TO: ALA Executive Board

RE: Center for the Future of Libraries Update

ACTION REQUESTED/INFORMATION/REPORT:
Update on activities of the Center for the Future of Libraries.

ACTION REQUESTED BY:
Miguel Figueroa, Center for the Future of Libraries

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DRAFT OF MOTION:
No motion proposed – informational only

DATE: January 9, 2015

BACKGROUND:
The attached update includes information on the Center's trend library, social media, ASAE Innovation Grant, manual for the future of librarianship project, presentations, and partnerships.

Attachments:
Since formally launching in May of 2014, the American Library Association’s Center for the Future of Libraries has been working toward three primary goals:

- Identifying emerging trends relevant to libraries and the communities they serve
- Promoting futuring and innovation techniques to help librarians and library professionals shape their futures
- Building connections with experts and innovative thinkers to help libraries address emerging issues

The Center for the Future of Libraries is initially modeled on the successful American Alliance of Museums’ Center for the Future of Museums. AAM’s and the Center for the Future of Museums’ support and guidance are appreciate and valued.

The establishment of the Center for the Future of Libraries was made possible in part by the Institute of Museum and Library Services [RE-00-13-0096-13].

The following details some of the Center’s work from the past six months.

**Trend Library**

The Center’s focus on emerging trends follows the model of the Center for the Future of Museums (CFM), whose founding director, Elizabeth Merritt, uses social media, a popular blog, weekly e-newsletter, and the annual *TrendsWatch* report to promote a diverse range of societal, technological, political, and economic trends within the museum community.

In light of the vast range, the amount of information, and the multitude of sources and sectors from which we piece together our understandings of trends, the Center is working to develop a ready resource for librarians interested in keeping up with trends relevant to our profession.

The “trend library” brings together and organizes information shared via social media and found in articles and reports from across industries, offering succinct information on trends, including how they are developing, why they matter for libraries, and links to the resources that can further explain their significance. As a collection, the trend library features coverage across categories, including society, technology, education, the environment, politics, the economy, and demographics (STEEPED).

The trend library launched with eight entries – increases in aging, collective impact, connected learning, expanding data, the internet of things, the maker movement, rethinking privacy, and the sharing economy. New entries, including anonymity, drones, fast casual, flipped learning, resilience, robots, unplugged, and urbanization, have helped flesh out the resource. Entries are updated as new information is identified, keeping content current and useful. New entries are developed from scanning available sources and through feedback from leadership in the association and profession.

Figure 1: Trends from the Center’s Trend Library (available at [http://www.ala.org/transforminglibraries/future/trends](http://www.ala.org/transforminglibraries/future/trends))
The trend library can help provide librarians and library planners with a more centralized source for understanding specific trends and connecting insights across trends. This resource might help individuals find and piece together their own conclusions and priorities based on their own interests and strengths and the needs and aspirations of their community. We will all need to know at least a little bit about the trends shaping our world – and know more about the ones that are particularly important for the communities we serve – and we’ll need a starting place from which to build our knowledge.

Still to come: The trend library might have potential as an advocacy tool if it can better collect and promote information about how libraries are innovating within these trends. There’s an opportunity to show non- or infrequent library users and potential partners how libraries are transforming. Libraries and librarians willing to contribute their story can contact Miguel Figueroa at mfigueroa@ala.org.
Social Media

The Center also highlights trends through ALA’s social media content, with posts marked by the hash tag #libraryofthefuture. The Center’s contributions share content from across industries and encourage followers to offer their thoughts on the trends shaping the library of the future.

**Amer. Library Assn. @ALALibrary - Aug 29**


**Fast Company**

Will Half Of People Be Working Remotely By 2020?

By Laura Vanderkam @lvanderkam

It isn’t all-or-nothing when it comes to time at the office anymore. How long until that scale tips toward the remote workforce’s favor?

**Amer. Library Assn. @ALALibrary - Aug 28**

Urbanization, climate change, globalization – and resilience. Next Big Idea for Next Decade #libraryofthefuture ow.ly/AJ5Q8

**Medium**

The Next Big Idea for the Next Decade

By Rockefeller Phil @RockefellerPhil

Realizing the resilience dividend
Response to the Center’s social media presence has been very positive with followers responding to posts (with likes, comments, and shares) and building connections between external, non-library trends and their own library practice.

ASAE Innovation Grant

In December 2014, the Center for the Future of Libraries’ proposal for an ASAE Innovation Grant (http://www.asaecenter.org/foundation2/innovationgrants.html) was selected as one of four projects (from over fifty applications) to receive a $10,000 grant.

The Center will use the grant to explore how ALA and other professional associations might use crowdsourcing (where services, ideas, or content are collected from a large group of people often connected via the internet) for peer-vetted creative production, mobilizing members to submit innovative solutions to problems in their field and leveraging the wisdom of the crowd to point to the most viable solutions. For the purposes of this project, the crowdsourcing space will be promoted as a place for librarians to suggest innovative programs and services and for peers to evaluate, rank and comment on proposed innovations. The goal within the space will be to incubate and improve innovative programs or services, to responsibly develop innovations that conform to shared values and standards of the profession, and to provide broad-based support for innovators to launch their ideas within their communities.

With a multitude of conversations happening across the association and profession, library innovators and entrepreneurs plant new ideas for programs and services in any one of a number of disconnected forums. This project will help centralize those conversations and organize a supportive network for fostering innovation, by empowering the crowd to determine the most viable innovations. By building a dedicated space for crowdsourcing innovation, this project will
help build communities of members interested in innovation broadly or in specialized areas of innovation. The communities would include those who can generate ideas, those who can contribute to refining those ideas, and those who can support and sustain the innovative ideas.

Staff from across the association will contribute to the management of the project and there will be opportunities for members to contribute to the design and development of the crowdsourcing space. The grant project will run from February 2015 – February 2016.

**Manual for the Future of Librarianship**

In December 2014, inspired by the Long Now Foundation’s [Manual for Civilization](#) the Center for the Future of Libraries launched an experiment to crowdsource a “manual for the future of librarianship.”

Beyond what we learn in library school – a shared base of knowledge for librarianship – what are the other books, articles, reports, essays, videos, recordings, etc., that will help inform the future of our profession? The project encourages participants to think of things they have read, seen or heard that inform their practice and that would benefit others. It’s an opportunity to think inside and outside the library literature - bestsellers, obscure finds, and things that will make our brains hurt.

*Deschooling Society* by Ivan Illich
"Helps librarians think clearly about libraries as radical alternatives to schools. This is essential reading for librarians who think deeply about the seriousness of the educational alternative our institutions represent."
- Adam Feldman, Free Library of Philadelphia

*Earth* by David Brin
"Published in 1990, this novel correctly predicted the rise of global crowdsourcing, group investigations and issues stemming from leaked information. It also speculated on the effects of a phenomenon just coming into its own - surveillance tools in the hands of the masses."
- Daniel Cornwall, Alaska State Library

*Hacking the Academy* by Daniel J. Cohen and Joseph Thomas Scheinfeldt (editors)
"Digital humanities represents the future of 'the study of the book,' not just for scholars, but for students, readers, and information professionals."
- John Martin, University of North Texas

Submissions have been slow to arrive, but those that have come in have been interesting. The Center will continue to promote this project more actively in 2015.

*American Libraries* Magazine Emerging Trends Issue
The staff of American Libraries magazine has offered to highlight emerging trends and the work of the Center for the Future of Libraries in a forthcoming issue. Working collaboratively, the contents will highlight the Center's trend library and explore emerging trends in public, school, and academic libraries and in library education. The issue will coincide with AL's annual coverage of the Emerging Leaders program, a great opportunity to highlight some of the people and the trends shaping the future of libraries.

**Presentations**

The Center has benefited from several invitations to present and help promote the work of the Center.

*6th Annual iDEAL Summit*

*November 7, 2014*

Hosted by the Department of Library and Information Studies at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro, the iDEAL Summit is an annual community event that discusses and identifies strategies to address information, diversity, engagement, access, and libraries (iDEAL) in education, research, practice, and community-building. The 6th Annual Summit explored the future library and information needs and issues for all community groups and envisioned the future roles of libraries in ensuring equity and access. The Center was featured as part of a keynote presentation, “1,000 Futures: How Diverse Communities Will Shape the Libraries of the Future.”

*Embrace the Change: Transforming Libraries in the 21st Century*

*November 13, 2014*

Hosted by the Pittsburgh Theological Seminary, the Embrace the Change colloquium was a half-day workshop for Pittsburgh-area librarians and coincided with the Seminary’s work to remodel their Barbour Library. The Center was featured as part of a keynote presentation, “What’s Trending: How Current Trends Can Help Us Plan Future Libraries.”

Looking ahead, the Center will present at the 2015 Columbia Library Symposium, the 2015 Tennessee Library Association Annual Conference, the 2015 Texas Library Association Annual Conference, and the fifth REFORMA National Conference.

**Partnerships**

The Center has made good progress towards creating partnerships to help libraries envision their future.

One of the primary collaborators and partners for the Center is the American Alliance of Museums’ Center for the Future of Museums and its founding Director Elizabeth Merritt. Elizabeth Merritt will participate in the 2015 ALA Midwinter Meeting with a “News You Can Use” session, “How to Foresee the Future(s): Learning with AAM’s Center for the Future of Museums,” on Monday, February 2nd from 8:30 – 10:00.

Working with the ALA Development Office, several meetings and communications with Library Champions have been conducted to help keep ALA’s vendor partners aware of the initiative and to build opportunities to collaborate.
Additionally, the Center has reached out to emerging library partners, including 3D Systems and Mobile Beacon, to find new opportunities to connect around emerging trends in library services and programs.

Through participation in forums and events, the Center has also begun reaching out to the wider innovation and futuring community, including conversations with Google [x], IDEO, Steelcase, and the Long Now Foundation.