



Project LOCAL: Library Outreach as a Community Anchor in Learning

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Project LOCAL is an IMLS National Leadership Planning Grant initiative that will take place from May 2017 to April 2018. The purpose of this research is to describe and analyze libraries’ practices and perceptions of community-focused programs and services that are taking place outside of library walls and intended to reach families in underserved communities who are not currently using the library. We will include a diverse range of libraries of different sizes and from diverse geographical locations.

The project goals center on bringing value to libraries and library research through a broader and deeper understanding of how libraries are reaching outside of their walls to meet families from underserved communities where they are and providing programs and services that address their needs. We will develop a roadmap from these baseline findings for serving these families and share this information with the library community to inform the field and provide clear examples and guidelines around how to develop and implement outreach-based programming for families from underserved communities. This planning grant will also inform the development of a larger research grant to further explore models of how libraries can be more effective community anchors for families in underserved communities.

Our overarching research question asks: *How, if at all, are public libraries currently reaching beyond their walls to serve families in underserved communities who do not come into and utilize the library?* Our subquestions are:

RQ1: How, if at all, are libraries working to understand the needs of families in underserved communities who do not come into and utilize the library?

RQ2: What are libraries offering in terms of programs and services that take place outside of library walls to reach families from underserved communities who do not come into and utilize the library?

RQ3: What do libraries perceive as challenges or obstacles to developing and delivering programs/services outside of library walls for families in underserved communities who do not come into and utilize the library?

The research includes three stages of data collection and participants are invited to participate in one or more of the stages:

Research Stage	Timeline	Location
Focus Groups	June 2017	ALA Annual - Chicago Public Library
Interviews	Fall 2017	Virtual
Survey	Winter 2018	Virtual

We greatly appreciate your participation and look forward to learning from you. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact the Project LOCAL team at LocalUW@uw.edu.