Library Programs and New Americans

A White Paper / JUNE 2019
Order of Presentation

• Research methods and themes found

• Examples and experience from project advisors and libraries doing the work

• Recommendations for libraries

• Questions and Discussion
Today’s Presenters

• Rebecca Joy Norlander, New Knowledge Organization

• Erica Freudenberger, Southern Adirondack Library System in New York

• Madeleine Ildefonso, Los Angeles Public Library

• Jonathan Fein-Proaño, International Rescue Committee in Los Angeles
Research Design

Where did the data come from?
Landscape Review

• Context
• Considerations for Implementation
• Examples from Libraries Across America
Site Visit Focus Groups

1) With New American library patrons

1) With library & community partner organization staff
Key Findings

What did we learn?
Focus on...

Citizenship Programs

Learning English Language
Major Themes

- Diversity of Experience
- Operational Considerations
- Evaluation
- Active Community Engagement
Partnership Models

1) Parallel services
2) Library as space
3) Space plus
4) Library as collaborator
5) Library as implementer
WHAT IS A LIBRARY?

- Education
- Place to learn
- Study
- Learn English
- Place to study
- Nice atmosphere
- Interesting books
- Concentrate
- Class for computer
- Activities for kids, adults
- Culture
- ALA American Library Association

- Listen to lectures - food - Iraqi food
- Place to relax
- Read a book
Lifelong Learning & Social Inclusion
Creating Community

Nepal
India
Vietnam
China
South Korea
Thailand
Russia
Israel
France
Eastern Europe
Holland
Germany
Venezuela
Puerto Rico
Columbia
Brazil
Library as Collaborator

**SCHUYLERVILLE PUBLIC LIBRARY**
- POP: 9,881
- Budget: $340,000

**CAMBRIDGE PUBLIC LIBRARY**
- POP: 1,870
- Budget: $80,741

**GREENWICH FREE LIBRARY**
- POP: 4,942
- BUDGET: $152,602
WHAT IS A LIBRARY!

ALA American Library Association
New Americans: It’s Complicated
Let’s Get Started: Citizenship Program

The Citizenship and Financial Capability Program at IRC-LA is a library-based innovative approach to encourage civic engagement by providing access and information on immigration/naturalization and financial capability at local public libraries.

It’s a combination of:

✔ Immigration Legal Services
✔ Education and Empowerment
✔ Financial Capability
✔ Civic Engagement
✔ Accessibility for the community in their own neighborhood
✔ All services provided through local public libraries
Partnerships that Stick

- Capacity
- Alignment
- Trust
Library as Space: Capacity

- Strategic locations
- Program Expansion and Development
- Coordinated marketing
- Longevity → Social Capital
Library as Collaborator: Alignment

• Social capital leads to external and internal results

• Services informed by shared goals

• Scope of work augmented by budget

• Anonymized information sharing

• Potential for growth
Library as Implementer: Trust

Library identifies need, IRC has skills
IRC purchases materials; IRC brings trust
IRC & library, share goals; IRC utilizes adaptive approach
Joint grant seeking; focus on broader civic engagement

Library as Collaborator

Library as Implementer

What’s Next?
What Can Libraries Do?

Recommendations to improve service to new Americans
Assess Community Needs

- How do you know what you know?
- Choosing an approach:
  - Formal assessment? Or less structured?
- Overlooked data sources
Foster partnerships with community organizations

- Where does your library fit in?
- What resources do you need, and who can help?
- Develop a detailed plan
Additional Recommendations

• Include new Americans in decision-making
• Use terms that resonate with your community
• Develop multilingual resources
• Foster connections between new Americans and established residents
• Create more intergenerational programming
• Build sustainable services
White Paper and Website

NewAmericans.ala.org