LJ LIBRARY JOURNAL

Report of
Community Engagement Survey Results

Fall 2018

METHODOLOGY:

The *LJ* community engagement survey was developed in conjunction with BiblioBoard. The survey was emailed to a selection of public library directors from libraries serving populations of 100,000 or more and random community engagement stakeholders on October 5, with a reminder to non-responders on October 10. The survey closed on October 22 with 66 respondents.

SUMMARY:

This study was conducted to learn if libraries make community engagement with local creators a priority and if so, what tools, including community engagement software, do they use? Communicating the value of these programs and securing funding are also asked about.

Nearly eight-in-ten respondents strongly agree or agree that their library's long-term strategic vision emphasizes engaging with local creators to make their works available to other patrons and provide artists with a discovery opportunity.

Almost all responding libraries (94%) currently makes an effort to work with local creators in their communities. Urban and suburban libraries are more likely to have reached out to local writers, artists, and musicians, possibly because they have a larger pool of potential creators to tap.

Arts and crafts programs are the most common program for creative communities, offered by 95% of libraries. But writing classes, 3D printers, makerspaces, and coding/website design classes are offered by the majority of libraries as well.

Funding sources for community engagement programs and tools vary widely, but Friends of the Library groups (65%) and the library's programming budget (61%) are tapped most often. Donations and one-time grants are relied upon by nearly half the sample.

Forty-one percent of respondents report that district-level administrators and stakeholders are "very supportive" of funding community engagement programming. Another 34% say their administrators are merely "supportive." Only 7% of libraries feel that administrators are "not too" or "not at all supportive." The few responses to a follow-up question asking why district administrators are non-supportive vary from "no money for arts funding" to community engagement is not viewed as an "essential service."

The value of community engagement programming is communicated to funders at library board and town meetings, in library newsletters and in the local newspaper. Staff presentations generally include anecdotal outcomes, photos, and 'data' without description of what type of data. Customer feedback/survey results or project outcome statistics are mentioned by very few libraries. Some respondents commented that they could be doing this better.

About 1-in-5 libraries have software that enables local creators to contribute works to the library's collection. Of the libraries that have no community engagement software, almost two-thirds believe it would be either very valuable or valuable to use.

For those libraries with community engagement software, their state or library consortium is the biggest contributor of funding. Library administrators and technology staff are the most mentioned community engagement software decision makers.
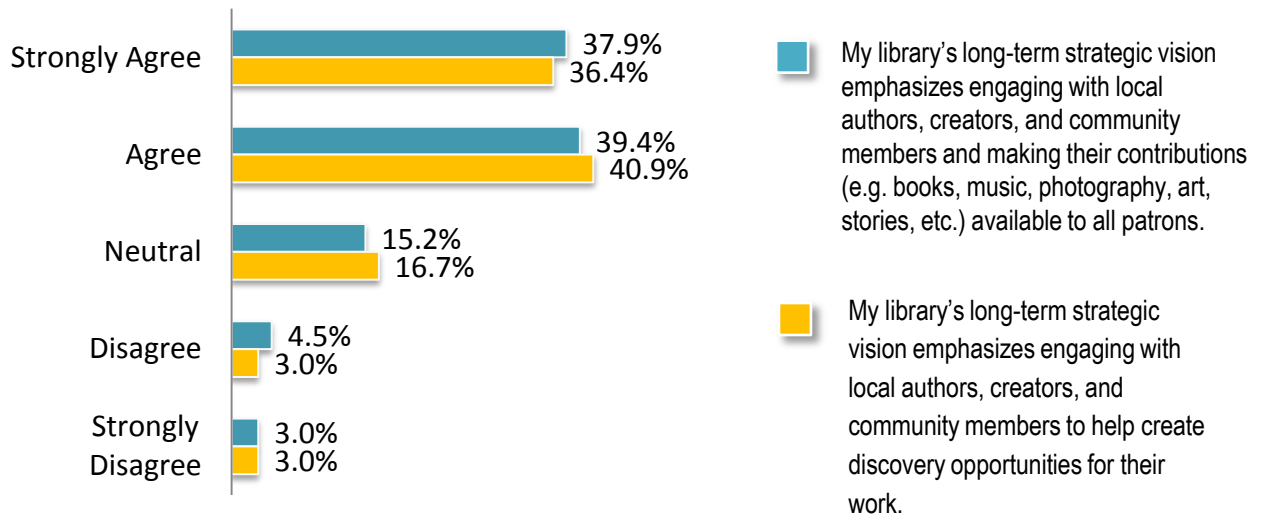
True engagement with creators and non-creators is the primary method libraries use to measure the value of their community engagement software, followed by software usage metrics.

QUESTIONS

1. Please indicate the degree to which you agree with the following statements:

- Nearly eight-in-ten respondents strongly agree/agree that their library's long-term strategic vision emphasizes engaging with local creators to make their works available to other patrons and provide them with a discovery opportunity.

Strongly Agree 37.9% / 36.4%

Agree 39.4% / 40.9%

Neutral 15.2% / 16.7%

Disagree 4.5% / 3.0%

Strongly Disagree 3.0% / 3.0%

■ My library's long-term strategic vision emphasizes engaging with local authors, creators, and community members and making their contributions (e.g. books, music, photography, art, stories, etc.) available to all patrons.

■ My library's long-term strategic vision emphasizes engaging with local authors, creators, and community members to help create discovery opportunities for their work.
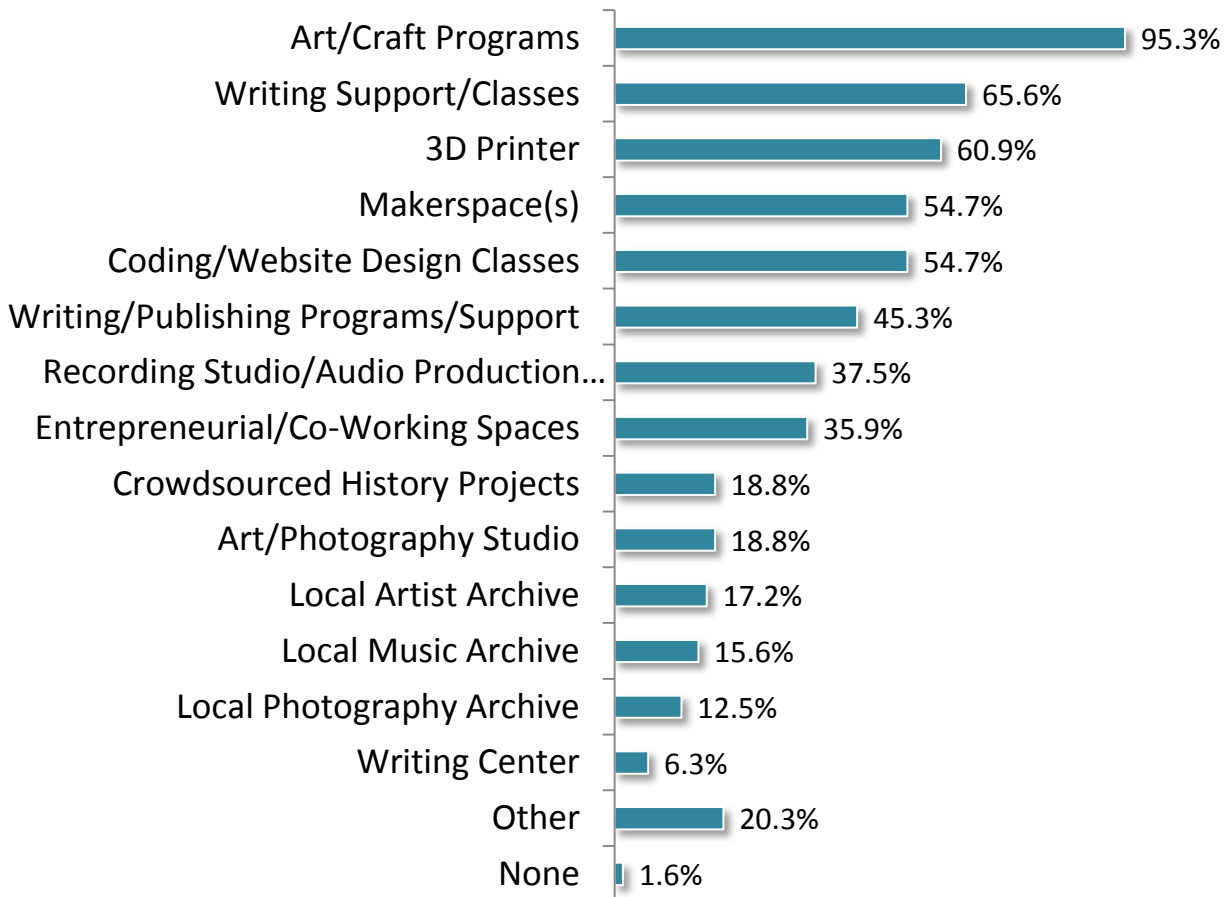
2. Has your library made an effort to work with local creators (e.g., writers, artists, musicians, etc.) as part of its community engagement offerings?

Yes, 93.9%

No, 6.1%
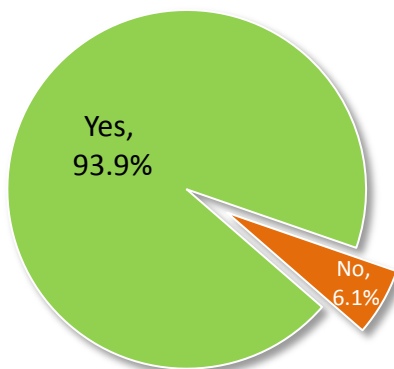
- Nearly all respondents (94%) have already made an effort to work with local creators in their communities.

- Urban and suburban libraries are more likely to have reached out to local writers, artists, and musicians, possibly because they have a larger pool of potential creators to tap.

3. What types of tools, spaces, or services does your library make available for your creative community? Please check all that apply.

- The top five tools, spaces, or services offered to libraries' creative communities are
    - Arts and crafts programs (95%)
    - Writing support and classes (66%)
    - 3D Printers (61%)
    - Makerspaces (55%)
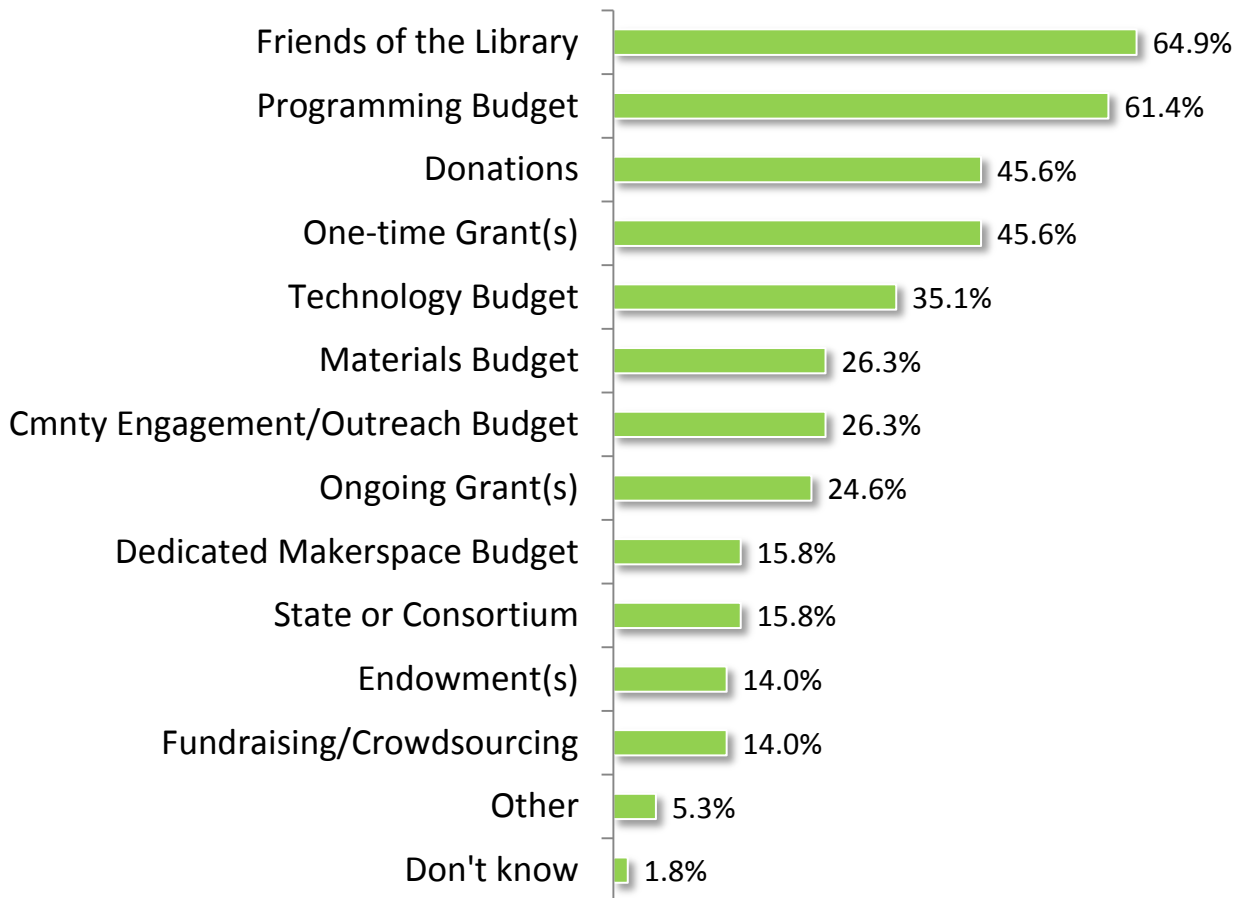   - Coding/Website design classes (55%)

Category	Percentage
Art/Craft Programs	95.3%
Writing Support/Classes	65.6%
3D Printer	60.9%
Makerspace(s)	54.7%
Coding/Website Design Classes	54.7%
Writing/Publishing Programs/Support	45.3%
Recording Studio/Audio Production...	37.5%
Entrepreneurial/Co-Working Spaces	35.9%
Crowdsourced History Projects	18.8%
Art/Photography Studio	18.8%
Local Artist Archive	17.2%
Local Music Archive	15.6%
Local Photography Archive	12.5%
Writing Center	6.3%
Other	20.3%
None	1.6%

4. [If Makerspace(s)] What types of technology/software does your makerspace include? (open-ended question)

- 3D printers and scanners, movie editing software, Cricut machines, and Dremel tools received multiple mentions in this open-ended question about makerspace technology.
- Full-text responses can be found in the Appendix.

5. From what funding areas does your library pay for these types of community engagement programs, services, and tools?

- Funding sources for community engagement programs and tools vary widely, but Friends of the Library groups (65%) and the library's programming budget (61%) are tapped most often.
- Donations and one-time grants are relied upon by nearly half the sample.

Funding Area	Percentage
Friends of the Library	64.9%
Programming Budget	61.4%
Donations	45.6%
One-time Grant(s)	45.6%
Technology Budget	35.1%
Materials Budget	26.3%
Cmnty Engagement/Outreach Budget	26.3%
Ongoing Grant(s)	24.6%
Dedicated Makerspace Budget	15.8%
State or Consortium	15.8%
Endowment(s)	14.0%
Fundraising/Crowdsourcing	14.0%
Other	5.3%
Don't know	1.8%

6. How supportive are district administrators and stakeholders about funding your library's community engagement efforts?

- 41% of respondents report that district administrators are "very supportive" of funding community engagement programming. Another 34% say their administrators are "supportive."
- Only 7% of libraries feel that administrators are "not too" or "not at all supportive." The few responses to a follow-up question asking why administrators are non-supportive vary from "no money for arts funding" to not viewed as an "essential service".

41.1%	33.9%	17.9%	5.4%	1.8%, Not at all Supportive
Very Supportive	Supportive	Somewhat Supportive	Not too Supportive	
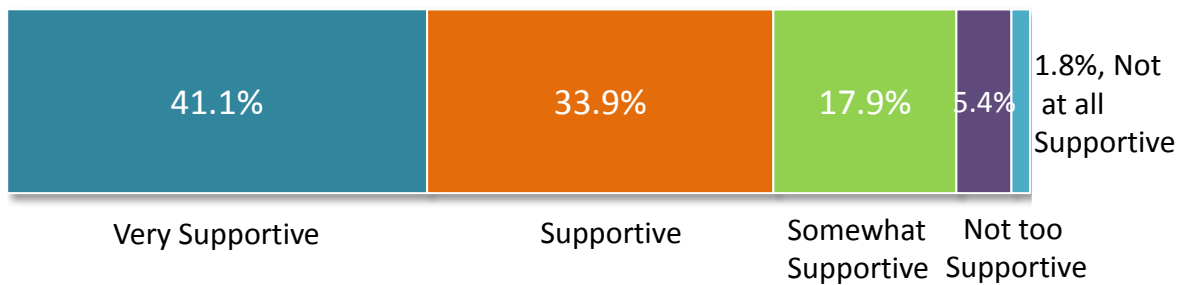
7. [If 'not too' or 'not at all supportive'] Why do you think they are reluctant to fund community engagement projects? (open-ended question)

- Don't see the value; don't view it as an essential service.
- No transparency or shared information.
- The most common response that I have received is that we don't have 501(3)C status. We are trying to get a Friends group started, but struggling with that as well.
- Towns are having problems funding health insurance costs and infrastructure. Austerity does not leave room for arts funding.

8. How does your library communicate the value of community engagement programs, services, and tools to funders? (Open-ended question.)

- Most seemed to answer the question "Where?" rather than "How?" Board and town meetings, library newsletters, and local newspaper are common answers, as well as staff presentations that include anecdotal outcomes, photos, and 'data.' Customer feedback/survey results or project outcome statistics are mentioned by very few libraries.
- Some respondents admitted that they could be doing this better.

- Annual performance measures to County; quarterly work plan reports to Library Board; presentations to Friends.
- Customer feedback/survey analysis; impact stories; class/event photos
- Data and anecdotes. Survey results that display a need.
- Feedback forms, attendance numbers
- Fliers, Web presence, Social media
- I am a Special Fund department funded directly from property tax, so I don't have that issue. However, I do depend on them to fund capital projects, and in that regard, they already support the library so it's not really an issue.
- I have spoken to various groups, we put library news in the local paper, and also contact various people via phone and email.
- In a variety of ways, meetings with funders, stakeholders, etc, media, social media, and grants.
- In reports and presentations detailing outputs and outcomes.
- Library staff develop one-page outcome sheets with data and stories. On going coverage on our public website.
- Marketing efforts, briefings, budget hearings
- Mentions at beginning of programs or text in press releases, newsletters, posts or speeches etc.
- Monthly reports to the library board, city council updates and strategic plan updates
- Newsletters, personal visits
- Noted in our annual fund drives, discussed in newsletter, word of mouth, annual meetings
- Our Library communicates the value and impact of these programs through staff presentations given during public meetings of the City Council, Library Board, Friends Board, Foundation Board, civic club and service organizations located throughout the city. We also publish feature articles in our local newspapers and on the library's social media outlets.
- Outreach events, Managers being part of community meetings like Business associations, Partnership with schools
- Presentations which combine storytelling (anecdotes) and data.
- Presentations, reports, statistics. We could definitely do more!
- Press releases.

8. How does your library communicate the value of community engagement programs, services, and tools to funders? Continued

- Providing statistical results, providing visual aids of programs in progress and public feedback (surveys etc.)
- Quarterly emails from the director, monthly e-newsletters, 2 annual appeal letters, an annual report, special giving initiatives and events, social media platforms, website
- Quarterly reports to funders, news releases, storytelling, spa showing activities with patron testimony
- Regular reports to the board, annual report. We've not found a successful model yet.
- Regular reports, videos, social media postings, direct communications with elected officials, funders, and other stakeholders.
- Showing/explaining examples of the work and programming they provide.
- social media, newsletters, webpage
- Social media, television and radio, print, recognition events
- Surveys, posters, social media
- Talk about opportunity and equity - lack of STEAM access.
- Through collected stories, quantitative data (which needs to improve), some additional qualitative data such as surveys.
- Through monthly reports made available on the city's website, newspaper articles, presentations at city council meetings and other meetings.
- Through official communications (budget/council presentations), using Library Board and fundraising organizations as spokespersons, brief videos, individual stories
- TV/Radio, social media, events to recognize donors and volunteers
- Using Project Outcome Statistics we present the value in our newspaper, newsletters and radio show
- variety of media channels and word of mouth
- We communicate the value of our community engagement programs through statistics and testimonials.
- We don't do a great job with this yet. It is incorporated into our institutional goals.
- We don't do this well.
- We don't really have ongoing conversations about community engagement outside the library, but rather develop relationships using community engagement models.
- We post activities to our webpage, Facebook and Twitter accounts. We also have a weekly article in the local paper.
- We publicize our programs locally and depend on the state library association to communicate with state legislators
- We self-fund through sources outside town appropriation.
- Weekly radio appearances, tv appearances, print media (weekly newspaper column), advertisements placed in local publications, flyers, social media.
- White papers, grant reports, annual reports, data collection.

9. Does your library have community engagement software that enables local authors, creators, and community members to contribute their works to the library's collection? (This software may be obtained through your state or consortium.)
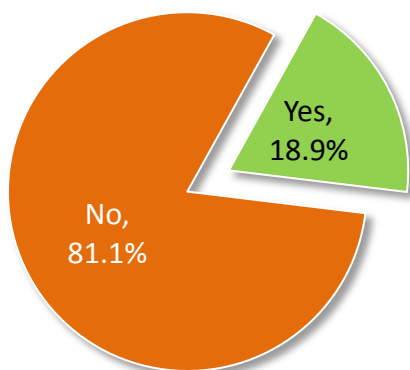
- About 1-in-5 libraries has software that enables local creators to contribute works to the library's collection.
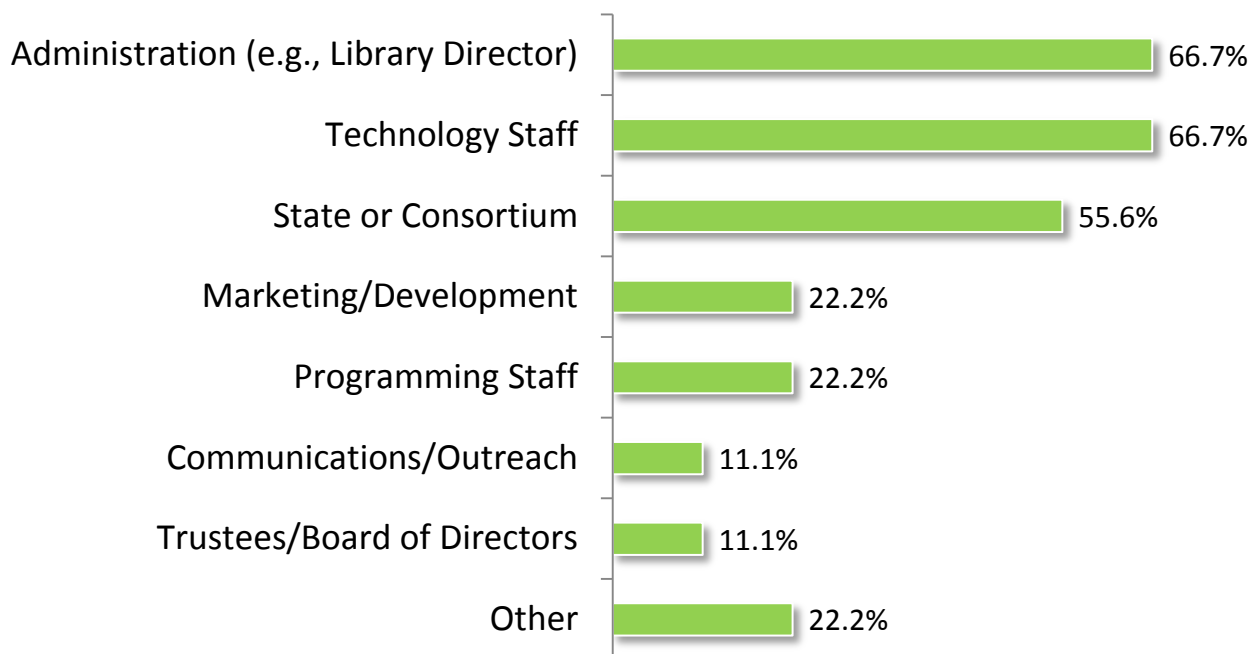
10. Which of the following sources of funding contributes the most toward community engagement software? Please check only one answer.

- The state or library consortium is the biggest contributor of funding for community engagement software.
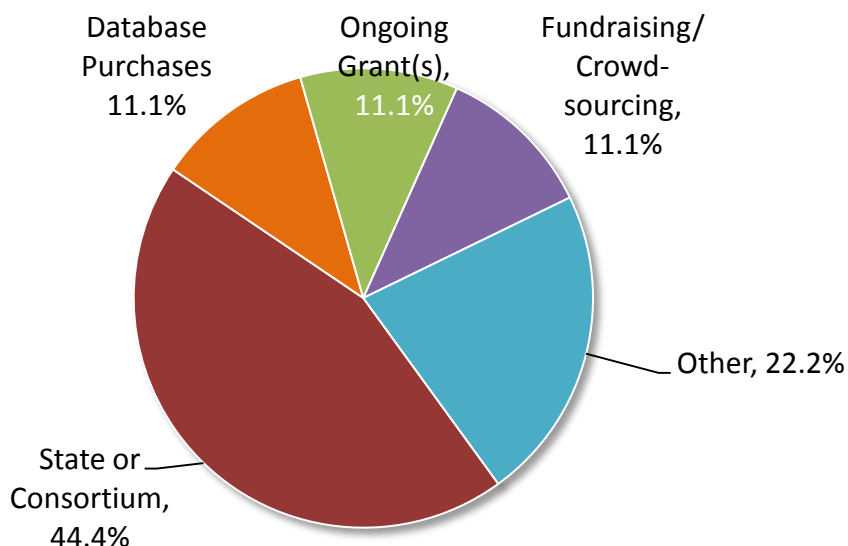
11. Who was involved in the decision making process about which community engagement software to use in the library? Check all that apply.

- Library administrators and technology staff are the customary community engagement software decision makers.
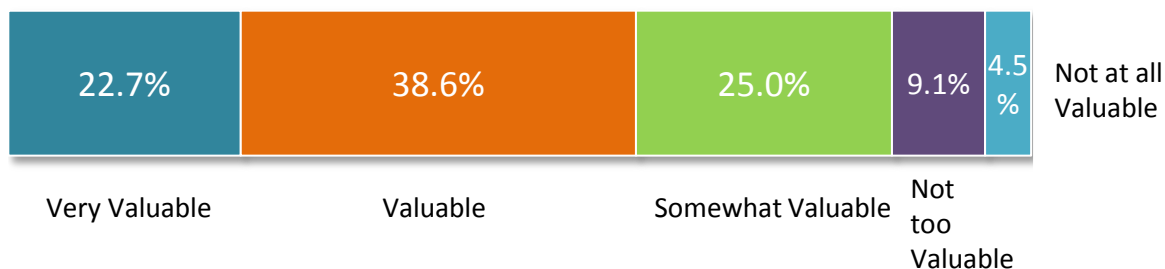
Category	Percentage
Administration (e.g., Library Director)	66.7%
Technology Staff	66.7%
State or Consortium	55.6%
Marketing/Development	22.2%
Programming Staff	22.2%
Communications/Outreach	11.1%
Trustees/Board of Directors	11.1%
Other	22.2%

12. How does your library primarily measure the value of community engagement software (i.e. return on investment)?
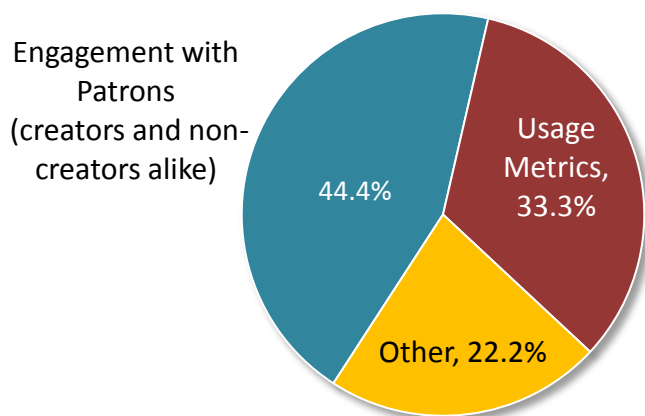
Engagement with Patrons (creators and non-creators alike) 44.4%

Usage Metrics, 33.3%

Other, 22.2%

- Engagement with creators and non-creators is the primary method libraries use to measure the value of their community engagement software, followed by usage metrics.
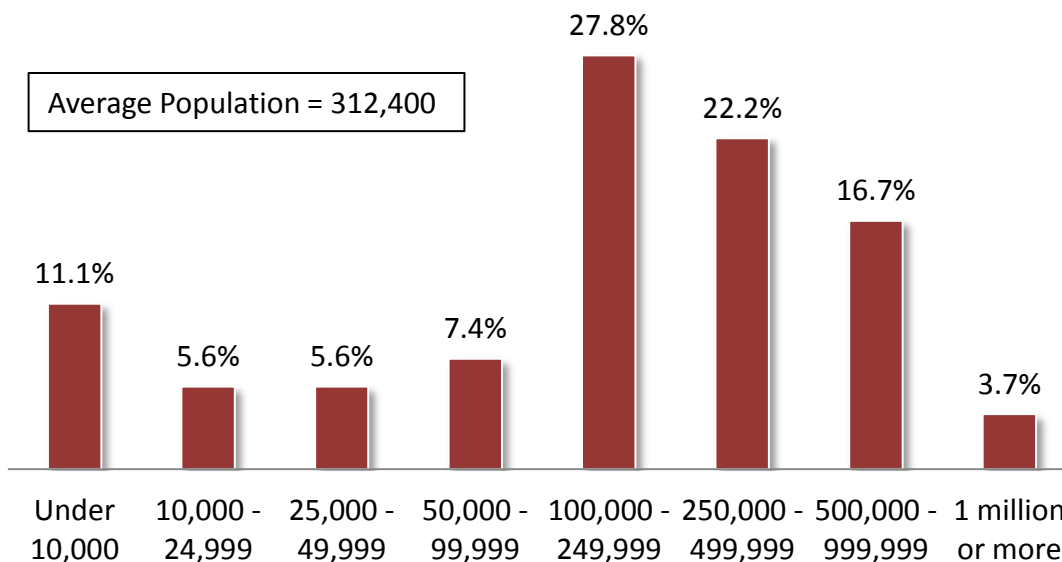
13. [If library has no community software] How valuable would it be to have software that enables local authors, creators, and community members to contribute their works to the library?

- Of the libraries that have no community engagement software, almost two-thirds believe it would be very valuable or valuable to have.
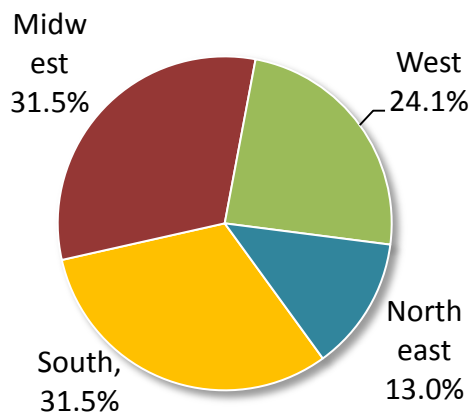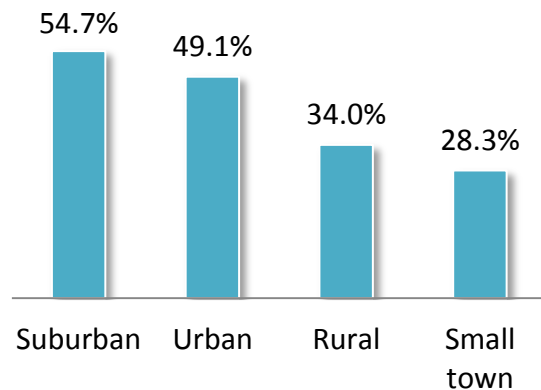
Very Valuable	Valuable	Somewhat Valuable	Not too Valuable	Not at all Valuable
22.7%	38.6%	25.0%	9.1%	4.5%

DEMOGRAPHICS

14. What is the total population served by your library?

Average Population = 312,400

Under 10,000	10,000 – 24,999	25,000 – 49,999	50,000 – 99,999	100,000 – 249,999	250,000 – 499,999	500,000 – 999,999	1 million or more
11.1%	5.6%	5.6%	7.4%	27.8%	22.2%	16.7%	3.7%

15. Where in the United States is your library located?

Midwest 31.5%

West 24.1%

Northeast 13.0%

South, 31.5%

16. How would you describe the area your library serves? Please answer all that apply.

Suburban	Urban	Rural	Small town
54.7%	49.1%	34.0%	28.3%

17. Which of the following comes closest to your job title?

Job title	Percentage
Library director	67.9%
Programming librarian/coordinator	11.3%
Assistant library director	7.5%
Library/Branch manager	3.8%
Adult services librarian/coordinator	1.9%
Head librarian	1.9%
Other	5.7%

APPENDIX
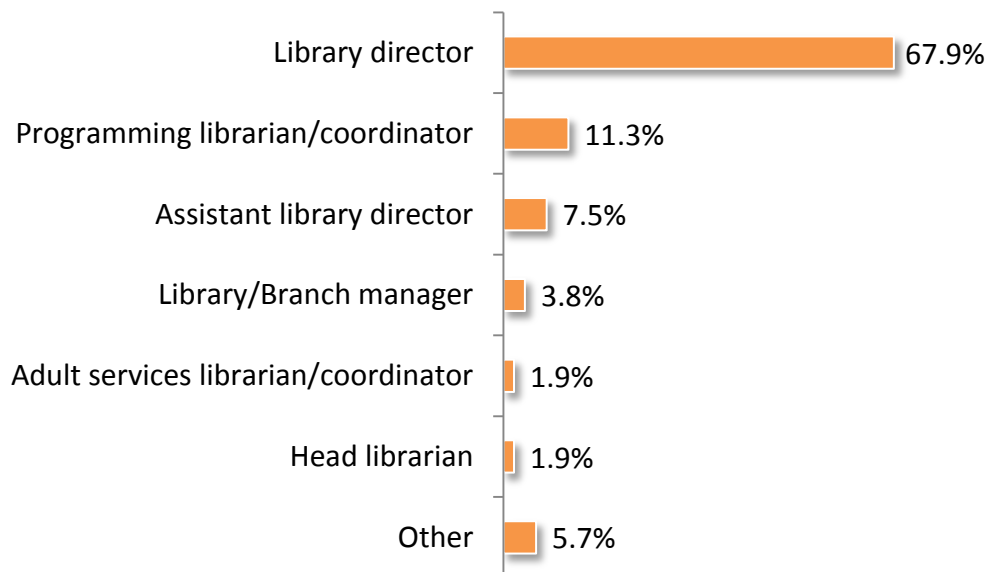
4. What types of technology/software does your makerspace include? Open-ended answers.

- 3D printer, 3D carving machine, laser cutter, vinyl cutter, Smartboard,virtual reality equipment, Arduinos, Raspberry Pis, Cubelets, Adobe Creative Cloud, Fusion 360
- 3D printer, computers with graphics editing software, 3D scanner, cameras, green screen
- 3D printer, Dremel tool, soldering rod, Arduino, Raspberry Pi, snap circuits, Software- iMovie, Garageband, Photoshop
- 3D printer, green screen and photography equipment, Legos, puppets, Teacher geek cart loaded with parts, art supplies
- 3D printer, green screen, coding software, sewing machines
- 3-D printers
- 3D printers, Bloxels, augmented reality programs
- 3-D printers, robotics, Embroidery machine, t-shirt press, Cricut, Adobe Suite, Large Format printers, memory lab.
- 3D printing, 3D scanner, Cura, Meshmixer, Blender, Papercutter, photo, slide and negative conversion - Wolverine F2D, ARchSoft PhotoStudio 6, sewing machines, Adobe Creative cloud, iMovie, GarageBand, Pages, Numbers, Keynote, EQ7 Quild Design, Xcode 8, Intuos Creative Drawing Tablet, Comic Life, Anime Studio, Windows Movie Maker, Adobe premier pro, Final Cut Pro Logic Pro, Green scree GoPro camera, tripod, Recording booth, Avid Pro Tools, Studio One 3 Artist, Roxio,
- Adobe Creative cloud, iMovie, GarageBand, Pages, Numbers, Keynote, Final Cut Pro, Logic Pro, Roxio, Windows Movie Maker, Cura, Meshmixer, Blender, EQ7 Quilt Design, Xcode 8, Intuos/Wacom Creative Drawing Tablet, Anime Studio, Comic Life,
- AR, VR, 3D printer, photo lab, green screen,
- Audio and video support.
- Cricut, kisslicer, polyprinter, tinkercad, any free online programs in support of creative efforts. Physical equipment: Polyprinter, cricut, sizzix, sewing machines, laminator, t-shirt press.
- *Cricut Maker Machine plus attachments * Body Kun Human Models * Printer for Giclee Prints *Sizzix BIGkick Machine * Color wheel, watercolor wheel, grey scale value finder * Large wooden paper cutter   * Self-healing mats * Stencils * Glowforge Plus laser with air filter
- In the Maker Lab at Georgetown we have a 3D printer, 3D scanner, Dremel workstation, Electronics Workbench complete with soldering iron, heat rework, an oscilloscope and power supply, Arduino kits for classes, two sewing machines, a serger, vinyl cutter, several laptops with Adobe Creative Suite and Scratch, and iPads with several apps on them.   In the Maker Lab at Main we have a 3D printer, 3D scanner, audio recording station, VHS to DVD conversion, sewing machines, Electronics Workbench complete with soldering iron, heat rework, an oscilloscope and power supply, vinyl cutter, computer stations with Adobe Creative Suite, and cameras available for check out.

- Graphic Design, Audio and Video editing, Office suite
- Graphic design, video and audio production, recording studio, VR, 3d design and printers, laser cutters, Cricut machines, sewing machines, looms, etc.
- iPads, online resources, in the beginning stages.
- Mac Computer Adobe Pro Tools Garageband Microphones USB Audio Interface Digital Drawing Pad 3D printer
- Mac/Pros, 3D printer, Silhouette Cameo laser cutter, Arduino, Scratch, GoPro Fusion 360 cameras, Final Cut Pro, GarageBand, iMovie, Photoshop, Tinkercad, Raspberry Pi, audio/video to digital conversion
- Our Digital Studio has a full suite of audio, video, and web development and editing software. We also offer a fully equipped recording studio, a green screen video recording studio, and 3-D printers.
- Silhouette cutter, 3D printers, photoshop software, digital cameras and green screen, laptops with software supporting all the equipment listed, sewing machines, button makers, Lego, Makey Makey, leather craft, jewelry making, lots of arts and crafts activities
- The Apple audio station in the Recording Studio will provide these tools for sound recording: - ProTools - LogicX - GarageBand The Mac stations in the Tech Center will provide these design tools: - GarageBand - iMovie - LogicX - Gimp - Scratch - HUE Animation - Sketchup 2015 - Blender - Audacity - MakerBot Desktop The Windows PC stations will have, in addition to standard library software: - Adobe Creative Cloud - Arduino - MakerBot Desktop - Sculptris - Autodesk123D Design - Blender - ComicLife - HUE Animation - KoduGameLab - Inkscape - K-LiteCodecPack - LegoMindstorms - Lego WeDo - SmallBasic - PicoBlocks - Stencyl - Twine - Sketchup - LDraw - Python - AutoDesk Maya (1) (https://www.hclib.org/about/locations/brooklyn-park-tech-center)
- Vinyl cutter, Sewing Machine, 3D Printer, Animation, Video, Sound, Adobe Creative Cloud, CANVA, Sculptris, Garageband, Pixlr, Weebly
- We have an audio recording booth set to open with our central library renovation completion in 2019. Throughout the system we offer 3-D printers and programs, and are currently looking at other creative technology to work with writers and artists.
- Wood lathe, 3d printer, various other tools

Engage with local authors → Promote a state author contest → See an increase in submissions

States that promoted an Indie Author Contest received an increased number of submissions in 2018.*

Indie Author Project
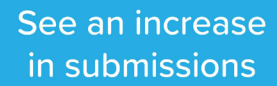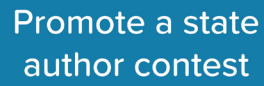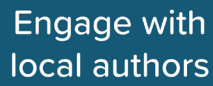
*All highlighted states had significant growth in submissions in 2018 compared to 2017.