the national, state, and local levels. ALA OITP provides the oversight for Phase III activities, and YALSA serves as the grant administrator.

Additional Resources

- ALA Libraries Ready to Code website: <http://www.ala.org/tools/readytocode>
- University of Maryland's YX Certificate Program: <http://yx.umd.edu/>