

**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:** 03/25/2016

**BACKGROUND:**

The attached update includes information on the Center's work across three goal areas:

- Identify emerging trends relevant to libraries and the communities they serve
- Promote futuring and innovation techniques to help librarians and library professionals shape their future
- Build connections with experts and innovative thinkers to help libraries address emerging issues

The American Library Association's Center for the Future of Libraries works toward three primary goals:

- *Identify emerging trends relevant to libraries and the communities they serve*
- *Promote futuring and innovation techniques to help librarians and library professionals shape their future*
- *Build connections with experts and innovative thinkers to help libraries address emerging issues*

Activity updates have been organized according to these goals.

### ***Identify emerging trends relevant to libraries and the communities they serve***

The Center's [trend collection](#) remains a popular resource for library professionals, planners, and supporters. The collection received 5,762 unique page views (10,739 total page views) during the period from December 30, 2015 – March 24, 2016. During the period from June 1, 2015 through December 29, 2015 the collection received over 10,000 unique page views (19,000 total page views).

In November 2015, the Center launched an e-mail newsletter, [Read for Later](#), that shares the Center's weekly trend scanning to help library professionals think about the future of our collections, spaces, services, partners, and roles in the community. Subscription to the newsletter has steadily grown from 500 subscribers in December 2015 to over 1,100 current subscribers.

The Center continues to highlight trends through ALA's social media content, with posts marked #libraryofthefuture.

The three activities above have provided the Center with a process through which it can continue to update and expand its coverage of trends affecting libraries and their communities.

In addition to the above regular activities, the Center has had two opportunities to promote its trend-focused work. *American Libraries'* March/April issue featured a [story highlighting the Center](#) and four librarians who have used the Center's resources to advance their work and institutions. In March, as part of YALSA's Teen Tech Week, the Center participated in a [Twitter takeover](#), broadening the Center's trends-thinking message to [@yalsa](#)'s over 35,000 followers.

### ***Promote futuring and innovation techniques to help librarians and library professionals shape their future***

The Center helps share information about futuring and innovation techniques through frequent presentations to library staff and the public. So far in Fiscal Year 2016, the Center has provided 19 presentations:

- USC Conversations with Leaders webinar
- Minnesota Library Association (2)
- Lincoln Park Village
- Sustainability Round Table webinar
- 2015 Library State of Mind Better Together preconference
- Marquette University Future of the American Public Library
- Cedar Rapids Public Library
- New America Foundation/Future Tense
- IMLS Focus Conference
- Area Training for Librarians and Staff
- Reference Association of South Suburban Libraries
- University of North Texas – ELMS workshop
- ALA Midwinter (3)
- Skokie Public Library
- Niles Public Library
- SXSWedu

Through the end of Fiscal Year 2016 (August 31, 2016), the Center has so far scheduled 16 additional presentations:

- Oklahoma Library Association (2)
- Small Library Education Development Day
- Georgia Public Library Service webinar
- Ohio Take 5 Conference
- Western Council of State Libraries Meeting
- Transportation Librarians Roundtable webinar
- CALA Midwest Chapter Meeting
- Massachusetts Library Association (2)
- Congress of University and Research Libraries (Chile)
- Michigan Library Association Executive Summit
- Western Pennsylvania- West Virginia Chapter of ACRL
- Spectrum Leadership Institute
- System Wide Area Network (SWAN)
- ALA Leadership Institute

The Center works to advance innovative projects and programs within the Association, including working with units (LITA, ALCTS, PLA) to introduce digital badges into professional development and continuing education offerings.

With support from additional staff, the Center is updating its trend entries to feature library projects that illustrate how libraries are innovating with trends. This will provide a resource to demonstrate how libraries are transforming and help disseminate innovative approaches across the profession.

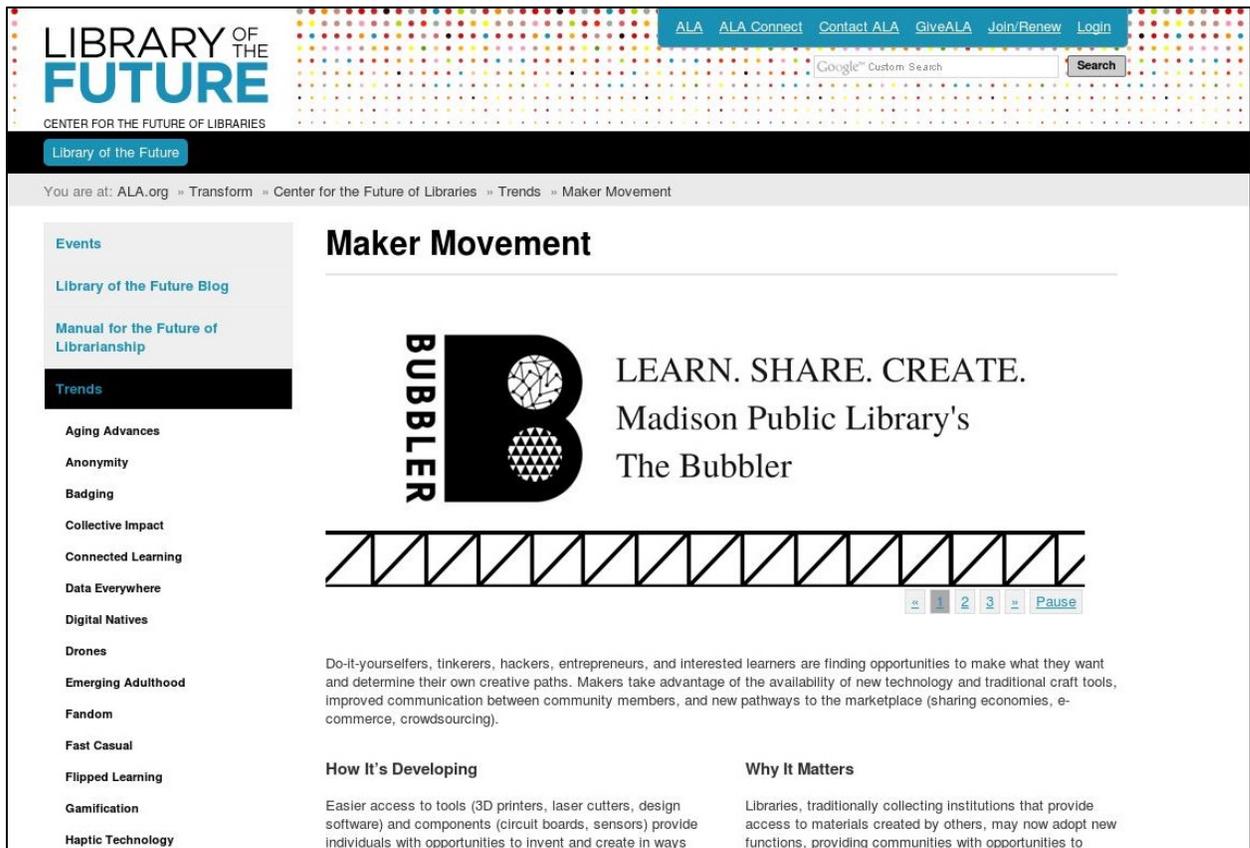


Image 1. Revised trend pages. Trend pages will be updated to include a rotating slideshow linking to innovative library projects that exemplify the given trend.

### ***Build connections with experts and innovative thinkers to help libraries address emerging issues***

Through conference programming, including the Library of the Future Series at ALA's Annual Conference (including Steelcase, OPN Architects, Google, The Long Now Foundation) and the Libraries Transform series at ALA's Midwinter Meeting (Civic Innovators, Social Innovators, Kotter International), the Center works to bring experts and innovative thinkers into the library space.

Additionally, the Center works with partners like the Knight Foundation, the New Media Consortium (a new partnership with ACRL), the American Alliance of Museums, and others to bring content to the ALA audience.

In October 2016, the Center will partner with the [Library 2.0 web conference series](#) on a mini-conference, "[Library 2.016: Libraries of the Future](#)," with a goal of bringing together civic, social, education, and library innovators to explore near- and long-term trends that point to the future of libraries and their communities.

The Center is also increasingly involved as a partner in grant projects and proposals, including the [OpenLab project](#) funded by the National Endowment for the Humanities.

### **Center for the Future of Libraries Advisory Group**

The Center's Advisory Group continues its productive work following its first two meetings. Focus areas include:

**Trend-Thinking Tools** - Determining an achievable list of tools and resources that build off the Center's existing trend-focused content and would be useful to library professionals, administrators, funders, boards and community advocates. Tools and resources might be modeled on the Aspen Institute's Action Guide for Re-envisioning Your Public Library (that evolved out of the Rising to the Challenge Report) or the Design Thinking for Libraries toolkit produced by IDEO with the Chicago Public Library and Aarhus Public Libraries.

**Partnership Development** - As part of the Center's charge to "build connections with experts and innovative thinkers to help libraries address emerging issues," identifying potential external partners and prioritize meaningful partnerships (beyond name only) that will help libraries innovate services, programs, collections, and spaces.

**Promotion and Awareness** - Determining the best strategies for building awareness of the Center among ALA members and across the library profession. Strategies could include reports (modeled on the Center for the Future of Museums' TrendsWatch), webinars or professional development opportunities, or media (podcasts, videos, etc.).

**Sustainability** - Developing a long-term plan for the Center's sustainability, including considerations for budget, staffing, and relationship to divisions, offices, and other ALA units.

### **Questions or Comments**

Questions or comments may be sent to Miguel Figueroa at [mfigueroa@ala.org](mailto:mfigueroa@ala.org).