



IdeaLab: Rethinking Library Spaces to Create & Inspire

Grant Amount:
\$20,000

Time Range:
1 year

Eligibility:
Any

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Summary:
Establish a makerspace



PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

This grant will support the development or expansion of a makerspace. Projects will offer maker programming and provide access to materials and specialized tools for DIY and other creative projects. Items for the makerspace could include 3D printers, audio and video production equipment, simple hand tools, and other materials for crafting, sewing, and art. Project activities may be STEM-based or could focus on creative arts. ALA's "Make it @ Your Library" has a wealth of ideas to get started.

Projects should identify an individual to manage the IdeaLab who is well-versed with the equipment and materials. This individual will teach IdeaLab users about materials and equipment as well as train additional library staff.

Libraries should also seek out community agencies, organizations, and businesses that may serve as partners to share skills useful to those working in the IdeaLab. Potential collaborations include local vocational/technical high schools, art schools, museums, or other organizations supporting industry and the arts.

BACKGROUND

According to the IMLS report *Learning Labs in Libraries and Museums*, libraries across the country and around the world are placing themselves at the center of innovative research and practice about how

to create and share knowledge, powered by a combination of digital media and traditional tools. Since 2011, IMLS has invested over \$10 million in learning through making in museums and libraries that underscores recognition of the importance of the maker movement to a competitive workforce and an engaged citizenry.

Community-based technology centers in libraries provide access for people of all ages to pursue their interests, gain expertise, share information, and have meaningful experiences. Learning spaces in libraries present a trusted place for people to gain new skills in a rapidly changing world, to follow their passions, and inspire one another. These programs embody the sound principles of Connected Learning—learning that is interest-driven, fosters supportive relationships with peers and mentors, and aims at expanding educational or economic opportunities.

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