



Libraries Connected Innovators Network National Gathering 2023

10.00 Arrival, Refreshments & Icebreaker

10.30 Welcome, Ayub Khan, Libraries Connected President, and Service Manager (Universal Services), Warwickshire.

10.45 Involving Patrons in Louise Michel Library's Projects, Melanie Mesquita, Librarian, Louise Michel Library, Paris.

11.15 Practical Shared Learning – session 1

Library Speed Talks

1. Work with volunteers to support adult literacy, create connections, improve life chances and have some fun along the way, Alison Thorne, Norfolk Libraries
2. Project Mind Space, Lisa Mustoe, London Borough of Merton
3. Virtual Reali-TEA, Katie Jeffs & Tracey Williams, Solihull
4. I Am a Reader: Exploring and Celebrating the Creativity of Reading, Michelle Dunstan, Inspire Notts
5. STEM story time - a pilot project, Mandy Charles & Carmen Caruso, London Borough of Hammersmith & Fulham

Group discussions

12.45 Lunch

13.45 Practical Shared Learning – session 2

Library Speed Talks

1. Welcoming Ukrainian Families, Angela Boatswain, Blackburn
2. Innovative Recruitment, Dr Stephanie Jones & Nicki Hitchcock, Worcestershire
3. My Voice: embedding youth voice in Hertfordshire libraries, Hannah Pegg, Hertfordshire
4. Oakley Immersive Storytelling Centre, Curtis Fulcher, Gloucestershire
5. Growing the Business, Katie Kinnear, Surrey Libraries

Group discussions

15.15 Connecting children and young people with the magic of stories – new approaches from The Story Museum, Oxford, Daniel Clark, Director of Creative Programme.

15.45 Open Floor Sharing Session – a chance to share any innovative library projects you've been involved with.

16.00 Close



Guest Speakers



Melanie Mesquita, Librarian, Louise Michel Library, Paris

Melanie started working at Louise Michel library in 2012. She works mostly with kids, from age 7 and up, trying to involve them in the library's projects, whether by participating in the acquisition choices or by organising workshops and events with them.



Daniel Clark, Director of Creative Programme, the Story Museum, Oxford

Daniel Marcus Clark is an award-winning Creative Director and writer who specialises in playful and imaginative ways in connecting people with the magic of stories.

From 2018-2022, Daniel was the Creative Director at Libraries Unlimited where he conceived and led the Evolve programme and, prior to this, Daniel worked around the world bringing unique story experiences and installations to life, with organisations including The Metropolitan Museum, New York; Nottingham Castle; Skywalker sound and Stanford University, where he was also visiting lecturer in Sonic Storytelling.

He is the co-host of the 'why tell stories' podcast, a weekly podcast exploring innovations in sonic storytelling.

Library Speed Talks

Work with volunteers to support adult literacy, create connections, improve life chances and have some fun along the way.

Alison Thorne, Community Librarian, Norfolk Libraries

Hear how we are meeting the needs of adults who want to learn to read in Norfolk. Learn about volunteer catch-ups, Just a Cuppa social sessions, shared reading, book clubs and building dyslexia and basic-skills collections. We'll tell you how we work with referrers and adult learning and all about our new publicity. We are always open to new ideas too.

Project Mind Space

Lisa Mustoe, Library Service Manager, London Borough of Merton

At a time of huge pressure for the NHS access to good quality health and wellbeing services in the community is essential. Mind Space is an innovative project developed in partnership with local NHS and Public Health services to increase prevention services in the community via Merton's libraries.



Newly created Health and Wellbeing Zones have been set up in all libraries, introducing specialist technology to assist residents to better manage their health including technology to support relaxation like massage chairs and weight, height and blood pressure monitors. Working with partners a full programme of free health and wellbeing events such as life coaching, fitness classes and karate are delivered monthly in libraries as well as specialist health and wellbeing seminars and workshops. Through evaluation this project has demonstrated significant positive impacts on the health and wellbeing of the local community and the work continues to evolve.

Solihull Virtual Reali-TEA

Katie Jeffs, Libraries Development Manager & Tracey Williams, Library Specialist: Heritage & Local Studies, Solihull

Hear how Solihull Libraries used external funding to celebrate the Platinum Jubilee of Queen Elizabeth II, acknowledge local carers, obtain virtual reality kit, and create an immersive experience from historic maps and photos in the local studies collection.



I Am a Reader: Exploring and Celebrating the Creativity of Reading

Michelle Dunstan, Libraries and Culture Officer, Inspire: Culture, Learning and Libraries

Founded on a passionate belief that reading is a creative act, I Am A Reader is a project that aims to uncover authentic insights into the adult reading experience, and ultimately help to inform and revitalise how the libraries and literature sectors engage with readers. This session will give you an insight into this groundbreaking project in progress, which is already generating tangible, creative outcomes that encourage readers to think and talk about how they read, why, and what happens when they do. It will also provide a chance to explore how by taking an agile approach to projects, libraries can deliver inspiring creative products and events while gathering insights and learning that can be used to ignite engagement for the future.

I Am A Reader is supported using funding by the National Lottery through Arts Council England, and delivered by Inspire: Culture, Learning and Libraries - a charitable community benefit society delivering cultural, library and learning services across Nottinghamshire.

www.iamareader.org.uk

STEM story time - a pilot project

Mandy Charles, Customer Service Manager & Carmen Caruso, Library Customer Service Assistant, London Borough of Hammersmith & Fulham

This pilot project at Shepherd's Bush Library developed science story times alongside science-related activities in partnership with a network of Physics departments, local schools, and young residents. The project was a huge success and massively inspiring for staff.



Welcoming Ukrainian Families

Angela Boatswain, Library Officer: Literacy Development & Engagement, Blackburn

Beginning with initial contacts between Blackburn with Darwen Council departments, the presentation will describe the inception of a library based Coffee Morning for Ukrainian families and their hosts. It will outline how Universal Library Offers were incorporated into the meetings, whilst retaining the informal, guest-driven nature. Finally, there will be an account of the benefits arising from this project, and an insight into its future development.

Innovative Recruitment

Stephanie Jones, Hive Library Services Manager & Nicki Hitchcock, Library Manager, Worcestershire

We will be covering the need that we as a service identified to be able to interview more candidates at once and to allow them to gain a better experience of what it's like to work in a library environment. We identified that the 1:1 model was not sufficient in testing candidates for "teamwork" and historically, this had always been something that the candidates had struggled to evidence at interview and application. The incorporation of a group interview stage with activities directly lifted from the job description has allowed us to test candidates more effectively and give them insight into the expectations of the role.

My Voice: embedding youth voice in Hertfordshire Libraries

Hannah Pegg, My Voice Project Officer, Hertfordshire Libraries

My Voice is an innovative two-year project which intends to transform the way Hertfordshire Libraries work with young people aged 14-24 years old. My Voice is generously funded by Arts Council England, in partnership with DS Achieve, Herts Sports Partnership and The OLLIE Foundation.

Hertfordshire Libraries have a long standing track record of working with youth volunteers, My Voice will take this to the next level by using the Hart's Ladder of Youth Participation as a model to develop authentic youth voice in all aspects of our service delivery. From January 2023, young people volunteering in libraries across Hertfordshire will be empowered to shape their own volunteering experience by developing activities and events for themselves and other young people in their community. By putting youth voice at the heart of their services, Hertfordshire Libraries intend to improve their engagement with non-library users and as result increase participation, footfall, issues, and library membership.

A newly formed Youth Advisory Panel is helping to shape the project, advise on stock and other elements of Hertfordshire Libraries' work with young people. My Voice represents a significant shift to Hertfordshire Library Service's offer for young people. Integral to the project is specialist training from partners which has been developed to support staff through this change.



Libraries Connected



Oakley Immersive Storytelling Centre

Curtis Fulcher, Development Manager, Gloucestershire

In 2022 Gloucestershire Libraries applied to the Arts Council for funding to support a brand new concept to support literacy in a very specific community of Cheltenham. The seed of the project came from feedback from the residents of Oakley, one of the top ten most deprived wards in the UK. There was an overwhelming resistance to the word 'The Library', there was high levels of low digital engagement and a community that is very dependent on its area (even though Cheltenham is less than two miles away). The Oakley concept was to introduce immersive digital equipment for the local community to engage with renaming reading/The Library to storytelling.

Growing the Business

Katie Kinnear, Strategic Manager: Development and Support Services

Katie Kinnear, Strategic Manager: Development and Support Services for Surrey Libraries led the Surrey Libraries strategic challenge project for the Leading Libraries programme. That project called 'Growing the Business' created a step change in how the service developed and supported front line staff to grow *their own* library business on the ground all of which delivered a significant increase in use, and new library membership and made sure that the service is now one of the busiest in the country.

**Share your highlights on social media using #librariesinnovate
and tag us @libsconnected**