

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

CONTACT PERSON:

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DRAFT OF MOTION:

No motion proposed – informational only

DATE: 10/02/2015

BACKGROUND:

The attached update includes information on the Center's work identifying and promoting trends, grants and partnerships, programming, and promotions and communications.

The American Library Association's Center for the Future of Libraries works 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 Museum's Center for the Future of Museums](#). AAM's and the Center for the Future of Museums' support and guidance are appreciated 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].

Trends

The Center continues to promote trends as an important part of thinking about the future of libraries. The [trend collection](#) has now grown to cover twenty-three trends across seven categories - society, technology, education, the environment, politics, the economy, and demographics (STEEPED).

Newest entries include:

[Badging](#) and digital badges, which offer opportunities to recognize individuals' accomplishments, skills, qualities, or interests and help set goals, motivate behavior, represent achievements, and communicate success in learning offered in schools, professional settings, or daily life. Categorized under Education.

[Fandom](#), referring to the growing communities of people who are passionate about specific films, bands, television shows, books, or sports teams. The growing availability of media and social networks have provided individuals more opportunities to discover content and then more easily find groups of like-minded people with whom they can share and exchange proof of their fandom (discussions, writing, art, etc.). Categorized under Society.

[Haptic Technology](#), which incorporates tactile experience or feedback as part of the user interface, creating a sense of touch through vibrations, motion, or other forces. Categorized under Technology.

The feedback on the trend collection continues to be positive – helping libraries to see outside trends and connect it to current practice and allowing them to see how trends can come together to develop innovations.

Through FY 2016 there will be a more concerted effort to add new trends on a more regular basis – so far in the year trying for one new trend added every two weeks.

There has been a more intentional effort to use the Center's blog – a "[Developing Trends](#)" post for each new trend that is added to the collection, highlighting the trend and how it connects to libraries or to innovations in our environment; a weekly post titled "[Read for Later](#)" that collects and summarizes the week's news scanning, including quick bullet summaries for each article and collected content around relevant themes (an early effort to provide a service like the Center for the Future of Museum's [Dispatches from the Future of Museums](#)); a new "[Viewing the Future](#)" column that shares interesting video or audio content illustrating possible trends, future scenarios, etc.; and continued use

of the “[Wednesday Reading](#)” column that highlights and summarizes relevant futures reports.

Trends and Libraries Transform Campaign

The Center’s trends have been featured as part of the new [Libraries Transform](#) site. This opportunity to highlight the Center’s work is much appreciated.

The Center is working with ALA’s Office for Library Advocacy and Public Awareness Office to enhance the trend pages with stories of libraries innovating within the trends, helping to demonstrate how libraries are transforming and staying relevant with new developments across sectors.

Social Media

The Center continues to highlight 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. 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

Grants and Partnerships

ASAE Innovation Grant

In December 2014, the Center for the Future of Libraries’ proposal for an ASAE Innovation Grant was selected as one of four projects (from over fifty applications) to receive a \$10,000 grant.

IMLS National Leadership Grants – Learning from Learning in Libraries

The Center for the Future of Libraries and the Young Adult Library Services Association were invited to submit a full proposal for IMLS’s National Leadership Grants for Libraries program. The proposal, “Learning from Learning in Libraries,” planned to work with partners at the Digital Media and Learning Research Hub and the College of Information at the University of Maryland.

While the proposal received positive comments, it was not selected for funding. Given the priorities for the Young Adult Library Services Association and the Center for the Future of Libraries the proposal will not be revised for resubmission.

National Endowment for the Humanities – OpenLab

The Center is partnering on a project led by Council on Library and Information Resources (CLIR) and the National Endowment for the Humanities Office of Digital Humanities with the American Alliance of Museums (AAM), and the Digital Public Library of America (DPLA). The project, titled OpenLab, would work to establish a long-term home for technological change and innovation (a solutions lab, convener, or consultancy) to accelerate the speed and impact of transformational change for libraries, archives, museums, and other collecting organizations that serve the humanities.

Programming

At the 2015 ALA Annual Conference, the Center sponsored five programs and one preconference – all with very solid attendance.

With the Entrepreneurship and Maker Spaces Member Interest Group, the Center’s pre-conference, “An Innovation Workshop for Library Entrepreneurs and Makers (and Librarians Who Support Entrepreneurs and Makers)” sold out its initial 25 seats and then sold out the increased 35 seat limit.

General conference programming received strong interest:

“Library of the Future – Learning with the Participatory Library at Cedar Rapids Public Library” had over 480 people express interest via the scheduler and a full room of over 250 attendees.

“Library of the Future – Because Innovation is a Literacy” had over 580 people express interest via the scheduler and a very full room of 300 attendees.

“Library of the Future – Learning with Steelcase’s Learning-Optimized Library” had over 330 people express interest via the scheduler and a full room of 250 attendees.

“Library of the Future – Learning with Google’s Daniel Russell” had over 1,140 people express interest via the scheduler and a capacity (people sitting behind the projection screen) room of over 450 attendees.

“Library of the Future – Learning with the Long Now Foundation” had over 370 people express interest via the scheduler and a room of over 150 attendees.

Introductions for each session highlighted the work of the Center, but, interestingly, most attendees did not connect that these “Library of the Future” sessions were presented by the Center for the Future of Libraries.

Midwinter

Looking ahead to Midwinter, the Center is working to develop forums around Change Management (in support of Libraries Transform) and Civic and Social Innovation, to highlight innovators and connect their work to the future of libraries.

Communication and Promotion

In 2015, the Center benefited from invitations to present at or participate in over twenty events and meetings. Many of these were presentations to library staff and supporters, but also opportunities to network with innovators and leaders.

Since the 2015 ALA Annual Conference, the Center has presented webinars for the Tennessee Library Association and the South Central (NY) Regional Library Council and a featured session at the Public Libraries and STEM National Conference.

Upcoming presentations through December include a general session at the Minnesota Library Association 2015 Annual Conference; a webinar for ALA's Sustainability Round Table; a preconference for Illinois' Library State of Mind Conference; a presentation at Marquette University's Future of the American Public Library conference; a presentation at the Cedar Rapids Public Library training day; a presentation at Future Tense's Library of the Future event, presented by Slate and the New America Foundation; and a panel at the Institute of Museum and Library Services' 2015 Focus Conference.

Chapters

In September the Center sent a message through the ALA Chapter Relations Office asking Chapter leaders to consider the Center as a resource for conference programming, webinars, or even newsletter or blog posts. Several chapters, including California, Indiana, Massachusetts, and Michigan, have already reached out to the Center and will be working to help the Center expand its reach.

Questions or Comments

Questions or comments may be sent to Miguel Figueroa at mfigueroa@ala.org.