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The American Library Association

Libraries Transforming Communities

Interim Report 3

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NewKnowledge is a non-profit research institute founded to pursue a deep understanding of how people engage with society's grand challenges. The organization works to expand understanding of how knowledge is acquired and acted upon in order to promote a strong democracy that enables all people to live to their greatest potential in harmony with the biosphere.

Executive Summary

Libraries Transforming Communities (LTC) is an initiative of the American Library Association (ALA), with funding from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, seeking to strengthen librarians' roles as core community leaders and change-agents through training by the Harwood Institute for Public Innovation's Turning Outward approach. In partnership with ALA, external evaluator New Knowledge Organization Ltd. (NewKnowledge) engaged in a multi-pronged, intensive evaluation to track the progress of the initiative. This third interim report summarizes findings of the assessment conducted from February to July 2015 and provides recommendations corresponding to each project objective.

NewKnowledge assessed activities based on the project's four key areas: 1) intensive work of the Public Innovators Cohort, which consists of library leaders and community partners from ten sites nationwide; 2) scalable learning across the library field using LTC resources and tools; 3) ALA staff and member leader training; and 4) a communications campaign that builds support, visibility, and buy-in for the work of libraries as agents of community innovation and change.

At this stage, our assessment of the LTC initiative indicates the following:

- ALA and Harwood are adjusting the program, tools, and Work Space meetings in response to feedback from Public Innovators Cohort members, ALA members, ALA staff, and NewKnowledge. As a result, the program has nimbly adapted to the unique characteristics of the library field.

- Cohort members are on a solid path toward accomplishing project goals by the end of the grant period and building a foundation for sustained transformative work. They show evidence of increased collaboration with community organizations and collaborative learning with other Cohort teams.

- Conference sessions have incorporated more real-world examples to support learning across the field. There is an opportunity for increasing attendance at future sessions by structuring activities around new LTC tools aimed at deepening the experience of Turning Outward.

- Increased investment from ALA leadership and staff has started to shift organizational culture to align with the Harwood Institute practice.

- ALA staff and the Public Innovators Cohort are continuing to harvest stories of libraries engaging with their communities and the summative evaluation will examine shifts in public discourse about libraries.

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Introduction

Libraries Transforming Communities (LTC) is a comprehensive initiative of the American Library Association (ALA), the oldest and largest library association in the world, with approximately 58,000 members in academic, public, school, government, and special libraries. The LTC initiative is funded by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, a global philanthropic leader. The initiative addresses a critical need within the library field by developing and distributing new tools, resources, and support for professionals to engage with their communities in new ways. To this end, project leadership established four objectives, as described in the *Gates Foundation Results Framework*:

- **Objective 1, Intensive Cohort Work:** Create an opportunity for a public library cohort to intensively learn and apply the Harwood Institute practice in order to understand its potential for the field, identify barriers to success, and track change results;
- **Objective 2, Scalable Learning:** Contribute resources to the field that will teach librarians new approaches to community engagement and innovation;
- **Objective 3, ALA Staff Work:** Train ALA staff in the Harwood Institute practice to focus the organization outward and align internal process to the work in the field; and
- **Objective 4, Communications:** Build awareness, participation, buy-in, and a sense of urgency—in the field and externally—about strengthening of this type of library work and its potential for community change.

ALA's LTC partner is the Harwood Institute for Public Innovation, whose Turning Outward approach emphasizes changing the orientation of institutions and individuals from internal (institutional) to external (community-facing). This process promotes taking steps to better understand communities; changing processes and thinking to make conversations more community-focused; being proactive about community issues; and putting community aspirations first.

In partnership with ALA, external evaluator New Knowledge Organization Ltd. (NewKnowledge) has engaged in a mixed-method evaluation to track the progress of the initiative. This third interim report summarizes findings of the assessment conducted from February to July 2015, according to the four objectives of the project. Each section includes the intended primary objective and outcomes, as determined by the *Gates Foundation Results Framework*. An overview of methods provides background on the evaluation activities and participation. Key findings and recommendations are provided for each section. These recommendations can be used to further improve the trainings and tools, making them more effective over the remaining course of the initiative.

Objective 1: Intensive Cohort Work

PRIMARY OBJECTIVE

Create an opportunity for a cohort to intensively learn and apply the Harwood Institute approach in order to understand its potential for the field, identify barriers to success, and track change results.

DESIRED OUTCOMES

- Sustainability for the community engagement work of libraries is enhanced (e.g. libraries and library staff adopt library-led community convenings as a practice, librarians are confident in their skills and practice their skills as part of the day-to-day job, the Turned Outward activities of the library indicate a different way of doing business).
- Cohort participants become champions for this approach by sharing their lessons learned, mentoring peers, sharing their experiences, spreading the practice, and providing feedback to ALA on tools for the field.
- Cohort participants communicate and collaborate more effectively with their community partners.
- Cohort participant-led conversations result in community-specific actions (e.g. development of library services to community, programs to address community issues, library involvement with community partners to address issues, community member involvement in issues, work of library, work of partners - with the outcome of strengthening the community).

KEY FINDINGS

- The Public Innovators Cohort is on a solid path toward accomplishing project goals by the end of the grant period and building a foundation for sustained transformative work that carries into the future.
- Cohort members feel that Turning Outward has increased collaboration and reduced competitive feelings between libraries and other community organizations.
- Many libraries have engaged in meaningful actions in response to community needs, including increasing the accessibility of the library and library programs.
- The LTC Public Innovators Cohort private Facebook group is an effective way for libraries to share their successes and challenges and has contributed to a sense of community among Cohort members.
- ALA and the Harwood Institute have been highly responsive to Cohort feedback and NewKnowledge recommendations. In this reporting period, they increased opportunities for Cohort members to get to know one another and provided information about evaluation methods so library teams can ensure that the Turning Outward approach is sustainable.

OVERVIEW OF METHODS

This assessment of the Public Innovators Cohort outcomes use data from: 1) postings on ALA Connect between February and July 2015, including community narratives, community action plans, Taking Effective Community Action tools (TECAs), Tip Sheets, and coaching call recordings; 2) discussion threads and posts on the LTC Facebook group, created following the January 2015 Work Space; and 3) observations of the Work Space held on June 26, 2015 at the ALA Annual Conference in San Francisco.

The LTC Public Innovators Cohort group in the online forum ALA Connect was an important source of data for addressing Objective 1. ALA Connect has been used throughout the life of the project to facilitate discussions and resource sharing among a 72-person group that includes members of the Public Innovators Cohort from the ten pilot sites, facilitators and coaches from the Harwood Institute, NewKnowledge researchers, and ALA staff. Members use this platform to access links to archived webinars, conference calls, and discussion threads. Cohort members can also use ALA Connect to share documents with one another and with Harwood and ALA. A NewKnowledge researcher reviewed the qualitative content from discussion threads and posted documents to understand Cohort members' status and progress at this point in the initiative.

In February 2015, Cohort members set up a private LTC Facebook group so they could easily communicate with one another and with ALA and Harwood staff. Sarah Ostman, the Communications Manager for ALA's Public Programs Office, is part of the group and sent a list of recent posts and activity (e.g., likes, comments) to NewKnowledge. We reviewed the posts and activity to understand if and how Cohort members are using the online social networking option.

A NewKnowledge researcher observed the Work Space at the ALA Annual Conference on June 26, 2015. Participants at the Work Space included representatives from Harwood, ALA, and Cohort members at the ten participating sites. The Work Space aimed to provide formal and informal time for members to discuss their experiences with LTC; additional training on how Turning Outward impacts the library's core business functions, internal alignment, and culture; a discussion of metrics and evaluation; and an opportunity to collectively identify significant learning outcomes. Our observations aimed to gain more insight into the experiences, learning outcomes, and behavioral changes of the Cohort, and solicit feedback for improvements that can be made to ongoing LTC training. NewKnowledge researchers compiled the responses to identify themes and generate recommendations.

FINDINGS & DISCUSSION

Responses to Previous Recommendations

Recommendations from the previous interim report (PVT.074.175.04) included incorporating training in recruitment tactics for Community Conversations; providing guidance to help the Cohort create benchmarks and set realistic goals; clarifying the importance of Harwood terminology; and promoting a Facebook group page. ALA and Harwood carefully considered all recommendations and put some into effect immediately. Other recommendations – such as training in recruitment tactics and clarifying terminology – can be applied to an expansion of the LTC initiative as ALA continues to support the field in Turning Outward.

Harwood and ALA have been especially proactive at providing additional guidance for Cohort members to track their progress. In February 2015, they shared an updated project timeline with the Cohort via ALA Connect to establish milestones and plan upcoming coaching calls. At the end of the June 2015 Work Space, a handout was distributed that listed monthly activities, associated responsibilities, and the goal of each activity through the end of 2015. This clarity seemed to be greatly appreciated by Cohort members. Harwood and ALA also provided the requested guidance through focusing on concrete actions and examples when discussing LTC activities. One participant noted that this effort *turned the abstract into something tangible*.

Harwood and ALA have been effective at encouraging Cohort members to use the newly created LTC Facebook group. Sarah Ostman made several posts leading up to the June conference, as did two Cohort members. All posts received likes and/or comments, suggesting that Cohort members are accessing the information and are interested in supporting each other.

Harwood and ALA have adhered to a responsive leadership model throughout this reporting period and especially during the June 2015 Work Space. In this model, the interaction between project leaders and participants is dynamic and the decisions that are made respond to the concerns, priorities, and needs of the group. The Work Space was well organized, with clear indications that the organizers intentionally took into consideration feedback from Cohort members who participated in the January 2015 Work Space. For example, an Open Space Conversations session was added so that participants could have informal conversations with one another. The Work Space had a thoughtful and detailed agenda, and facilitators were willing to adjust activities throughout the day in response to participants' needs. They actively solicited real-time feedback from the group by asking participants if they needed clarification on tasks and encouraging them to reflect on the value of each activity (e.g., *Was that exercise a good use of our time together? Why or why not?*), which demonstrated their interest in ensuring that the program was useful for participants.

1.1 Sustainability of Library Community Engagement

According to the Harwood approach, changing internal organizational culture is necessary for sustained community engagement. In implementing their community action plans, Cohort members are clearly thinking about community engagement as a long-term strategy rather than a short-term effort, as evidenced by their questions and comments on the coaching calls and ALA Connect. For example, one library team commented that they were able to involve the director and senior/area managers in the Turning Outward approach, noting that buy-in from upper management enabled them to *change the organizational culture*, which will *make it easier for teams moving forward*. Other Cohort members noted that they need more support both from Harwood and their own staff to ensure that the Turning Outward approach will take root at their organizations. To this end, Harwood and ALA developed three new tools that were made available to the Cohort during the Work Space. These tools were titled, Making It Stick with Staff, Making Meaning of Data, and Tracking Your Progress. After receiving user feedback, ALA and Harwood adapted many of these tools to real-world practice, making them even more valuable for the field.

Cohort teams are thinking about how to use evaluation methods to measure the outcomes of their LTC activities and contribute to the overall sustainability of their work. Harwood and ALA have provided evaluation resources on ALA Connect and during the Work Space, including one document, *Pebble Theory of Change*, which describes how to measure outcomes at three levels: individual, organization, and community. Libraries are being encouraged to use their evaluation results to demonstrate institutional impact in future grant applications and funding proposals. At the Work Space, ALA presented Project Outcome, a Public Library Association initiative offering *resources, training and supportive online community needed to apply results [of data collection and analysis] and confidently advocate.*

1.2 Participants Champion the LTC Approach

Cohort members recognized their responsibility to champion community engagement through Turning Outward. Importantly, however, specific application of the Harwood tools vary based on a library's context. Before the Work Space, organizers asked Cohort members to select one of the Harwood tools that they have used with their community, library, or colleagues and complete at least one Tip Sheet, which described how they applied the tool, including changes in terminology and descriptions of effective strategies. Harwood and ALA convened a Work Space session called Champions in the Library Field, during which each Cohort library gave a brief presentation about the tool outlined in their Tip Sheet. Cohort members appreciated Harwood's interest in how they have adapted the tools and considered customizability a key to overall success. Prior evaluation found that some Cohort members resisted using Harwood terminology because they felt that it was *alienating*. However, we found that many teams at this stage have more thoroughly internalized some Harwood terms and altered others to be more effective in their own community work.

Harwood coaching calls continue to support individuals and teams, enabling them to become champions for the work of LTC. During these calls, Cohort members shared recent community activities that occurred as part of Turning Outward. For example, they described an *Alternatives to Violence project*, an *action potluck* to discuss potential community projects, and a *community clean up day*. Coaching calls also focused on how to implement action plans and teams were encouraged to describe the challenges they have encountered or anticipate encountering so they could be effectively tackled together. Beyond group calls, coaches were available to provide one-on-one support to Cohort members.

> *The library is a space but it's also an experience, and the experience can be shared*
> *more broadly when we leave our geographic space. – Public Innovators Cohort member*

The Facebook group has been a useful venue for libraries to share news and network with one another. From April through June, Sarah Ostman and Cohort members posted several articles, videos, and blog posts describing recent events, including Los Angeles Public Library winning the National Medal for Museum and Library Service, Red Hook Public Library's recognition at the Massachusetts Library Association conferences, and staff changes at Springfield Public Library and Hartford Public Library. There is a core group of users who contribute most of the posts, with many others responding to the posts with likes and comments. Users value the opportunity to learn about others' successes and challenges and the Facebook group seems to have created a stronger sense of community among members, as well as increasing their commitment to LTC.

1.3 Communication and Collaboration with Community Partners

Communication and collaboration are key components of the Harwood practice. In response to a request for more informal, unstructured time to talk with other Cohort members, organizers included an *Open Space Conversations* session during which Cohort members self-organized to discuss shared interests. Many conversations among Cohort members focused on how to effectively communicate and collaborate with community partners. One participant noted that Turning Outward has *neutralized opposition* that they previously encountered from other community organizations. Others echoed this sentiment, noting that potentially negative voices have been re-directed into joint efforts, reducing the feeling that organizations were *competing for scarce resources*. This effort to *diminish turf battles* felt like a win for the library teams.

Cohort members are beginning to see past their own library's successes and view their role as *cheerleaders for the whole community*. Additionally, they are increasingly able to share the successes of other community organizations because of their role in those successes. This observation highlights how libraries are truly partnering with community groups rather than attempting to spearhead change by themselves.

1.4 Increase in Community-Specific Actions

During the June 2015 Work Space, Cohort members reflected on their everyday work through the lens of the 3As of Public Life – Authority, Authenticity and Accountability – related to capturing what communities really need and meeting community members *where they are at*. Some libraries addressed this latter concern literally. For example, one rural library found that patrons could not get to the library given the lack of adequate public transportation and solved this problem by bringing library programs to other venues, including schools and RV parks. A librarian reflected on their actions, noting, *are we really doing our job as a public library if we are waiting for people to come to where we are?*

During the Work Space, Sarah Ostman facilitated a short exercise that helped teams share with one another how they were actively addressing community aspirations. Each team was asked to complete the phrase, *People in [our community] said they want _____, so the library is doing _____.* This exercise generated diverse responses that demonstrated the large and small actions that libraries are taking to address community needs (Figure 1). For example, people in Springfield, MA wanted to go to the library, but did not feel safe, so the library is creating a *walking school bus* so people can travel to and from the library in groups. People in Hartford, CT said they want to have a voice in the city budgeting process, so the library worked with the city chamber of commerce and neighborhood organizations to hold a participatory budgeting event.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Continue to focus on mentoring, communicating clear guidelines and expectations, establishing performance metrics that libraries can use to compare themselves to similar libraries, and developing tips for sustainability.

- ALA Connect adequately facilitates the distribution of timelines, links, and other files and should continue to be used for one-way dissemination and resource sharing.

- Continue to promote the use of the LTC Facebook group and seed conversation prompts focused on sustainability and evaluation. Cohort members are excited to connect with each other and share their experiences and these conversations are more easily facilitated on social media platforms. These self-initiated interactions will likely build stronger ties among the Cohort, enabling them to continue to support one another beyond the end of the grant period.

Figure 1. Ad promoting LTC featuring Red Hook Library at the Annual Conference

Objective 2: Scalable Learning

PRIMARY OBJECTIVE

Contribute resources to the field that will teach librarians new approaches for community engagement and innovation.

DESIRED OUTCOME

- Librarians have long-term, sustainable access to a wealth of resources to support their work doing community engagement.

KEY FINDINGS

- ALA and Harwood have effectively adapted conference sessions and tools in response to feedback from conference attendees and NewKnowledge, including incorporating more concrete examples.
- Conference session participants and tool users alike responded well to the incorporation of real-world stories and examples from libraries that have begun to implement the Harwood approach.
- Conference sessions had lower attendance than at previous conferences, though almost all participants felt that the information presented at the sessions was useful and meaningful for their work.

OVERVIEW OF METHODS

At ALA's Annual Conference in June 2015, Harwood and ALA ran four ninety-minute Turning Outward sessions to train participants to use the Harwood approach at their home institutions. Each session focused on one of four Harwood tools: Aspirations, Turn Quiz, Intentionality, and Sustaining Yourself. Sessions were similar to those conducted at previous ALA and Public Library Association (PLA) conferences and incorporated NewKnowledge recommendations from the first and second LTC interim reports.

NewKnowledge adapted a survey instrument from the version used in January 2015 at ALA's Midwinter Conference, which focused on participants' reactions to the session format and their intentions to apply what they learned when they returned home. ALA staff collected paper surveys at the end of each session and a NewKnowledge researcher entered the paper survey data into Qualtrics to compute summary statistics.

Following the Turning Outward sessions, a NewKnowledge researcher contacted nine Cohort members via email to gain insight into their experience as informal facilitators. The researcher used informal, open-ended prompts to gather information. NewKnowledge received eight responses and reviewed them to identify key themes and observations.

We used activity on the LTC website and ALA Connect to understand how Cohort members and the larger library community are using LTC tools. Sarah Ostman provided NewKnowledge with Google analytics tracking the number of visits and downloads on the LTC website. A NewKnowledge researcher logged into ALA Connect to track ALA's communication with the Cohort about conference sessions, tools, and resources. We downloaded and reviewed all Tip Sheets prepared by Cohort teams, which described how they had adopted and adapted the various Harwood tools.

FINDINGS & DISCUSSION

Responses to Previous Recommendations

Recommendations from the previous interim report included offering more contextual information in the Turning Outward sessions and continuing to use concrete, real-world examples; allowing more time for small group discussions in each workshop, especially Aspirations; giving current Cohort members greater leadership roles; and considering additional promotional strategies to encourage ALA members to access the free tools and resources provided.

We saw evidence that ALA and Harwood took these recommendations into account when planning the conference sessions. Leading up to the conference, Harwood coaches acknowledged the importance of Cohort members' stories in a message to the Cohort stating, *We've learned from past ALA sessions that those attending these introductory sessions greatly value hearing from colleagues like you about how they are using Harwood tools and why it matters to them as professionals, to their library and to the communities they serve.* In this message, they recruited Cohort members to introduce or participate in one of the four conference sessions. Introducers took ten minutes to describe their experience with the Harwood approach, including how they discovered the approach, factors motivating their library to apply it, key outcomes, and how those outcomes have impacted individuals, libraries and communities. Participants took a few minutes to share an example that illustrated a particular Turning Outward topic. One example was a Cohort library team that hosted a Community Conversation at the local fire department and saw what had been dismissive attitudes toward the library turn into support by way of a cash donation by the end of the Community Conversation exercise. Other Cohort members spoke about integrating what they are learning into strategic plans at their libraries. This approach addressed two of our previous recommendations by providing both concrete examples of LTC activities and allowing the Cohort to assume more leadership responsibilities.

ALA used several strategies to promote the Harwood tools leading up to and during the June 2015 Annual Conference. Information was posted on the LTC website and promoted via ALA Connect and ALA's electronic mailing lists. Cognotes, ALA's newspaper for conference and exhibition attendees, included articles about LTC, Turning Outward sessions, and four ads depicting activities of Cohort libraries. Two of

those four designs were turned into large kiosk ads (Figure 2) that were very visible in the conference venue. In addition to promoting LTC, the large kiosk ads emphasized that the initiative is a concrete way of seeing change occur as a direct result of a library's actions. All four of the ad designs were shared via social media in weeks leading up to the conference.

Attendees of the June 2015 Turning Outward sessions indicated that they had sufficient time to talk with peers during the sessions, suggesting that ALA and Harwood's efforts to shape the conference sessions around participants' needs were successful.

Figure 2. Ad promoting LTC at the Annual Conference, featuring San Jose Public Library

2.1 Changes to Resources

The set of tools and resources available on the LTC website is more complete than during previous reporting cycles. Three new tools have been added – Making It Stick with Staff, Making Meaning of Data, and Tracking Your Progress – which aim to improve internal evaluation and promote long-term sustainability. During the January 2015 Work Space, Cohort members previewed and provided feedback on the three new tools. They were then modified accordingly and given to non-Cohort libraries familiar with Turning Outward, who provided additional input. The final iterations of the new tools were uploaded to the LTC resources website and used at the June 2015 Work Space, with a broad release to the field planned for August 2015. These new tools represent the Cohort's important to ongoing learning and development of resources based on emerging practice in the field.

All tools can be downloaded individually or as part of a complete binder titled, *A Step-By-Step Guide to "Turning Outward" to Your Community* (Figure 3). ALA brought approximately 220 of the printed Step-By-Step Guides to distribute at the conference sessions instead of using loose paper handouts as had been done in the past. Guides were also available for use by the Cohort during the Work Space and offered to those who attended an LTC evening reception.

Figure 3. Cover of the LTC resource binder

Each Cohort team completed Tip Sheets for at least one of the Harwood tools. One team described the Community Conversations tool as guidelines for engaging in *loosely structured conversations with 8-15 people designed to help an organization gain a better understanding of community needs*. The team regularly held Community Conversations with adults living in the neighborhood, teens from a local Community Center, Vietnamese- and Spanish-speaking adults in a library ESL class, parents attending a school parent meeting, seniors attending the Community Center's Senior Lunch Program, and members of a Community Center church group. They described benefits such as the opportunity to *communicate realistic promises to residents that help*

demonstrate the library's accountability to the community. They also advised others to plan ahead if hosting a conversation for non-English speakers because it can take some time to effectively translate the Community Conversation questions into another language. They also suggested bringing a sign-up sheet to collect participants' contact information.

2.2 Increased Access to Resources

Turning Outward Conference Sessions

ALA Conferences and the LTC website are the primary ways for the broader library field to access the Turning Outward resources. At the June 2015 Annual Conference, ALA and Harwood hosted four sessions focused on training members of the broader library field to use the tools. Attendance was lower than at previous conferences (Table 1), which was likely due to competing events, opportunities to attend Harwood sessions at other ALA conferences, availability of the tools online, or other factors. Attendance was fairly consistent across the four sessions, with the lowest turnout for the final session. We collected a total of 96 surveys (Table 1). Six people reported attending all four sessions.

Table 1. Number of respondents at each of the four sessions

Session	Total Attendance[a,b]	Number of Respondents[b]	Percent of Total
Aspirations: 8:30 AM – 10:00 AM	34	30	88%
Turn Quiz: 10:30 AM - 12:00 PM	32	20	63%
Intentionality: 1:00 PM – 2:30 PM	34	31	91%
Sustaining Yourself: 3:00 PM - 4:30 PM	25	15	60%

[a] Attendance data collected by ALA Staff
[b] People may have attended and responded to surveys in multiple sessions

Of the 85 people who provided background data, 62% were librarians, 8% worked in the library in another role, including doing volunteer work, and the remaining 30% selected "other" and wrote in their specific title. Most of these respondents were managerial positions (e.g., branch manager, outreach manager) and two respondents were consultants or suppliers to libraries.

The feedback for the sessions was largely positive, with 90% or more of respondents in each session indicating they were satisfied with that session. Comments were generally positive, usually indicating they appreciate the guidance for their community engagement work. One participant noted, *we are preparing to begin working on a new strategic plan. I think the tools provided will help us make this process*

much more meaningful and productive. A few comments included suggestions for improvement. These were requests to *unpack the meaning* of certain terms and include more examples from the Cohort. Detailed feedback from each Turning Outward session is available in the Appendix (#PVT.074.175.05-A).

Web Traffic

Google Analytics enables the LTC project team to track the traffic on the project homepage and subpages, as well as the number of times the LTC tools have been downloaded (Table 2). In this reporting period (January - June 2015), there have been over 5,000 views and 4,000 unique views to the project homepage (www.ala.org/LTC) and over 8,000 views and almost 7,000 unique views to all subpages combined (e.g., resources, about LTC, cohort, blog). As in previous periods, the Resources subpage received the most traffic, with almost 4,000 views and over 3,000 unique views alone. There have been about 1,800 unique downloads of LTC tools. The Turn Outward and Aspirations tools were two of the most popular, with 570 and 374 unique downloads respectively. The Digital Workbook was also popular, with 528 unique downloads.

Table 2. Web traffic during the current reporting period and over the entire project period.

	Views/Downloads Current Reporting Period (Jan–Jun 2015)	Views/Downloads Entire Project (Jan 2014–June 2015)
LTC Homepage Views	5,396 (4,291 unique)	20,272 (15,874 unique)
LTC Subpage Views	8,139 (6,653 unique)	19,144 (14,993 unique)
LTC Tool Downloads	4,038 (1,795 unique)	10,078 (4,142 unique)

Google analytics also tracked the number of hits for each LTC webinar (Table 3). The webinar titled Hosting and Leading Community Conversations was very popular, with 855 views since it went live. Please note that the webinars went live at different times as they were recorded and posted over a period of nine months, so views should not be directly compared.

Table 3. Webinar views over the entire project period.

	Hits
Hosting/Leading Community Conversation (June 2014)	855
Theming/Using Public Knowledge (July 2014)	311
Hosting/Using Innovation Spaces (Aug 2014)	258
Partner Selection/Managing Relationships (Sept 2014)	261
Sweet Spot of Public Life (Feb 2015)	39

The LTC Resources website provides a comprehensive look at the tools. ALA acknowledged that someone unfamiliar with Harwood's approach could be overwhelmed by the breadth of resources or the idea of engaging in such an involved process. To address this concern, six Cohort members recorded short cell phone videos about specific LTC tools that they found especially useful in the Turning Outward process. These videos were essentially video versions of the Tip Sheets, where Cohort members shared how their libraries used the tool. These videos aimed to make the resources more accessible to newcomers by emphasizing that they were easy to use. ALA is considering additional ways to provide concrete examples of how libraries are using the tools.

ALA and Harwood will convene a Public Innovators Lab from October 14-16, 2015 in Detroit, MI. This workshop is intended as a way for library staff to gain hands-on training in the Harwood practice and will focus on five key topics, titled: Being Turned Outward, Understanding My Community, Creating Conditions for Change and Sustainability, Deciding on the Right Path, and Making an Agreement with Myself. While this is a pay-to-attend event outside the scope of the grant, it signifies the ability of the LTC leadership to develop modified curricula based on feedback from participants, making the Harwood approach increasingly suited to the library field.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- To decrease competition, attempt to schedule the Turning Outward conference sessions during timeslots when there are few simultaneous sessions that focus on community engagement and outreach.

- To increase novelty and deepen conference attendees' understanding with Turning Outward, consider hosting conference sessions that train participants to use additional tools beyond the four commonly scheduled.

- Upload the Cohort's videos about the tools to YouTube or other social media platforms and provide links on the LTC website to ensure that more people have access to and know how to use these valuable resources.

Objective 3: ALA Staff Work

PRIMARY OBJECTIVE

Train ALA staff in the Harwood Institute practice to focus the organization outward and align internal process to the work in the field.

DESIRED OUTCOMES

- ALA becomes a more Turned Outward organization (e.g., member conversations regularly convened, conversations actively inform ALA planning processes and decision making).

- ALA communicates and collaborates more effectively with partners and allied organizations (e.g., convenes partner conversations as part of partnership planning process, conversations inform partnership planning and help to align messaging).

- ALA staff and member leaders become "fluent" in the practice this initiative seeds in the field and can support the work of library professionals (e.g., ALA officers and committee chairs are active in this work, bringing it to the committee level; staff actively participate in and facilitate conversations; feedback used to inform strategic planning, conference planning, and member support).

KEY FINDINGS

- ALA continues to convene Kitchen Table Conversations at ALA national conferences for its staff and members to better understand the perspectives and aspirations of the professional library field. ALA staff have made concerted efforts to discuss and address the findings from these conversations through the formation of working groups.

- ALA staff and leadership continue to show support for applying the Turning Outward approach in their professional lives by attending staff workshops, discussions, and training sessions aimed at identifying common organizational aspirations, barriers, and solutions.

- Staff interest and support for LTC initiatives suggest that internal changes have occurred since the original Intentionality Forum in April 2014. Changes in ALA staff's ability to communicate and collaborate effectively as a result of their Turning Outward training will be measured during the summative evaluation.

OVERVIEW OF METHODS

These data came from two sources: 1) notes taken by anonymous observers during Kitchen Table Conversations at the June 2015 Annual Conference and 2) a list of ALA staff activities on the LTC website. Kitchen Table Conversations provided conference-goers with an opportunity to *dig deeper into the ALA member experience,* by discussing topics like starting and renewing membership and navigating ALA's

website. Observers submitted their documentation of Kitchen Table Conversations to NewKnowledge researchers for review and thematic analysis. NewKnowledge also reviewed the list of ALA staff activities posted on the LTC website and reviewed relevant emails forwarded by ALA LTC leadership. We will conduct a survey of ALA staff during the summative evaluation phase in October 2015.

FINDINGS & DISCUSSION

Responses to Previous Recommendations

Past recommendations from NewKnowledge were varied and many referred to long-term goals relating to ALA's role as a professional organization (e.g., provide skills training for members). As such, the recommendations continue to be folded into the ongoing Turning Outward work and changes are likely to become evident in the final stage of the project.

Kitchen Table Conversations occurred both internally to ALA with staff members, and at the June 2015 Annual Conference with the broader ALA membership. These conversations continue to exemplify ALA's commitment to both staff and member feedback. ALA LTC project staff are documenting the learning that is emerging from the current LTC initiative so that best practices for meaningful and relevant library work can be shared with the broader field.

During this reporting period, ALA and Harwood conducted several staff training sessions to encourage ALA staff to become fluent in the Harwood approach and ensure that the program has support from the highest level of ALA leadership.

3.1 ALA Turns Outward

ALA staff and member involvement in LTC is intended to build the capacity of ALA as a professional organization and encourage a Turned Outward approach to engaging the broader library field. ALA Executive Director Keith Michael Fiels articulated his support for LTC in a March 2015 all-staff email asking staff to engage with the initiative, writing, *As part of my commitment to this process, you will be hearing from me on a regular basis about what I'm seeing and hearing and I encourage you to do the same. I do believe that ALA is already benefitting from becoming less "inwardly" or institutionally-focused and better attuned to the aspirations of our library "community*." Fiels encouraged staff to participate in upcoming support sessions, noting that Cheryl Gorman, Harwood's Vice President of National Programs and Harwood Mentor Coach, would be visiting ALA headquarters quarterly to work with the LTC team and lead workshops to train ALA staff in the Harwood approach.

Cheryl Gorman's quarterly visits to ALA (April 2015, July 2015 and upcoming in October 2015) each include the following: 1) an LTC Planning Committee meeting with senior management and ALA PPO

leadership; 2) a Making ALA More Welcoming Committee meeting co-facilitated by Cheryl and Ron Jankowski, the ALA Membership Director; and 3) a "staff learning session" with Keith Fiels, open to all staff.

A number of ALA staff participated in Turning Outward meetings and discussions during Cheryl Gorman's April 2015 visit to ALA, including one titled Working Effectively Together. These conversations resulted in many collective ideas about how to apply the Turning Outward approach to ALA as an organization. The group concluded that improving internal communications should be a high priority. Fiels reported back to ALA staff, noting that these conversations *generated a great deal of energy and excitement about ways we can work better together as a staff community, as well as ways we can better help our membership achieve their aspirations as reflected in the ongoing Kitchen Table Conversations and other member conversations*. Fiels wrote that over the coming months, he will be *highlighting the actions and ideas of individual staff and working groups as they turn outward with actions and ideas*.

The Making ALA More Welcoming Committee's work is focused on improving the ALA membership experience. So far, it has led to a number of innovations including developing the Engage with ALA webpages, which describe how ALA helps members develop their skill sets and advance in the profession. At the April meeting, the group identified practical action areas to improve the membership experience, including establishing *communities of practice*, an *ALA Customer Journey Map*, and *more personal interactions with fellow members*. Group members formed smaller committees that will focus on each of these areas and plan to extend an invitation to all ALA staff to join the committees.

> *The Task Force on Equity, Diversity and Inclusion used the ASK exercise to facilitate a Midwinter conversation about diversity, equity and inclusion with 80+ members. It was a great way to hear members' concerns while keeping the conversation productive and positive.*
> *–Wendy Prellwitz, Interim Director, Office for Diversity, Literacy and Outreach Services*

Convening Kitchen Table Conversations at ALA conferences indicates that ALA is interested in learning about the concerns of its members and is continuing the process of Turning Outward. The June 2015 Kitchen Table Conversations indicated that the broader ALA community would like to see increased organizational transparency and access to ALA staff, a *high-touch* experience for ALA members, more personalized attention for new members, and an orientation to the organization. Members believe in ALA and value belonging to a professional organization, but recognize the difficulty of developing a true sense of connection with such a large organization. They want a more *human experience* and clarity about how to get involved when not at ALA conferences. They specifically emphasized the potential benefits of

following up with attendees after they leave the conference. While ALA resources, such as webinars, generated praise, participants felt like they do not provide the desired personal feel.

3.2 ALA Communication and Collaboration

LTC Staff learning sessions facilitated by Cheryl Gorman in April and July 2015 included reviewing the organization's actions in response to community needs. Specifically, the team felt that a lack of internal communication was an important obstacle that prevented critical organizational changes. They felt that several factors, including streamlined work flow, opportunities to get to know others on a personal level, encouraging curiosity, and providing a safe space to make mistakes would enable staff to work together effectively and should characterize ALA culture on an organizational level. The group also identified strategic opportunities for ALA as it moves forward with becoming a more Turned Outward organization. For example, the group identified actions that individuals could push forward on their own or with others in their spheres of influence, such as developing a *go ask* culture, as well as those that will require organizational support, such as standardizing the process of onboarding staff.

Twenty-five ALA staff participated in a Community Conversation in April 2015 to determine how ALA can support staff in applying the Turning Outward approach in their professional lives. The second goal of the conversation was to better understand the ALA community by discussing shared goals, aspirations, barriers, and potential areas for action. Participants indicated that they want a *learning community*, work more like an *ecosystem*, and are working towards a *sharing and open community* in which opportunities are transparent. They emphasized the importance of strong internal communication in an effort to break away from specialty-focused silos and ensure that all staff are informed and held accountable to each other. Finally, participants expressed the desire for a *culture of curiosity* where it is safe to make and learn from mistakes with the ultimate goal of building a spirit of collaboration and mutual trust. In all, these goals indicate that staff are hopeful that structural and cultural shifts could have powerful impacts on ALA's ability to Turn Outward and serve the library community.

3.3 ALA Leaders Become Fluent in Harwood Practice

In addition to organization-wide invitations to participate in the activities described above, ALA staff members have access to various resources to develop fluency in the Harwood approach. At the ALA staff learning sessions, Mary Davis Fournier, Deputy Director of ALA's Public Programs Office, documented a few options for taking action. These options included joining the Making ALA More Welcoming in-person or ALA Connect group, staying tuned to communication for ALA-wide staff initiatives, contacting the PPO project team about individual guidance or training related to the Harwood practice, accessing the web-based LTC resources, or contacting a Harwood Certified Coach directly via email or phone.

This fluency has already begun to produce results. An internal taskforce now works with ALA's human resources department to develop better onboarding of new staff members, incorporating Turning Outward practices. Another group is surveying new member outreach practices across association units with a goal of best practices alignment. A senior management group is working on presenting and getting buy-in on ALA's new strategic plan from every staff member. These innovations are clear indicators of ALA's process of becoming fluent in Turning Outward. Even more promising is that approximately 30% of those now involved in these efforts are newer staff. As the leadership becomes more fluent in the Harwood approach, ALA's potential for internal transformation increases.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Continue to work with staff to understand specific barriers to internal communication processes and how these barriers can be addressed.

- Consider establishing a process to communicate with new members following ALA conferences and at periodic intervals throughout the year, perhaps connecting new members or member libraries with more established members to serve as mentors.

- Carefully consider and follow up on the goals and hopes voiced by ALA staff for shifting aspects of ALA's internal working culture. Incremental changes in these areas may have meaningful effects on how ALA interacts with its community.

Objective 4: Communications

PRIMARY OBJECTIVE

The goal across all target audiences will be to build awareness, participation, buy-in, and a sense of urgency—in the field and externally—about strengthening this type of library work and its potential for community change.

DESIRED OUTCOMES

- Shift in discourse about public libraries in the national and local media away from the narrative about libraries in crisis and debate over libraries as "essential institutions" to one of libraries as agents of positive community change.
- Excitement in the field evidenced by member-driven conference sessions and activities related to libraries as engines of community development at ALA annual, division, and state library conferences.

KEY FINDINGS

- The LTC blog is a useful venue for promoting specific examples of community work by Cohort libraries. These examples are very valuable to ALA for shaping the discourse around libraries as community change agents and getting the field excited about the Turning Outward approach. The broader influence and meaning of these messages will be explored more fully in the final phase of the evaluation.

OVERVIEW OF METHODS

NewKnowledge conducted a library media discourse analysis in the second quarter of 2014 to evaluate the national and local discourse about public libraries in recent years. A full description of the methods, analysis and findings can be found in the Library Media Discourse Report (NewKnowledge Report #PVT.74.175.03). We will use these same methods to conduct a similar analysis during the summative evaluation phase. NewKnowledge researchers, ALA staff, and the Public Innovators Cohort have been collecting local media stories that focus on the role of public libraries in their communities. The summative media discourse analysis will also include current and past ALA and PLA conference programs and upcoming 2016 PLA proposals as a supplementary data corpus, which will allow us to determine whether shifts in national discourse align with shifts in professional discourse.

FINDINGS & DISCUSSION

Responses to Previous Recommendations

Prior recommendations included continuing to collect media examples of what is happening in Cohort communities, helping the Cohort convey the work of LTC to various audiences, assisting libraries in communicating with local media partners, and facilitating opportunities for speakers to present concrete examples of engagement with communities. ALA and Cohort libraries have continued to collect media reports, some of which are described in this section. Other recommendations, however, will become more apparent as the project moves into the final evaluation phase.

4.1 Shifting Discourse About Public Libraries

The LTC blog is a useful venue for accessing a collection of stories about activities of Cohort libraries. In this reporting period, the LTC blog has documented several examples of action among the Public Innovators Cohort:

- Cindy Fesemyer, Library Director at Columbus Public Library, wrote a blog post describing how community conversations allowed the library to identify an inherent tension between tradition and change in the local community. The library and other community organizations developed small actions – such as hosting a potluck and transforming public spaces into works of art – to begin to ease that tension.

- Jeff Lambert, Mason Square Branch Supervisor, wrote a blog post about his community's feelings of alienation from civic institutions, concerns about violence in the community, and a desire for leadership and mentorship opportunities for young people. The library subsequently partnered with a local organization to host workshops aimed at building a cohort of advocates for non-violence and public safety measures.

- Emily Bunyan, Library Director at Knox County Public Library wrote a blog post about how community conversations revealed patrons' worries about food scarcity throughout the summer months. The library held a food drive and fines forgiveness program that raised over 1,300 non-perishable food items for the local food bank.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Continue to compile examples of media pieces focused on libraries to add to the database for the second media discourse analysis.

- As Cohort members are increasingly invited to be the public face for the work they are doing, ALA may want to offer training in presentation skills and public speaking. This training may help the Cohort best

convey the work of LTC to various audiences. As people become more comfortable presenting the story of their own transformation and LTC, they may increasingly look for opportunities to share with and inspire others.

- There is no shortage of stories about how Cohort libraries have worked with their communities to address collective needs. To ensure that these stories reach a broad audience, we recommend that ALA incorporate more opportunities for speakers to present their stories at ALA conferences and continue sending personalized invitations for Cohort members to contribute to the LTC blog. As other libraries that are not in the Cohort engage with their communities as a result of LTC, we also recommend that they receive invitations to contribute to conference presentations and the blog.

Conclusion

Substantial progress has been made since the second interim report, according to the criteria established in the Gates Foundation Results Framework. Most progress has occurred within the Public Innovators Cohort, where members have progressed from abstract thinking to concrete action. Similarly, ALA staff and leadership have begun to embrace the Turning Outward approach. The LTC approach shows evidence of becoming an integral part of the broader field. We will continue to examine these project outcomes in the summative evaluation.

NewKnowledge Report # PVT.074.175.05

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new
knowledge.org

tel: (347) 766-3399
13 East 37th Street, 7th Floor, New York, NY 10016
3630 Ocean Ranch Rd., Oceanside, CA 92056

New Knowledge Organization Ltd.
Facing Society's Grand Challenges Head On