TRAVERSE

Evaluation of the Libraries: Opportunities for Everyone innovation fund

Projects Information Booklet

Contents

Introduction

The Libraries: Opportunities for Everyone (LOFE) innovation fund was launched in December 2016.

Its primary aim was to enable local authority library services to trial innovative projects that would benefit disadvantaged people and places in England.

Managed by the Arts Council, the £3.9 million fund awarded grants of between £50,000 and £250,000 to 30 projects across 46 library services in March 2017.

This booklet

The booklet supplements main report for the evaluation of the LOFE innovation fund.

It provides a brief overview of the projects that delivered activities under the LOFE Fund, summarising their aims, activities and emerging impacts.

When reading this booklet, please note that:

- The booklet is divided into 5 thematic clusters, which group together projects focused on similar Libraries Deliver outcome areas, aims, or activities:

Clusters	
	Cluster 1: Arts and culture
	Arts-based activities that aimed to improve young people's confidence and skillsets, as well as their relationship with art, culture, literature and their local library.
	Cluster 2: Digital
	Digital activities that aimed to improve people's digital literacy and reduce social exclusion, embedding this within library services through staff training.

	Cluster 3: Families and wellbeing
	Wide range of activities to increase families' engagement, and improve access to information and physical, emotional and mental wellbeing.
	Cluster 4: Literature and creative expression
	Creative activities that aimed to address low levels of participation and bring literature to life for vulnerable and marginalised groups.
	Cluster 5: Makerspaces
	Physical hubs that aimed to address local deprivation through digital taster sessions, activities and courses, including creative activities such as 3D printing, animation, robotics and coding.

- The fund was also delivered within the framework of the Libraries Deliver: Ambition's 7 strategic outcomes. These are referenced throughout the report where projects aimed to contribute towards them.

Outcome 1
Cultural and creative enrichment

Outcome 2
Increased reading and literacy

Outcome 3
Improved digital access and literacy

Outcome 4
Helping everyone achieve their potential

Outcome 5
Healthier and happier lives

Outcome 6
Greater prosperity

Outcome 7
Stronger more resilient communities

Arts and Culture

Arts-based activities that aimed to improve young people's confidence and skillsets, as well as their relationship with art, culture, literature, and their local library.

London Borough of Merton

Project name: My Library
Project cluster: Arts and Culture
LOFE funding: £142,611

2 locations	**82** sessions	**4997** total visits	**120** final event

Project aims:
Merton planned to deliver a new literacy, arts, and cultural programme to increase young people's engagement with libraries, focusing on localities where there are reduced life chances.

Target groups:
The project was aimed at young people aged 11-18 and was designed as an extension of a previous primary school programme (which resulted in all primary school children in the area being signed up as library members).

Activities:
The funding was used to deliver various activities, commissioning arts and other organisations to deliver workshops, as well as enhancing spaces that are appropriate for delivering such activities. This included a new youth 'Arts Space' for youth activities at Mitcham Library and developing existing space at Wimbledon Library.

An activity plan was developed in consultation with young people and included workshops for music, drama and slam

poetry, culminating in an exhibition and performances designed by young people with professional support. The workshops and events were well-attended, with almost 5000 participants recorded over the course of the project. The project also offered a reading challenge that continues to be developed working in close collaboration with secondary schools.

Impact and legacy:
Throughout the delivery of this project, project leads adapted their delivery methods, including using more workshop facilitators and tailoring activities to take into account varied literacy skills. To achieve this, they offered youth engagement training for staff, which increased their confidence to start thinking about other ways to open up opportunities for young people in the borough. Partners from youth services and youth agencies were also involved in supporting or delivering the project.

While it was hard to measure these impacts at the end of the project, early evidence suggests that project participants had grown in confidence throughout the programme and developed new skills by channelling their energy into positive activities. This project also had a reported impact on library staff, who now have the skills to work with more challenging young people and can manage their behaviours. To sustain the project impacts, a team of youth mentors was set up, who continue delivering some activities.

Libraries Taskforce blog:
Merton Arts Space > My Library

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Middlesbrough Libraries

Project name: My Town, My Future
Project cluster: Arts and Culture
LOFE Funding: £91,410

20 locations

72 sessions

366 total visits

Project aims:
This project aimed to highlight the past and present contributions that marginalised groups have made to the local area, through providing skills training in a range of digital media to local people from disadvantaged backgrounds.

Target groups:
The project worked with individuals from communities facing significant disadvantage in the town, including wards in the top 20% most deprived in the country for deprivation (Index of Multiple Deprivation 2015). This included a specific focus on vulnerable and marginalised groups, such as a group of adults with special educational needs and students who had been excluded from mainstream schools.

Activities:
Activities included purchasing a digital scanner and training volunteers to digitally archive centrally held resources that document the history of the local area, as well as hosting 72 workshops across community hubs which focused on taking photographs and submitting creative writing about their communities. These old and new images were combined on a digital platform as well as in a touring exhibition showcasing participants' work.

Impact and legacy:

The project explored issues of personal and public identity, asking people what is important in their lives and how that is represented by them in the images and words they created.

This was felt to have encouraged participants to focus on the positive aspects of their local community as well as introducing some people to arts activities for the first time. Project leads felt that this increased their confidence to seek further activities in the future.

The project was felt to have given library staff the confidence to apply for more innovative and digitally focused projects in the future. Project leads now plan to secure more funding to deliver activities using the equipment acquired with the LOFE funding, including the digital scanner, iPads, and cameras used for workshops.

Involvement in the project also helped the library to build a good relationship with the council IT team, who were involved with the procurement and set-up of digital tools. Additionally, the delivery of this project embedded the library's involvement with community Hubs across the area.

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London Borough of Lewisham

Project name: What's the story?
Project cluster: Arts and culture
LOFE funding: £60,000

3 locations

23 sessions

142 total visits

Project aims:
The aim of this project was to bring together librarians, journalists and educators to enable young people to take part in a multi-media journalism project using mobile devices such as tablets and mobile phones.

This was run as a short course during the summer holidays, targeting disadvantaged young people and those with special learning needs in the borough of Lewisham. The course was co-developed and delivered by the Lewisham Library and Information Services and Goldsmiths School of Journalism.

Target groups:
The project worked with disadvantaged young people aged 16-21 from the local community.

Activities:
The project ran a digital journalism course at Goldsmiths School of Journalism, which used the Battle of Lewisham as a central focus to develop a deeper relationship and understanding for the local area. The library service provided access to local history and archives resources, equipment, a place to work and staff who have a wealth of knowledge and expertise.

Activities included sourcing, interpreting and editing stories about their local community and involved learning how to use a range of digital services. This included a video camera,

interview techniques, how to edit a Wikipedia page and the resources available in local libraries. The second phase of the project will showcase the project at community events and within local libraries.

Impact and legacy:
In addition to library staff time, youth workers were also recruited to deliver the project. This gave library staff an opportunity to work more closely with young people and build their confidence in this area.

Project participants were reported to have thoroughly enjoyed the project, with attendance being very consistent across the course. The project was also felt to have been successful in increasing people's confidence in skillsets such as journalism and teamworking, as well as using the library services.

Since the project ended, some participants have showed interest in taking their learning further and have asked for ways that they can continue doing so. It was also felt that the partnership with Goldsmiths had given young people an important insight into university life, which was reported to have inspired 1 participant to apply for university.

Project leads plan to consult with the project participants to see how they can develop the project in the future.

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Digital

Digital activities that aimed to improve people's digital literacy and reduce social exclusion, embedding this within library services through staff training.

Barnsley

Project name: Digital Makerspaces boxes and Home Library Service Tablets
Project cluster: Digital
LOFE funding: £52,910

7 locations

16 sessions

42 total visits

Project aims:
The project aimed to provide mobile access technology to a targeted group of customers at high risk of digital and social exclusion. This was intended to increase the use of e-books, e-resources and improve access to Universal Information, Advice, and other community resources.

Target groups:
The project focused on hard-to-reach groups such as the elderly and the housebound, as well 'digitally excluded' community groups who lacked the equipment and/or knowledge of how to use the technology.

Activities:
The project developed portable digital kits with mobile digital access and IT, including camcorders, tablets, laptops, Raspberry Pi sets and micro:bits. Library staff were also trained in how to use the digital kits and use a 'making every contact count approach' when talking with customers. This approach

focuses on recognising opportunities to talk to people about their wellbeing using the skills of asking and listening.

Trained staff then delivered tailored, 1-to-1 digital skills sessions with Home Library Service users, as well as group sessions with community groups and other local partners.

Impact and legacy:
Project leads reported that almost all participants in the project had found the sessions useful and felt their knowledge and confidence in using digital devices had improved.

Project leads also reported that the sessions had helped customers understand how online resources could be of benefit to them, reduced their nervousness of burdening others in learning how to use them, and increased customers' confidence in using technology through providing them with supported opportunities to use it.

It was also felt that the project enabled a cultural shift within the organisation, where all staff had started to engage with digital tools in one form or another. In the future, it is hoped that this will help fully integrate digital services within the library's core offers.

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Hampshire

Project name: Library DOTS (Digital; Options; Training and Support)
Project cluster: Digital
LOFE Funding: £238,324

37 locations

144 sessions

708 total visits

Project aims:
This project aimed to reduce the digital exclusion and social isolation in areas of disadvantage through iPad lending schemes and training sessions.

Target groups:
The project adopted a flexible approach to targeting groups and communities experiencing disadvantage, working with local library staff, public health, community groups, and local networks to identify families in need.

Activities:
Participants were recruited through social media, leaflets, printed advertising, and outreach by the project coordinator. Activities delivered included an initial 3-hour training session for each participant to explain how to borrow, return, and use the iPads, as well as how to access e-books and e-magazines.

This was followed by a 4-week rental period where participants could contact a tutor or coordinator if they needed help. Throughout the project, staff were trained in the digital offer and as a result are more digitally engaged themselves.

Impact and legacy:

The project was reported to have improved the awareness and take-up digital library services, including offering e-books and e-magazines. It was also reported that the project had helped improve the confidence, understanding, and ability of participants to use tablets.

Project leads plan to secure funding to continue the project. If unsuccessful, they will incorporate the project into existing learning activities, which they could continue delivering without funding, but on a more ad-hoc basis.

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Lincolnshire

Project name: Forging Lincs
Project cluster: Digital
LOFE Funding: £231,080

4 locations

153 sessions

441 total visits

Project aims:
The project aimed to create 4 library techno labs and a number of mobile labs to serve 9 more libraries that would bring local communities together around co-designed group activities.

The activities were planned to create friendships between different groups, encourage participants to become 'social agents' of change in their local communities, and lead to longer-term changes such as improved health and wellbeing, increased confidence, enhanced IT, and employment skills.

Target groups:
The project initially focused on working with 16 to 25-year olds, but opened up activities to anyone who was interested over the course of the project.

Activities:
The project created 4 'tech labs' in libraries located within communities experiencing higher levels of disadvantage, as well as mobile IT kits for use in 9 other locations, and trained staff in their use.

In total, 153 half-day workshops and tutored courses were delivered across a range of digital and creative theme such as graphic design, music production, photography, coding and computer game programming.

Impact and legacy:

Project leads reported that the project helped improve young people's knowledge in specific areas of study, which participants could then use to help them find a job. In particular, participants were often looking to develop skills that would help them start a business or further develop a start-up business. Beyond this, project leads also reported that the project helped form friendships between groups of participants, including home-schooled participants who have stayed in regular contact.

The project was also felt to have had a positive impact on staff, who were excited to learn how to use the technology themselves and have an opportunity to 'think outside the box' in terms of expanding the library's existing services.

This had helped challenge preconceptions among staff and the local community as to what the library can offer and also widened the demographic of service users through giving unengaged individuals a new reason to come into the library. The libraries also developed their relationship with local community groups through working more closely alongside them.

Project leads plan to continue to integrate digital activities within their service offer and further increase their information and learning opportunities available within the library,

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Manchester City Council

Project name: Big Ideas Generators (BIG)
Project cluster: Digital
LOFE Funding: £249,985

14 locations

411 sessions

3112 total visits

Project aims:
Big Ideas Generators (BIG) was a project supporting innovation and enterprise across 10 Greater Manchester library authorities.

BIG was the extension of an existing programme running in Manchester Central Library to 9 other library authorities, with the aim of ensuring that libraries contribute to meeting business information needs and that people have access to a range of advice and tools to start and maintain a business. While a lot of emphasis was put on these goals, the project had a wider objective of impacting participants on a personal level by inspiring them to learn/ do something new.

Target groups:
The project focused on working with women and BAME individuals. Both of these groups are underrepresented among UK business ownership.

Activities:
More than 400 group workshops and 1-on-1 sessions were held across all libraries on topics such as 3D printing, cloud computing, business idea guidance, online tools, social media, and other technical skills. Most of the sessions were attended by people interested in business start-up, but some events attracted different target groups, such as families.

Impact and legacy:

Although the events were felt to be a success overall, project leads also reported that reaching out to the desired target groups was at times challenging, with different results in different regions. Feedback from participants suggests that the project helped increase their skills, knowledge, and self-confidence.

To strengthen the evidence of these impacts, a social value calculation was included in the project's own evaluation. This will be used to showcase the success of the project and secure future funding opportunities. While no opportunities have been secured as yet, Greater Manchester Libraries was recently added to the supplier framework of a local start-up support network and are expecting to deliver or hosts events for them in the future.

To ensure the project's legacy, a new website is being created that will incorporate many resources from BIG. All the equipment remains, including a 3D printer in every authority and large-screen TVs that can be used for future screenings and low-cost events.

Working across the 10 different authorities was initially perceived as a challenge, but resulted in an opportunity to create a new delivery model across the county. The consistent engagement across all 10 authorities and the sharing of best practice was a critical success factor, which enabled Greater Manchester Libraries to work closer together than ever before. As a result, they have decided to fund a consortium officer post to help them continue this joint working.

Libraries Taskforce blog:
The Big Ideas Generator – final report

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Nottingham City Council

Project name: Storysmash
Project cluster: Digital
LOFE funding: £226,235

12 locations

73 sessions

1099 total visits

110 final event

Project aims:
Storysmash aimed to increase young people's engagement with the library and raise their self-esteem through a range of digital gaming workshops and creative writing sessions.

Target groups:
The project worked with young people aged 11-25 with low literacy skills.

Activities:
Storysmash gave young people the chance to create their own computer games and narratives. While trainers from the NVA were brought in to teach them Twine, the underpinning software, the emphasis was on creativity as opposed to coding knowledge or ability.

To this end, the project also included 12 masterclass sessions with authors (such as Charlie Higson, Ian Livingstone, and Gabrielle Kent) who provided additional inspiration and helped to educate the participants. A larger celebratory event with multiple authors was held in February and was open to the general public, with 110 attending.

The libraries' previous links with Academies in the area were crucial in promoting Storysmash and recruiting participants and advocates. A group of young advocates called 'The Youth Council' acted as consultants to the project and helped shape its direction. One of the most significant changes to the

project delivery was dropping the initial plans of charging for the sessions, which saw an immediate increase in take-up.

Impact and legacy:
Project leads report that the results are far-reaching, from perceived increases in digital and creative skills among both participants and staff, to the creation of a high-quality original video game and a community of young people that would not have otherwise socialised.

Gaming Hubs that feature young people's Twine games are in place at each of the 5 participating libraries, along with board games to help stimulate creativity. The equipment is still available and there are plans to train 2 Storysmash champions at each library to carry on delivering workshops and encouraging gaming with a bias towards literacy. Project leads are exploring the possibility of producing a toolkit and selling to it others who want to replicate Storysmash.

It is planned that the Youth council will also act as legacy to help libraries with their engagement in the future.

Libraries Taskforce blog:
Storysmash in Nottingham

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Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council

Project name: Tech Suites
Project cluster: Digital
LOFE Funding: £85,840

6 locations

185 sessions

4181 total visits

Project aims:

The project aimed to create 'tech suites' in Sandwell libraries to extend their suite of existing ICT equipment. They planned to use LOFE funding to purchase iPads, robotics, and 3D printing equipment and then partner with organisations to commission a variety of activities. These were targeted at a range of age groups who experience disadvantage and would otherwise not have had access to this type of equipment.

Activities:

The project ran over 180 activity sessions across 6 different locations, including iPad courses for beginners aimed at older people, workshops for children and families using virtual reality sets and robotics, and an iPad loaning services. Classes were advertised on the web portal.

Impact and legacy:

The project succeeded in encouraging children to participate in activities and increase their interest in STEM subjects. Without the project, project leads reported that these children would not have had access to such technologies.

While some staff have embraced the project activities and use of technology, project leads have found it challenging to get all staff on board. This caused a challenge in terms of future delivery of activities, especially the robotics session. To

overcome this, project leads will be recruiting more volunteers with a particular interest in technology to deliver the sessions.

As well as building relationships with partner organisations, the project led to new relationships with other council departments including the housing team.

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Telford and Wrekin

Project name: Family Code Club
Project cluster: Digital
LOFE Funding: £50,000

5 locations

48 sessions

306 total visits

Project aims:
This project aimed to address unemployment and skills shortages in the most disadvantaged areas of Telford where, in a significant proportion of families, at least 1 parent is unemployed.

Target groups:
Project activities were initially aimed at families, to teach parents the digital skills that their children are using and how to apply these new skills to job seeking, but it was later broadened to include a wider audience.

Activities:
The project ran 48 sessions across 5 locations, which included family coding club sessions, as well as sessions with a 3D printer that was purchased as part of the project, which were open to all participants.

Impact and legacy:
The project introduced people to new technology that they have not had exposure to previously, such as 3D printing. This includes participants and staff who have both learnt the extent to what they can produce using such technology, leading to a perceived increase in confidence. These activities were also felt to have improved the perception of the library among service users.

Project leads hope to continue to run activities using new equipment for at least the next 12 months and will recruit a team of volunteers to continue running regular clubs. They have also considered applying for additional funding and have looked into the possibility of loaning out the use of the 3D printer to help fund activities.

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Project name: Digital Library Plus
Project cluster: Digital
LOFE funding: £178,830

36 locations

58 sessions

222 total visits

Project aims:
The Digital Library Plus project in West Sussex was guided by 3 of the council's political priorities: addressing issues related to an ageing population at risk of loneliness and social isolation, addressing the high numbers of job seekers with low digital skills, and helping people with learning disabilities to increase their wellbeing.

Target groups:
The project worked with older people in their own homes, adults with learning disabilities in either a library or clinical setting, and with job seekers in areas of high unemployment.

Activities:
The first part of the project involved procuring and setting up a range of digital equipment in line with the libraries' IT requirements. Resources such as tablets, laptops, projectors, e-book collections and speech apps were bought across the 36 libraries of the county and then used within 1-to-1 or group sessions in a location that suited the participant.

While the sessions were aimed at increasing participants' awareness of digital/online tools and teaching them basic IT skills, the project did not aspire to be an IT project, but a 'people project', with a strong emphasis on bringing people back into the community.

Impact and legacy:

The project aimed to deliver digital change not just for participants, but also for the library staff and the organisation as a whole. All library staff across the entire council received training in the need to address digital exclusion as well as specific digital skills for helping customers.

As a result, staff were reported to feel well-equipped to continue delivering the library's digital services and sustain this emerging shift in culture, with a Project Champion assigned in each library. The ambition of West Sussex Library Service is to fully embed Digital Library Plus into their services.

To that end, they will continue offering digital assistance to housebound people in their homes, also giving these residents the opportunity to borrow iPads. They will continue to support jobseekers with low digital confidence, helping them to use the library's online service and promoting them to other relevant schemes. There are also plans to develop the offer for those with special communication needs that wish to take part in sessions or trial speech-therapy technology.

Local organisations have also taken an interest in the project and were involved in organising different activities to address the target groups' social isolation. Project leads are hoping to further develop their relationships with partners to widen their reach of the target groups.

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Families and wellbeing

Wide range of activities to increase families' engagement, and improve access to information and physical, emotional and mental wellbeing.

Essex Libraries

Project name: Chelmsford Central Family Hub
Project cluster: Families and Wellbeing
LOFE Funding: £145,586

1 location

6 sessions

850 total visits

Project aims:

By securing funding from 2 major funding streams – LOFE and the Community Infrastructure Levy (Chelmsford City Council), Essex Libraries had a unique opportunity to realise a long-held ambition to develop an innovative, inspirational children and young people's space within Chelmsford Library.

Their mission was to better engage vulnerable or isolated families in Chelmsford by developing the library area and offering people a more seamless experience.

Target groups:

The project aimed to engage vulnerable or isolated families, including workless households, lone parents, BAME families, and children and young people with autism.

Activities:

The project coordinators engaged with a variety of organisations and groups as part of the design of the new space: from local schools and nurseries, Children's Centres and charities, to groups of children and teenagers that helped identify relevant display areas and co-create artwork for the space. The set-up phase took up a large proportion of the

funding duration, as it involved a lengthy process of procuring a supplier, agreeing on the infrastructure and making the necessary space adjustments for the continuing operations of the library.

The area opened to the public in March, with positive results so far. The coding club activities have taken off and are now oversubscribed, suggesting a significant increase in interest. There are also various craft resources, as well as baby and toddler sessions, and a range of sensory equipment, which staff were trained to use. On top of this, there is an interactive floor open to partners who want to deliver activities or signpost to their services or other interest groups, such as teachers or tutors.

Impact and legacy:
Although the funding period has ended for Chelmsford Library, project leads reported that in many ways the project is just beginning. By offering an integrated family hub through the new space, there are hopes that engagement with library users as well as partners will increase significantly, and early evidence suggest that this has already started to happen. A few volunteers have also been recruited to support the activities related to the new area.

Libraries Taskforce blog:
A new space for children and families in Chelmsford Library

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East Sussex County Council

Project name: Advantage East Sussex
Project cluster: Families and Wellbeing
LOFE Funding: £128,053

24 locations

174 sessions

2710 total visits

Project aims:
Advantage East Sussex was a multi-strand project tied into the council's strategic commissioning process, which addressed a range of target groups in areas of high deprivation (economic, attainment, and literacy) in East Sussex.

Target groups:
The project targeted individuals who had a visual impairment, were vulnerable to mental health deterioration, were digitally excluded from employment, as well as refugee families, children, and young people from the most deprived areas.

Activities:
The project involved 6 new initiatives to support the most disadvantaged groups in East Sussex:

- Writer in residence programme to support literacy among teens and other local groups;
- Hardware and software for visual impairments (building on connections with local societies for the blind);
- IT for You – aimed at improving digital skills among job seekers;
- Code clubs for children;
- Dual language Rhyme Time and Story Time – at centre for refugees;
- Wellbeing boxes for a wide range of groups.

The code clubs and wellbeing boxes were particularly successful and allowed the service to reach out to more people than they had initially hoped, despite the difficulties in recruiting volunteers for the code clubs or initial confusion about the concept of wellbeing boxes. Other activities, like running sessions with visually impaired people, were more challenging due to delays with implementation of software.

Impact and legacy:
Overall, feedback from participants was positive, with many profound individual stories. Library staff also reported being excited about the new activities.

The project also raised the profile of the library service at the council, and helped to establish new relationships with partners or further develop existing partnerships. The project also influenced development of the East Sussex Libraries Strategic Commissioning Strategy, 2018/19 to 2022/23.

Plans for the future include delivering code clubs in more locations and during library opening hours, continuing to use the vast stock of wellbeing boxes, holding occasional sessions with refugees, and exploring new ways of promoting the hardware and software to engage with people with visual impairments. They are also looking for additional funding streams to continue the digital offer for jobseekers.

Libraries Taskforce blog:
Advantage East Sussex

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Luton – Cultural Services Trust

Project name: Library Makers
Project cluster: Families and Wellbeing
LOFE Funding: £151,855

**3
locations**

Project aims:
Library Makers aimed to reach out to disadvantaged groups and involve them in the redesign of underused library spaces, so that they are more welcoming and better suit the needs of local residents. The project was modelled on a similar co-production programme called Museum Makers.

Target groups:
The project targeted disadvantaged groups that use the library building, but do not actively engage with its services.

Activities:
The project's main goal was to recruit volunteers called Library Makers and co-develop 3 safe spaces for social, learning and creative activities within Luton Central Library:

- A T+ area for young people/adults: refreshed the area on the first floor of the library and made it more relevant to teenagers, by redesigning the physical space and bringing in new collections. Focus groups with young people were run, as well as a consultation and workshop with an artist who developed interactive artwork for the space.

- Well & Wise Health space: a new space created to better deliver the Universal Health offer, run information sessions, workshops and provide Books on Prescription. This space was co-produced with library staff and local health providers.

- Children's Library: changed the children's space by producing and installing new artwork, with a view to enhancing children's wellbeing and development.

The project led to the development of a new website and social media platform, where over 100 Library Makers signed up. These volunteers are involved in selecting 'challenges', which are activities to be carried out in the library.

Impact and legacy:
The project helped change the perception of the library as a safe space beyond book borrowing. Those involved in co-production felt that their contribution made a positive impact and reported interest in visiting the library more. There is also some early evidence that points to an increase in the usage of library resources.

The impact of the Well & Wise Health space is limited at the moment, but early feedback from the health providers suggests that the space is helping them hold engaging sessions with new users.

Project leads continue to use the website to launch 'challenges' and engage Library Makers. The ultimate goal is to roll out this project to other libraries as well. They are also planning to explore additional funding to develop a coproduced programme and emphasise skills development and new activities addressing the needs of the local community.

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Project name: The Human Library
Project cluster: Families and Wellbeing
LOFE Funding: £99,000

2 locations

78 sessions

789 total visits

Project aims:
The project aimed to create a 'human library' of volunteers and partnerships to help address issues related to poor mental health and social isolation in one of the borough's most deprived areas.

It was planned that local residents would 'gift' their talents or experience to someone in need, from preparing and hosting a community meal to 1-to-1 sessions between a volunteer and someone living with a mental health condition.

Target groups:
The project focused on adults at greater risk of social isolation and poor mental health issues, with a specific focus on unemployed adults, carers, new parents, and lone parents. After the start of the project, the target groups were expanded to also include older people who self-identified as lonely and isolated, as well as children.

Activities:
The programme ran 78 creative and artist-led activity sessions across 2 locations, which were designed to uncover local talents among local residents, such as cooking, podcasting, glazing ceramics, flower arrangement workshops, story time sessions, and yoga. This helped build a sustainable bank of volunteers who were able to pass their gift on to others. Staff were trained in early intervention and prevention techniques such as Making Every Contact Count.

Impact and legacy:
Project leads reported that the introduction of creative activities within the library had changed the 'feel' of the library and created a more positive and energised environment.

Participants enjoyed taking part in the project, learned new skills, and formed new connections, which was felt to have led to a new group of users regularly attending the library. New friendships have formed and people volunteer regularly. In particular, the Human Library was reported to have helped improve participants' happiness levels, reduce stress and enable them to meet new people from their neighbourhood, reducing their sense of social isolation.

Through developing a closer working relationship with local artists, the project also provided staff and volunteers with an opportunity to learn new skills, increase their confidence, and expand their role within the library through engaging in creative activities and supporting participation.

Libraries Taskforce blog:
Creating a 'human library' in Sefton

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Staffordshire County Council

Project name: Ready Steady Library
Project cluster: Families and Wellbeing
LOFE Funding: £52,300

8 locations

33 sessions

540 total visits

Project aims:
Ready Steady Library aimed to increase the percentage of children accessing universal education provision, reduce referral rates to services, and improve school readiness.

Target groups:
The project targeted families with pre-school children in East Staffordshire, who face multiple issues including housing, health, unemployment.

Activities:
The project engaged families across 8 locations in co-production activities, which enabled them to support their children's development. Specific activities included:

- Co-creating resource bags to support the Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum (EYFS) by holding workshops for families in 3 groups: 0-18months; 18months-3yrs; and +3yrs;

- Training library and early years staff to use the resources in library and early years settings;

- Signposting parents to other supportive education provision (through the Children's centre);

- Developing part of the website where families and professionals can access the co-created resources for free and use them in different settings (a community resource);

- Purchasing equipment such as e-readers and tablets to help with IT skills development (supported by volunteers).

The participants, who took part in blocks of 12-week sessions, were recruited with the help of local organisations which work with specific family groups or specific sections of the community. Throughout the project, 33 sessions were delivered, with a total of 540 attendees.

Impact and legacy:
Despite the challenges of involving participants in co-production and dispelling an array of preconceived ideas, evidence suggests that the project had a significant impact on the families' confidence and wellbeing, as well as higher engagement with the library. With the project being extended until June, final impacts are still to be analysed.

In terms of next steps, the libraries plan on producing more bags to meet demand, based on the themes which attracted the most requests. Trained staff are also looking at new ways to market the bags and schedule events. The online resources are also available as a legacy of the project.

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Tameside Libraries

Project name: Story Makers
Project cluster: Families and Wellbeing
LOFE Funding: £60,660

9 locations

142 sessions

5152 total visits

189 final event

Project aims:
As one of the most deprived areas nationally, with low literacy and cultural participation, the main driver of Tameside Libraries was to support literacy in adults and school readiness for children.

Target groups:
The primary target group of this project was families with young children. Although the expected age group for the children was 2-4, the project attracted more families with children aged 0-2

Activities:
The project activities consisted of 39 weekly drop-in sessions in 4 libraries working with families with pre-schoolers in creative ways, such as engaging with stories, encouraging creativity, and developing reading skills and confidence. A writer and an illustrator were hired to work with families to develop ideas for 4 books, which have been published. To celebrate, the libraries hosted a large event with over 200 attendees and an art gallery exhibition dedicated to the production of the books.

Partners had an important role in the project. The libraries worked with early years providers and voluntary and council bodies (children's centres, health workers, educational organisations, and others), who had a critical role in promoting the programme. Stone Soup Creative Development CIC also project managed and facilitated in partnership with libraries,

while the Halle Orchestra were involved in delivering activities and the Lowry Theatre hosted a series of visits.

Impact and legacy:
The project opened up new ways of thinking about cultural activities and in particular their impact on very young children. Evidence suggests that this has stimulated appetite for further engagement, and trained library staff will continue using their skills to run new events in the future.

Tameside libraries have since received expressions of interest from other organisations wishing to partner in similar projects. To sustain the legacy of the project a new project has just started. Funded by Community Safety Fund, "Story Makers People Who Help Us" will aim to improve relationships between disadvantaged families and Emergency Services by engaging with parents who have pre-school children. The sessions will focus on people who help us; Police, Ambulance and Fire Services and School Crossing Patrol - breaking down barriers through performance storytelling, singing and creating a children's picture book.

In addition, funding is being sought for a spin-off music project with the Halle orchestra.

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Literature and creative expression

Creative activities that aimed to address low levels of participation and bring literature to life for vulnerable and marginalised groups.

Bradford Libraries

Project name: Immersive Literature Kits
Project cluster: Literature and creative expression
LOFE Funding: £74,692

8 locations

34 sessions

282 total visits

Project aims:
The project in Bradford looked at improving the access to libraries for people of all ages, with special educational needs and disability (SEND). A clear need was identified in offering material that meets the target's specific needs, especially age-appropriate literature.

Target groups:
The project initially targeted people with special educational needs. However, this was expanded after project leads found that there was a strong level of interest from people with a wide range of other disabilities and conditions. This included working with people with dyslexia, as well as with those who had complex health needs such as Down's syndrome.

Activities:
Bradford Libraries worked with Purple Patch Arts, who trained 15 members of staff and 3 volunteers to work with SEND groups. Training included disability awareness activities, watching films of the everyday challenges of people with disabilities, and looking at language when talking to and describing people to raise awareness of what can be offensive.

The library also worked closely with Purple Patch Arts to develop sensory kits for adults, teens, and children and train staff on how to use them in groups to tell stories. A total of 25 collections of sensory materials sacks, including musical instruments, were created to encourage libraries to include sensory elements in all stories.

Impact and legacy:
Baseline and endline surveys for staff showed that confidence of working with SEND people increased considerably, as did their confidence in working with the new sensory approach. Participants reported enjoying the group sessions and showed an increase in their confidence. The project challenges previous ideas that children with SEND are not allowed in the library because they are noisy.

The staff are now trained to run sensory immersive literary activities and have a better understanding of what is the most engaging content per group age/level. In terms of next steps, sensory elements will be added in other story time projects.

Libraries Taskforce blog:
Immersive, age appropriate, sensory story times

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Cultural Community Solutions Harrow

Project name: Books Beyond Words Plus (BBWP)
Project cluster: Literature and creative expression
LOFE Funding: £92,206

13 locations

161 sessions

1412 total visits

Project aims:
Books Beyond Words Plus (BBWP) was a pilot art, drama, and literature project delivered by Cultural Community Solutions Ltd (part of Carillion) on behalf of the London Boroughs of Harrow (lead), Croydon, Ealing, and Hounslow. It aimed to increase literacy, social confidence, and pathways into work among participants, and was delivered in partnership with Books Beyond Words (BBW) and other local partners in adult social care and adult education,

Target groups:
The project targeted people with learning and communication disabilities.

Activities:
BBWP was modelled on the BBW book clubs using special picture books based on visual literacy. It aimed to offer people with learning disabilities a designated space and the assistance necessary to interact with tailored resources and expert facilitators in order to gain a better understanding of the world around them and better express themselves.

BBW CIC provided sets of 50+ picture rich books and trained library staff who helped deliver 161 Reading Group sessions with approximately 130 participants across 13 libraries. The sessions were delivered in bespoke places co-created with participants. Using the frame of visual literacy, library staff also co-created with participants stories as per the themes in the books. The

sessions started with fun motifs and easily moved on to more serious points such as being job ready, falling in love, and going to the doctor. Each session finished with colouring, craft, music or drama activity, and every group completed a scrapbook outlining their activities and progress. In addition to the Book Groups, there have been drama and music workshops, plus music and art workshops with Harrow Arts.

Partners such as Mencap and the Autism Society helped reach the target audience and provided an opportunity to develop a better understanding of what these groups need. Impact Theatre Arts Class were commissioned to design the look and feel of the space in the library dedicated to BBW.

Impact and legacy:
The project activities were carried out despite significant challenges posed by the dismantling of Cultural Community Solutions and the partial disappearance of funding through the liquidation of Carillion.

As a result of the project, the library is now felt to be a more accessible place for people with learning disabilities, who can be seen actively engaging. On a wider level, the picture books have enabled staff to connect with this audience in an innovative way. The partner organisations have also benefited from using this new method of visual literacy, and they now look to borrow the materials and bring in more groups into the library.

All 4 boroughs now have multiple sets of the Books Beyond Words picture books available to use with groups or to borrow from the BBW library shelf designed specifically for them. With members of staff and volunteers now trained in using the materials, the project continues.

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Greenwich Leisure Limited (GLL)

Project name: Story Book Play
Project cluster: Literature and creative expression
LOFE Funding: £125,121

Project aims:
On behalf of the Royal Borough of Greenwich, GLL set out to create Story Book Play, an indoor literary play space built around the theme of children's literature, loosely modelled on the outdoor play area in the Bibliotekshaven in Denmark.

This creative play area will be installed in Eltham Library, where it will provide an innovative facility meant to expand the range of services offered. It is envisaged that the space will generate new interest in reading, writing, family learning and the library.

Target groups:
The creative play space is suitable for children aged 0-8 and their families. The literary theme and activities will inspire children to use their imaginations and to encourage families to learn and read together.

Activities:
The literary space was designed in partnership with Discover, who ran consultation workshops with local families and children who use the library to clarify needs and create an engaging experience. This was accompanied by several book-based performances, some of which focused on the role that the space could play in hosting sensory activities for people with additional learning needs.

The space itself will be completed in late summer 2018 after the evaluation of the LOFE: innovation fund has been concluded.

Impact and legacy:

GLL intends to provide the necessary staff to run the fully operational project beyond the end of the LOFE. Prior to the space opening, it was anticipated that space would increase engagement with library services through its position next to the leisure centre, inspire more children and families to read, and encourage interaction between families.

The library will use a data focused approach to measure the impact, looking at the number of new customers and time spent in the library, as well as qualitative feedback.

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Norfolk County Council

Project name: Norfolk Reading Pathway
Project cluster: Literature and creative expression
LOFE funding: £98,020

39 locations

2222 sessions

562 total visits

Project aims:
The Norfolk Reading Pathway aims to help emergent readers aged 8 or over to develop their reading skills through coaching support and 1-to-1 phonics-based teaching delivered by volunteers in 47 libraries across Norfolk.

Target groups:
The project focused on emergent readers aged 8 or over living across the county. Around 150 adult learners engaged with activities.

Activities:
The funding was used to hire 2 volunteer coordinators, recruit and induct volunteer coaches, and purchase phonic workbooks. A total of 170 volunteers were recruited and trained in using the tools and over the course of the project, they delivered over 2000 1-to-1 sessions to 150 adults, as well as children in over 30 schools.

Impact and legacy:
A number of participants described their involvement as lifechanging, as they are now able to read for the first time. Readers are also able to progress to other challenges, such as the 'Reading Ahead' scheme.

The volunteers who delivered the project reported developing a positive and rewarding relationship with their readers, thus contributing to re-embedding literacy at the core of the library

offer. The sessions were delivered not just in libraries, but also in schools, with a high level of interest from the latter due to the lack of free alternatives.

The project reported that care was taken to establish the foundations of the project and recruit coordinators and a large number of volunteers, as well as working with partners to recruit readers. Project leads anticipate that the number of readers will continue to grow and therefore this offer has been embedded into their service. While the 2 volunteer coordinators are no longer in post, the library service was recently restructured to better support more local engagement, and this specific literacy support is included within the library service plan.

There are plans to develop the programme further, with the development of reading challenges and games. A shared reading group for adults was also piloted and this approach is being rolled out. It is hoped that individual readers will turn to the library service as a natural place to get help with any literacy issues.

Libraries Taskforce blog:
[The Norfolk Reading Pathway – literacy project in Norfolk](#)

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Plymouth Libraries

Project name: Lunch at the Library
Project cluster: Literature and creative expression / Families and wellbeing
LOFE Funding: £56,026

3 locations

16 sessions

4994 total visits

Project aims:
Plymouth aimed to combat holiday hunger and increase engagement with libraries through Lunch at the Library, a project that aimed to feed children's minds and tummies over the summer holiday.

Target groups:
The project targeted children and families from three deprived areas in Plymouth, focussing on 6 schools and irregular library users.

Activities:
The library service partnered with CATERed, a co-operative trading company jointly owned by local schools and Plymouth City Council who provide high quality school food to children and young people.

Lunch at the Library ran every Wednesday in August 2017 in 3 different locations, with a total number of 16 sessions and almost 5000 participants. A healthy lunch was provided, and each week a different activity theme was held for families to engage with. Free books were given out to further encourage reading and engagement with the programme.

Impact and legacy:
The impact was measured through 500 feedback forms and the increase in the number of memberships. Ultimately, the project allowed families to feed their children and provided access to cultural, digital and educational activities.

The library service has built up partnerships that will be long lasting. Lunch at the Library ran again in 2018, this time in all 12 libraries and a Pop-up Library. The project is now an annual event.

Libraries Taskforce blog:
[Lunch at the library – an update](#)

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SW Region of Readers

Project name: The south west: a region of readers
Project cluster: Literature and creative expression
LOFE Funding: £136,846

25 locations

57 sessions

3572 total visits

Project aims:
The project aims to address multiple disadvantages in target communities in the south west, including low literacy levels, digital skills, social isolation, and mental health and wellbeing.

Target groups:
The project targeted adults, families, digitally disadvantaged adults, and irregular library users within areas of multiple disadvantage, most of which were in the top 10-20% of most deprived areas in England.

All of these target communities experienced poor health outcomes, while most communities also displayed high levels of deprivation for older people; low levels of educational achievement, skills and employment amongst the working age population; as well as social isolation and loneliness.

Activities:
Activities were delivered in 25 locations through a partnership of 6 local authorities working in cooperation with Literature Works, The Reader and South Western Regional Library Services (CIO).

Activities were delivered across 3 major strands, including:

- A network of shared reading groups where participants relax, share stories, read aloud or just listen.
- Cultural events organised by library services, such as creative writing sessions and digital workshops.

- Co-creation of a digital app, online web resources, and community activities, inspiring and engaging local creativity.

Impact and legacy:

The shared reading groups were reported to have helped increase participants' confidence, reduce isolation and inspire those attending to start reading again. The volunteers that ran these groups were also felt to have benefited from the training that they received as part of the project, including reports of increased confidence to try new things, lead a group discussion, and read aloud.

Project leads also felt that the development of the digital app had caught the imagination of staff, who had taken ownership over its design and had increased their knowledge and skills in digital applications.

Designing, developing, and delivering the three activity strands of the project improved connections between participating libraries and their local partners, who are now continuing to work together.

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Makerspaces

Physical hubs that aimed to address local deprivation through digital taster sessions, activities and courses, including creative activities such as 3D printing, animation, robotics, and coding.

Hull

Project name: Makerspace Hull
Project cluster: Makerspaces
LOFE Funding: £243,783

15 locations

Project aims:
The project aimed to create a space within Hull Central Library for people to explore their creativity in arts, science, technology, and engineering on an individual basis or in a group setting.

Target groups:
Open-to-anyone interested in exploring their creativity in arts, science, technology, or engineering.

Activities:
A complete floor in the Central Library was refurbished and has been fitted out with state-of-the-art manual, digital, and electronic equipment and tools. This includes 3D printers, jewellery and ceramic kilns, a spray booth, digital printer and a CNC machine amongst many other offerings.

Library staff have also been trained to run taster sessions, workshops and host sessions alongside dedicated Makerspace staff. Participants can work on their own personal projects. A series of pop-up Makerspaces have been held in other locations across Hull. For example, The Big Malarkey Festival held in one of the city's largest parks.
Impact and legacy:

Project leads reported that, though it was too soon at the point of evaluation to observe the effect of the project on individual participants, they had observed initial changes in staff members and the local community. This included an enthusiasm among some staff members for a shift towards offering more digital services within the library and a 'buzz' among local community groups about the possibilities of working alongside the library and its newly developed space.

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Kent

Project name: Digital Dens
Project cluster: Makerspaces
LOFE Funding: £104,119

5 locations

151 sessions

2103 total visits

Project aims:
The project aimed to deliver 5 new digital makerspaces, in the form of a weekly club, to enable children to explore their creative minds using technology in a safe, fun, and stimulating environment.

Target groups:
Children aged between 8 and 12 from less advantaged backgrounds in some of the most deprived districts in Kent.

Activities:
Each club was developed to deliver a series of activities using a MakerCart (a portable trolley filled with technology), as well as a code club. Each club delivers a structured series of weekly, volunteer-led sessions focused on coding and digital exploration. Each site also offers drop-in sessions and special seasonal events.

Impact and legacy:
The project provided children living in areas of deprivation in Kent access to digital technology and digital skills education. Each club continues to run and expand, with demand still high. The Digital Den helps the children to start developing skills that they will need for school and future work.

Feedback from parents and the children themselves indicate not only that they really enjoy the club; but more importantly that they learn new things, and that they are enthused continue

learning at home. The majority of children say that they would like to take part in the same Digital Den club again, join another code club, or take part in a different digital activity in the library.

Anecdotal reports also indicated that libraries staff and volunteers had increased their confidence in using IT, with one volunteer using their Digital Den volunteering experience in a successful job interview. Staff at most sites have since found ways of using the technology within other library activities.

The Kent Library, Registration & Archive service is now looking at ways that it can partner with local organisations that are interested in digital literacy or run their own maker clubs to further develop this theme of work across the local community.

Libraries Taskforce blog:
Kent's Digital Dens

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Libraries Unlimited (Devon)

Project name: Unlimited Potential
Project cluster: Makerspaces / Arts & culture
LOFE funding: £245,330

12 locations

84 sessions

6085 total visits

Project aims:
Libraries Unlimited is a staff and community owned charity responsible for running 50 libraries and 4 mobile libraries on behalf of Devon County Council. Libraries Unlimited set out to promote literacy, provide access to arts and culture as well as improving and supporting peoples' health and wellbeing and employment prospects in targeted areas of deprivation. It focused on North Devon and Torridge, which has had historically low investment in arts and culture despite having a high proportion of the most deprived wards in England.

Target groups:
The project worked with a wide range of groups, including children and families, teenagers and young people, older people, local businesses and community groups.

Activities:
This project had 2 main strands:

• Developing a digital fabrication laboratory (FabLab) in Barnstaple Library. This included a range of digital equipment such as 3D printers and scanners, as well as a mobile FabLab used to deliver outreach activities to various target groups and communities including more rural libraries.

Alongside this, they also opened a new Business and Intellectual Property (IP) Centre at Barnstaple Library as part of the British Library's Business and IP network. This provides library users with free access to business focussed resources

and offers local entrepreneurs and start-ups the chance to attend events and workshops.

- Reimagining and introducing creative approaches to library services to reach more people and raise awareness of the variety of services. These were designed to bring people together, provide access to arts and culture, promote and improve literacy, health, wellbeing, employment prospects and overall life chances. This included activities for people of all ages and abilities from a street art stencilling workshop, to laughter yoga and theatre performances.

Impact and legacy:

The project engaged over 6000 people across 72 events. Feedback from participants was very positive, with many surprised by what libraries have to offer. Apart from helping change people's perception of libraries, the project allowed 54 members of staff to receive specific training and gave staff across the area more confidence in their ability to try new things, embed creative approaches and provided long-lasting relationships with new collaborators and partners.

The FabLab equipment, mobile FabLab and Business and IP resources will continue to be used, and a toolkit has been shared amongst staff, containing resources to allow them to continue delivering activities even if less money is available.

The project worked with 41 new partners, who ranged from Children's Centres, voluntary services and artist collectives, to the NHS social care team and local businesses. After recently becoming a national portfolio organisation (NPO) and accessing £170k a year through Arts Council England, they plan on continuing to work with these partners to create ways of engaging new groups such as young people and the elderly.

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Liverpool City Council

Project name: Maker Difference
Project cluster: Makerspaces
LOFE Funding: £75,500

5 locations

32 sessions

6787 total visits

4908 festival event

Project aims:
This project aimed to create makerspaces and host activities in areas affected by deprivation and poverty, where there are high levels of unemployment and crime.

The project also aimed to address a lack of artistic and cultural facilities in the targeted areas and thus hoped to build stronger more resilient communities, promote digital inclusion, reduce social isolation, and develop digital literacies

Target groups:
The project focused on working with children and young people aged 8-18 in 4 disadvantaged communities.

Activities:
The project partnered with local schools, a central co-working makerspace as well as creating local 'makerclubs' to deliver workshops and help attract participants in community libraries. These took place across 4 library sites in the most deprived areas, and maker carts used for activities included, a vinyl cutter, circuit boards, and a 3D printer. Activities were oversubscribed. The project culminated in a festival event to promote the new 'makerclubs'.

Impact and legacy:
The project was felt to have succeeded in embedding existing partnerships and developing new ones. The newly trained staff are now enthusiastic advocates for the Maker Clubs and will continue to engage in these activities beyond the funding period as well as cascade training to additional staff. They have also looked into the possibility of generating income by using the maker carts to offer courses to teachers as part of Continuing Professional Development (CPD).

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Stockton Libraries & Information Services

Project name: Innovation Stations
Project cluster: Makerspace
LOFE funding: £97,100

2 locations

Project aims:
Building on the area's industrial focus, this project aimed to address the decline in innovation and provide opportunities for local people to learn new skills and use specialist equipment not publicly available elsewhere in Stockton-On-Tees.

This project set out to deliver 2 fully equipped rooms within the borough's largest libraries. This includes 1 'Innovation station' – a makerspace with 3D printers and scanners, digital cutters and laptops, and 1 'Imagination station' which is a 'sensory space' for immersive projections. Apart from providing access to different technologies, these spaces are intended to contribute to the improvement of health and wellbeing among residents in need.

Target groups:
The project initially focused on working with young adults from deprived backgrounds, but was expanded to also include several special educational needs groups from local schools and older people with dementia.

Activities:
Both areas were successfully developed, overcoming a series of logistical and administrative challenges related to seeking approval for renovation in a rented space. The expertise of many staff members was used for creating the spaces: from specialist librarians who deal with children and young people, to

those focused on digital services, stock, and reader development or local history.

Project leads have also started delivering staff training to use the equipment, which was received with excitement. They have begun testing the space with some participants and are currently developing a programme of activities to carry out in the future.

Impact and legacy:
The project had an impact on frontline staff, who were initially reported to be resistant to the project but have since become big supporters of the spaces and the opportunities that the technology offers. Moreover, all staff involved in the project reported that they had learnt from their involvement in the project and have now started to consider ways in which the new spaces will be used to support their particular element of the public library service.

The children and families who have used the Innovation station also provided positive feedback. The imagination station proved to be a calming space, for example for people with dementia. As such, taking the project forward, project leads plan to work closely with contacts in health organisations and are engaging with Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) and other health professionals.

Libraries Taskforce blog:
Innovation and imagination in Stockton Borough

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Vision Redbridge Culture and Leisure

Project name: Lab Central
Project cluster: Makerspaces / Arts & Culture
LOFE funding: £208,989

10 locations

176 sessions

2127 total visits

Project aims:
This project aimed to position Redbridge Central Library as the main arts & technology hub for Ilford Town Centre by developing a makerspace on the ground floor of Redbridge Central Library. It also aimed to give young people in more deprived areas access to high quality art & technology, by piloting a technology lending service and creative engagement programme.

Target groups:
The project targeted children, young people, and families in local neighbourhoods with high levels of multiple deprivation.

Activities:
The project's activities included hosting a Tech Festival during London Technology week, a community engagement programme, an education programme, and a digital public arts commission for the town centre. The project enabled young people to explore new technologies and work with professional artists, educators and tech innovators. Furthermore, young people got the opportunity to create, innovate and exhibit their work in the library to coincide with the installation of public art commission in the high street.

5 frontline library staff were trained to help deliver the programme alongside a team of volunteers, The reliance on volunteers to deliver some of the activities presented challenges at times. Overcoming these challenges was possible as a result

of a strong partnership with arts and technology organisations and unexpected partnerships developing with other local providers during the course of the project.

Impact and legacy:
The new services were felt to have successfully inspired creativity among young people, where over 1895 children had a chance to experience new technology and creative practises. Project participants responded positively to the activities and all sessions were oversubscribed.

Library staff also showed enthusiasm for taking part, putting themselves forward for training and taking on responsibilities to deliver the new services which built their confidence with new skills. In order to ensure the sustainability of the programme, staff will use their training to deliver activities in the future.

The public art commission was also felt to have changed perceptions around what happens in and near libraries and raised the profile of the library service and the town centre at an exciting time in Ilford's regeneration, with audiences estimated at 50,000 people over a 10-night period. The makerspace and the activities delivered from it have been embedded within the core library offer. The project also won first prize in the Physical Category at the Edge Conference 2018, which is a testament to its achievements.

Project video:
Tech Ilford at Redbridge Central Library
Public Art Commission

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Warwickshire County Council

Project name: Let's make
Project cluster: Makerspaces
LOFE Funding: £79,500

2 locations

3 sessions

129 total visits

Project aims:
This project aimed to promote the educational attainment, economic growth, and wellbeing of disadvantaged communities in northern Warwickshire by setting up 2 library-based makerspaces, which offered local communities unique access to technology and facilities for exploring ideas, making things in new ways, and increasing digital awareness.

Target groups:
The project worked with people of all ages and backgrounds from disadvantaged communities.

Activities:
The project focus changed slightly over the course of the funding to concentrate on digital skills and preparing participants for the digital job market, as they found that this tied in better with activities that the libraries already delivered, such as code clubs. The 2 makerspaces were built successfully, and there is now a vast variety of equipment offered in them, such as robotics, virtual reality, 3D printers, iPads, and animation and film software.

'Let's Make' have since offered activities for children, young people, families, and adults with learning disabilities. Thus far, these have mainly taken the form of taster sessions, but will continue to evolve into more targeted courses after consulting with communities and the public about what type of activities to run.

Impact and legacy:
The project received great feedback from activity participants, who seem excited and inspired by the new technology. Staff were also felt to have increased their confidence in using digital media through attending a series of familiarisation courses that were offered to build up technical capabilities in order to promote the makerspaces effectively.

A number of partnerships with businesses, industry, community groups, and higher education were explored ahead of a main launch event taking place in May. In terms of next steps, the project received additional government funding to hire a 'Let's Make' Digital Apprentice. Project leads are now looking to recruit a Coordinator to push the project forward and embed it in the standard library service offer.

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