

# Collaborations Gone Wild: How Community Buy-in Can Make or Break Program Scaling

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# Grand Challenges

Treating diversity and inclusion initiatives as a checkbox

Lack of underserved and underrepresented populations in engineering

All children do not have access to quality early learning experiences



# Partnerships



Libraries, museums & relevant local partners / key stakeholders



Libraries and American Society of Civil Engineers



State and local libraries

# Community Dialogues

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# Problem we wanted to solve:

- A few things:
  - The idea of DEIA initiatives as checkboxes
  - The idea that there's a "good enough" when it comes to these initiatives
  - and the feeling (for us) that since we found more diverse venues (libraries) we didn't need to focus on it as much

# What is a Community Dialogue?

- A Community Dialogue is a loosely facilitated discussion that provides the opportunity for staff and community members to discuss a common, community-based challenge or aspiration.
- Think of it like a focus group, but instead of testing a product, you're gauging your community's opinions on your venue, and the services your community needs.

*"There is no doubt that the Community Dialogues are beneficial to all parties. I think this method should be employed more often when we are considering all kinds of services, initiatives and programs for our community."*

**Lisa Jackson - Youth Services Librarian,  
African-American Research Library and  
Cultural Center, Fort Lauderdale, FL**





- You know how your “frequent flyer” visitors use your venue, but what about the people who don’t come through the door? Are there services they would use that they don’t know about? Is there some reason they don’t feel welcome?
- But it’s more than just getting people in the door, it’s an opportunity to make new partners, and further cement your venues as a community hub.



*“Public libraries are a pillar of education for all. We have an opportunity and a responsibility to offer educational experiences for our communities. STEM learning is part of this and highly important for the continued development and health of our society, both intellectually and economically.”*

*Discover NASA Host Library Staff Member*

## **Community Dialogue Goals**

1. Strengthen informal education venues roles in establishing a STEM Learning Environment
2. Identify underrepresented community groups
3. Identify possible collaborations and partnerships within the community
4. Contribute to developing a flexible Community Dialogue model that all ISE venues can use





## What do they look like?

- 1-4 hours
- Participation that represents the community you live in
- People you already know AND people you don't
- Change makers
- But most importantly, they should look relevant for the groups you're working with

# Ground Rules (adopted from Harwood)



- **Have a “kitchen table” conversation**  
Everyone participates; no one dominates.
- **There are no “right answers”**  
Draw on your own experiences, views and beliefs. You do not need to be an expert.
- **Keep an open mind**  
Listen carefully and try hard to understand the views of those who disagree with you.
- **Help keep the discussion on track**  
Stick to the questions; try not to ramble.
- **It is okay to disagree, but don’t be disagreeable**  
Respond to others how you want to be responded to.
- **Have fun!**

## How We Got Started with this Model

- It actually started to help ME develop an exhibit and programming (Discover Health)
- Initially invited only library staff and Area Health Education Center Partners
- Some libraries started inviting other groups and community leaders and it became clear that these informal discussions could have a much broader impact



# Key Outcomes from Discover Health Dialogues

New partnerships with organizations like immigration services, heritage and cultural centers, tribal libraries, Area Health Education Centers, and Hispanic Chamber of Commerce

2 Libraries added more welcoming signage to their front doors

1 library completely changed a display that was sending the wrong message to their target population



# Community Dialogues Can Help Your Venue

- Expand your understanding of your visitors feelings about their local museum and its programs, including programming related to STEM or programming targeted at underserved groups
- Obtain meaningful feedback from the community on who visits the venue and why
- Have a conversation about how the venue can better serve ethnically, economically, and geographically underserved and underrepresented audiences
- Better connect with local organizations and potential future partners that have shared interests with your organization and community

“Community Dialogue attendees have shown strong support for library STEM programs and would like to meet again. We have plans to meet again next year, which allows for enough time to implement new strategies and reflect upon impacts.” – Dianna Leighton, Fort Fairfield Public Library



“This dialogue was very useful in setting up collaborations. The attendees weren’t as keen on discussing issues as they were on talking and working together!” Mary Jenkins, Clarksdale Carnegie Public Library





“Participants took off running-I was barely able to get questions in, but it was all good because by themselves they covered most of the questions” – Charles Diede, Fontana Library

- “When the facilitator set the tone for a fluid conversation among attendees, they seemed to be more willing to jump in and provide insight and opinions. Participants were encouraged to gather close together (even though the room we were in was quite large) so that it was easier to hear one another and to participate in the discussion” Atlas Logan, Gwinnett County Public Library

## Suggestions from venues who have already conducted these dialogues

- **Plan ahead.** Some libraries weren't able to promote the dialogue far in advance so some key players who would have otherwise attended (State librarian, state level representatives) were unable to make it
- **Invite the people you're wanting to serve.** Be concerned with the idea of programming AT target audiences, rather than involving them in the process.
- **Consider a neutral location.** If the groups who aren't visiting your library are more comfortable elsewhere, go there to meet with them. If they don't want to join a big meeting, have a small one. Be flexible.
- **Remember your role in these dialogues.** You're a convener, and if needed, a facilitator. Don't feel like you need to "run" the meeting. Let the tough questions play out. Let things get heated.
- **Make it FUN!** Make it a party, have snacks, do some activities.



# How can YOU Conduct a Dialogue?



OVERVIEW



PLANNING



HOSTING



AFTERWARDS



RESOURCES



APPENDICES

## Quick Links:

- [STAR Net Summary](#)
- [Sample Invitation](#)
- [Ground Rules](#)
- [Online Resources](#)

## What Library Staff Say:

*"There is no doubt that the Community Leaders who Dialogues are beneficial to all parties. I think the this method should be employed more often and when we are considering all kinds of services, ces initiatives and programs for our community."*



Elena Robinson is the Executive Director of Public Services, High Plains Library District, Colorado Cultural Center, Fort Lauderdale, FL

# To Learn More

Visit: [www.starnetlibraries.org/resources/community-dialogues](http://www.starnetlibraries.org/resources/community-dialogues)

Download our Community Dialogue Guide here:

[www.nc4il.org/images/papers/Community-Dialogue-Guide052318.pdf](http://www.nc4il.org/images/papers/Community-Dialogue-Guide052318.pdf)

Contact Anne Holland: [aholland@spacescience.org](mailto:aholland@spacescience.org)

# Our Grand Challenge:

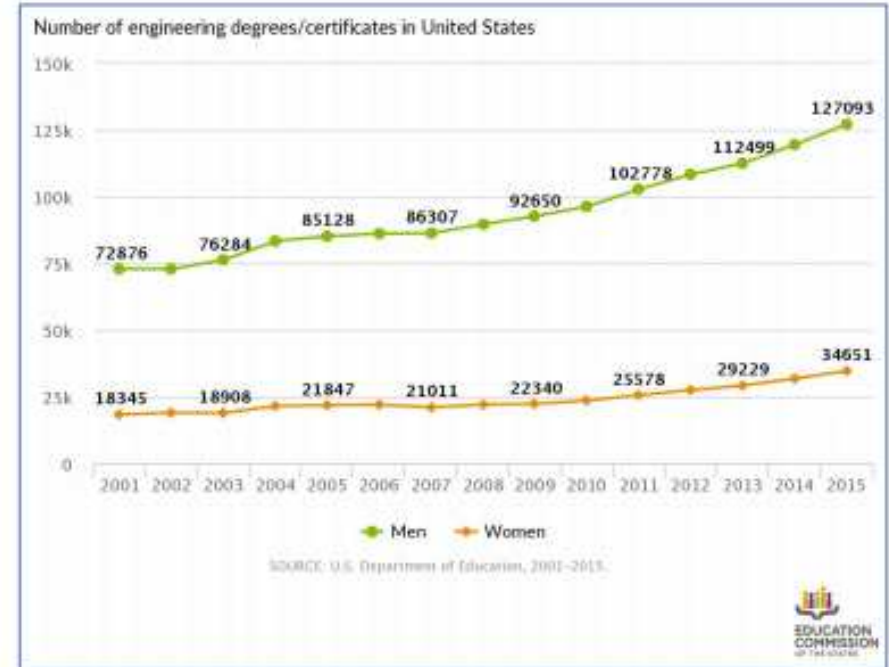
A lack of underserved and  
underrepresented populations in  
engineering



- African Americans: 14.8 percent of the college-age population (18 to 24 years old); earned only 3.8 percent of engineering degrees.
- American Indian/Alaska Natives: 0.9 percent of the college-age population; earned only 0.3 percent of engineering degrees.
- LatinX: 21.4 percent of the college-age population; earned only 9.6 percent of engineering degrees.

Source:

<http://www.nacme.org/news/blog/183-a-status-report-on-minorities-in-engineering>  
(2016)



77% of public libraries serve populations of less than 25,000 people

- 16,000 library locations
- 1.5 billion visits per year
- Latino Use: 72%
- African-American Use: 69%

Figure N-1. Public Library Outlets in the United States, Fiscal Year 2012

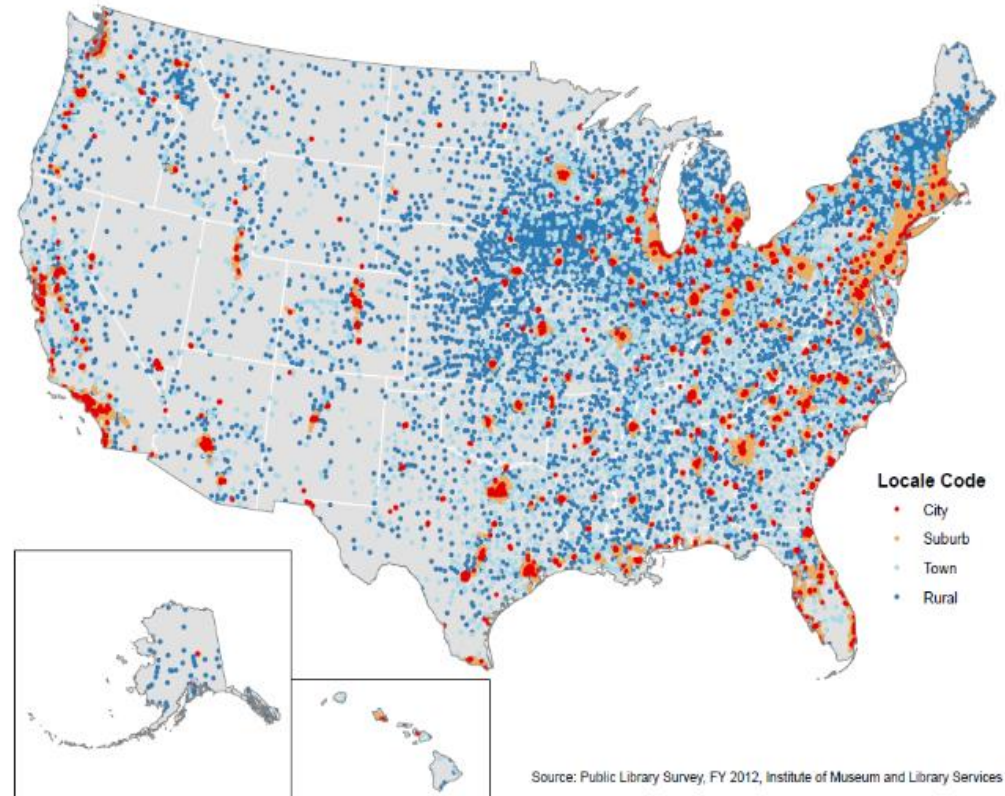
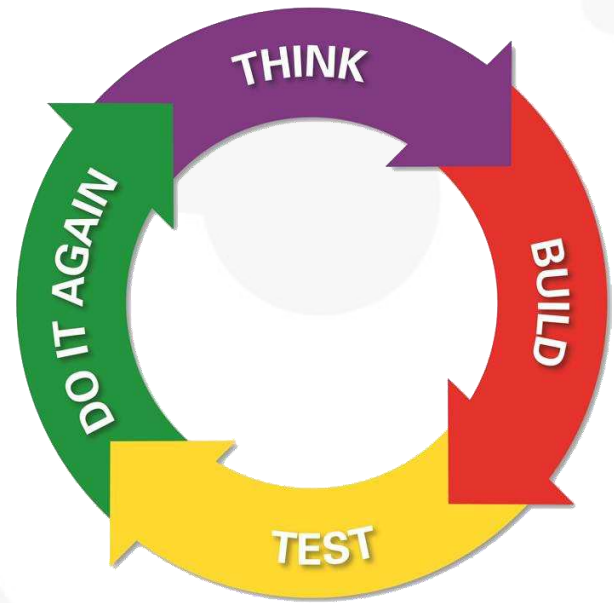




Photo Credit (1 and 2): AARLC, Broward Co., FL



Credit: Philadelphia Free Library

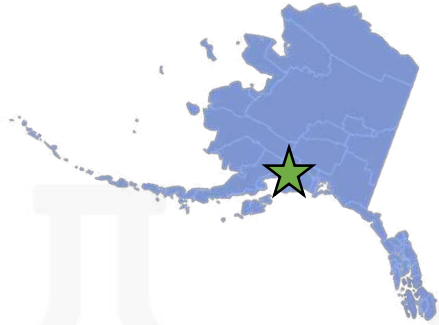




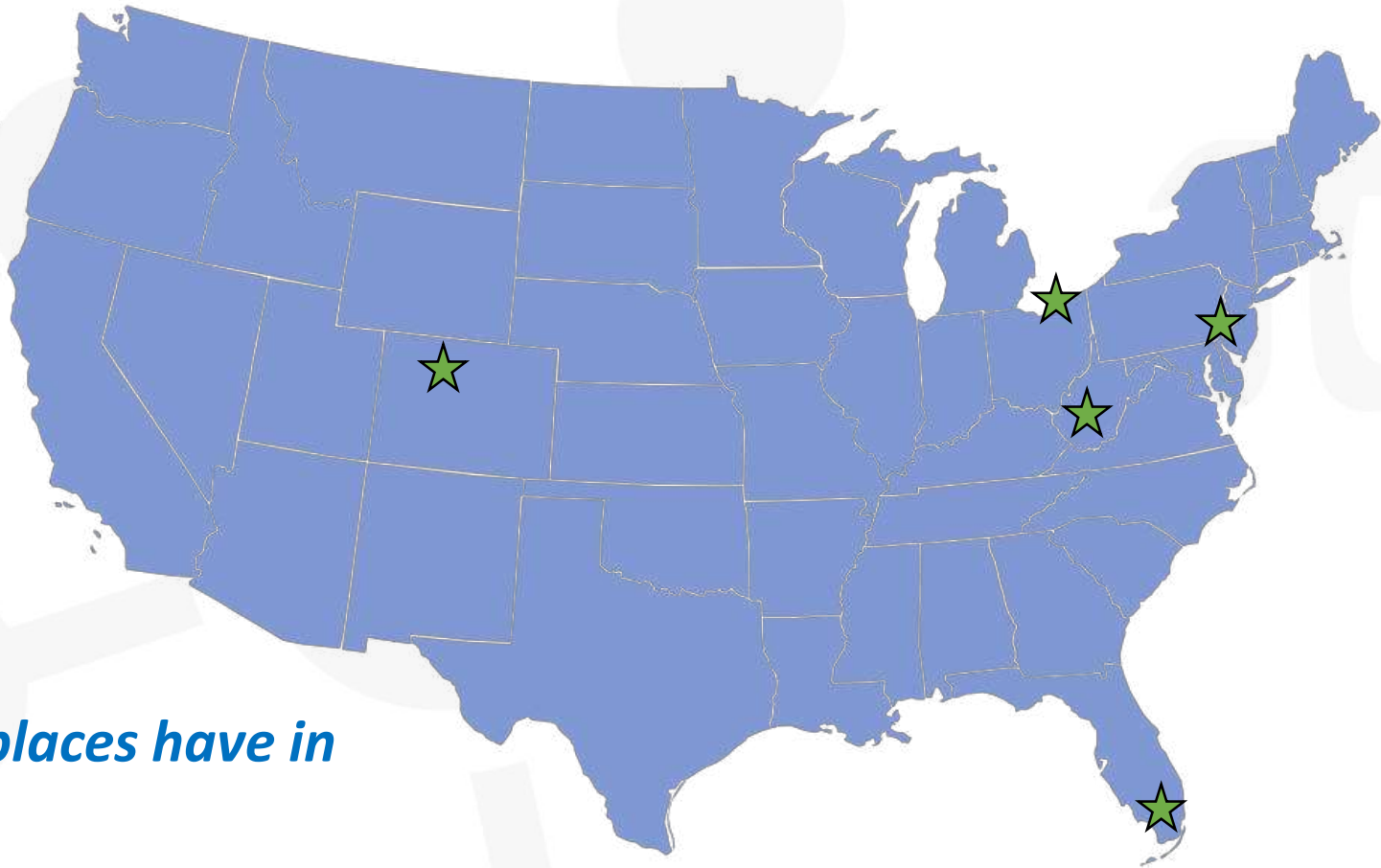


Contact ASCE at [outreach@asce.org](mailto:outreach@asce.org)

# Project BUILD



- Anchorage, AK
- Philadelphia, PA
- Kanawha Co., WV
- Ft. Lauderdale, FL
- Cleveland, OH
- Greely, CO



***What do these places have in common?***



# *They Use Engineering to Solve Real-World Problems!*

They build bridges to connect communities



They clean up pollution



They promote sustainability



They deal with natural disasters







Span-tastic Bridges



Designed to Survive



Clean Up Our World



Power from Nature

[www.clearinghouse.starnetlibraries.org](http://www.clearinghouse.starnetlibraries.org)

# Challenge: Lack of access to quality early learning experiences

- Libraries are safe, accessible and trusted community resources
  - 84% of families with children under age 6 believe libraries are very important for their children
- Libraries are increasingly being asked to serve as early learning environments
- Libraries reach a wide variety of people
  - All income levels and backgrounds
  - Educational opportunities for adults as well as children



# Reimagining School Readiness Toolkit

Brought to you by...



Bay Area  
Discovery  
Museum



*California*  
**STATE LIBRARY**  
FOUNDED 1849  
PRESERVING OUR HERITAGE. SHAPING OUR FUTURE

This project was supported in part by the U.S. Institute of Museum and Library Services under the provisions of the Library Services and Technology Act, administered in California by the State Librarian.

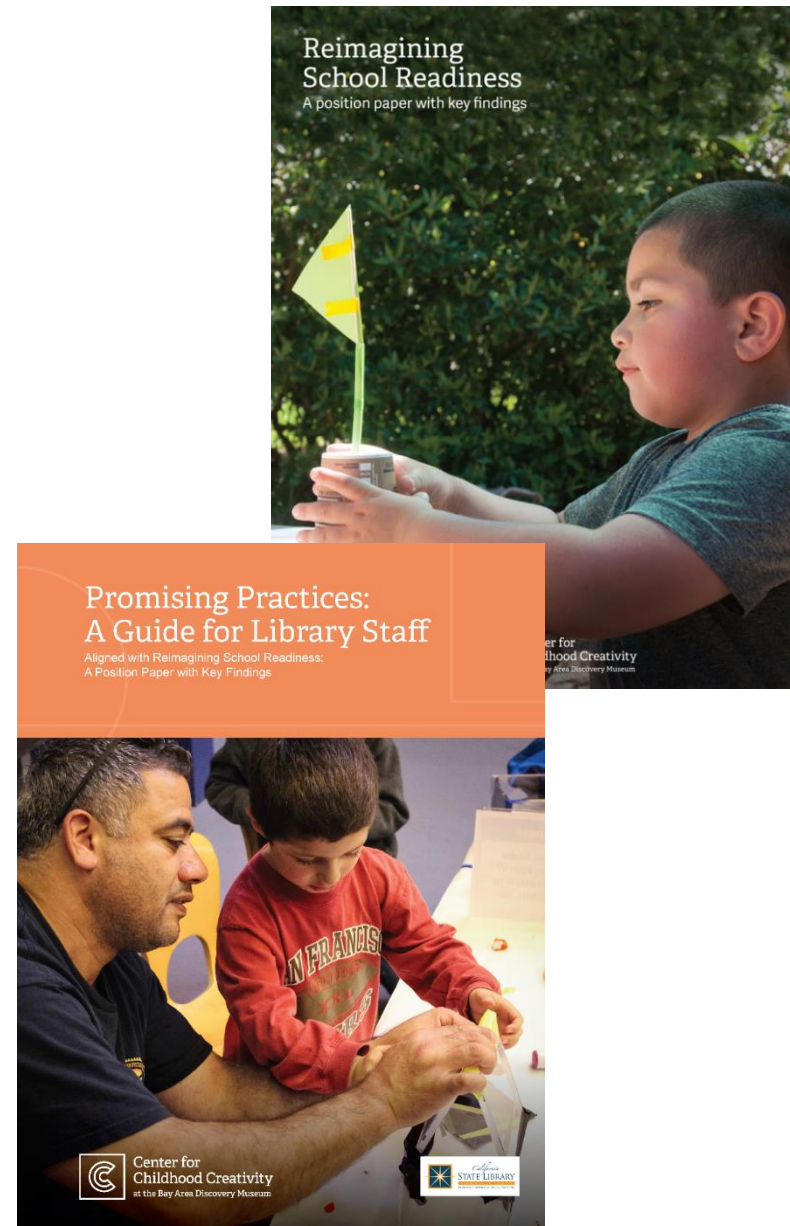




# Toolkit Overview

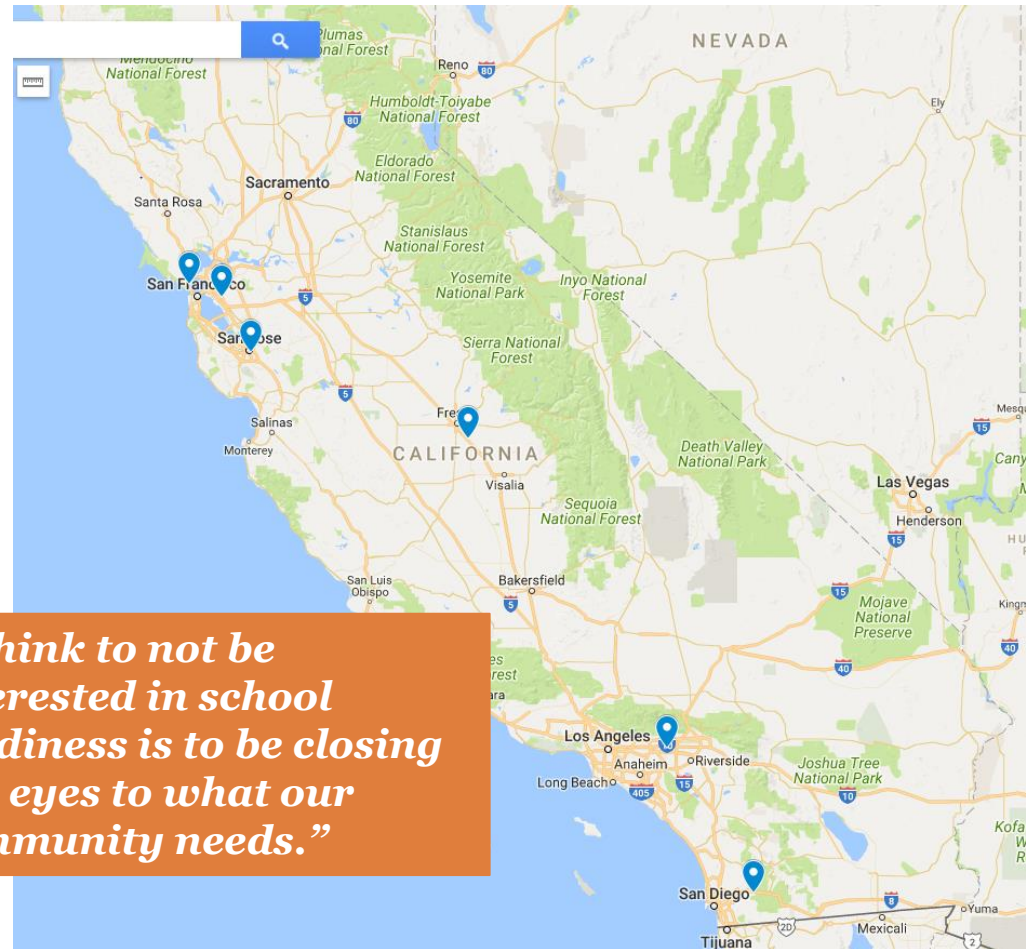
- Provide research-based strategies to libraries support school readiness programming
- Enhance the work of libraries with children (ages 0–8 yrs.) and their families

[http://bit.ly/CCC\\_toolkit](http://bit.ly/CCC_toolkit)



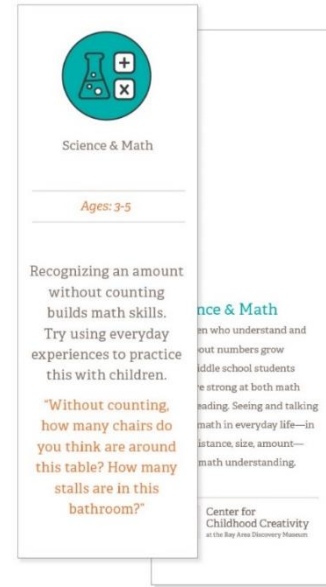
# Co-created with Library Staff

- Alpine Branch, San Diego County Library
- Biblioteca Latinoamericana Branch, San Jose Public Library
- Eastmont Branch, Oakland Public Library
- Fowler Branch, Fresno County Library
- Marin County Free Library, County of Marin
- Ovitt Family Community Library, City of Ontario



# Challenges

- One size fits all doesn't work
- Translation into:
  - Spanish (US)
  - Simplified Chinese
  - Vietnamese
  - Tagalog
  - Farsi
- Museum's brand not recognized outside of San Francisco Bay Area





# Trainings

- March- September 2018:
  - 9 regional trainings across California
  - 320 library staff trained
- September 2018 – May 2019:
  - Produced 4 webinars
  - Approximately 600 library staff trained
- Consistent additional demand from libraries for additional trainings

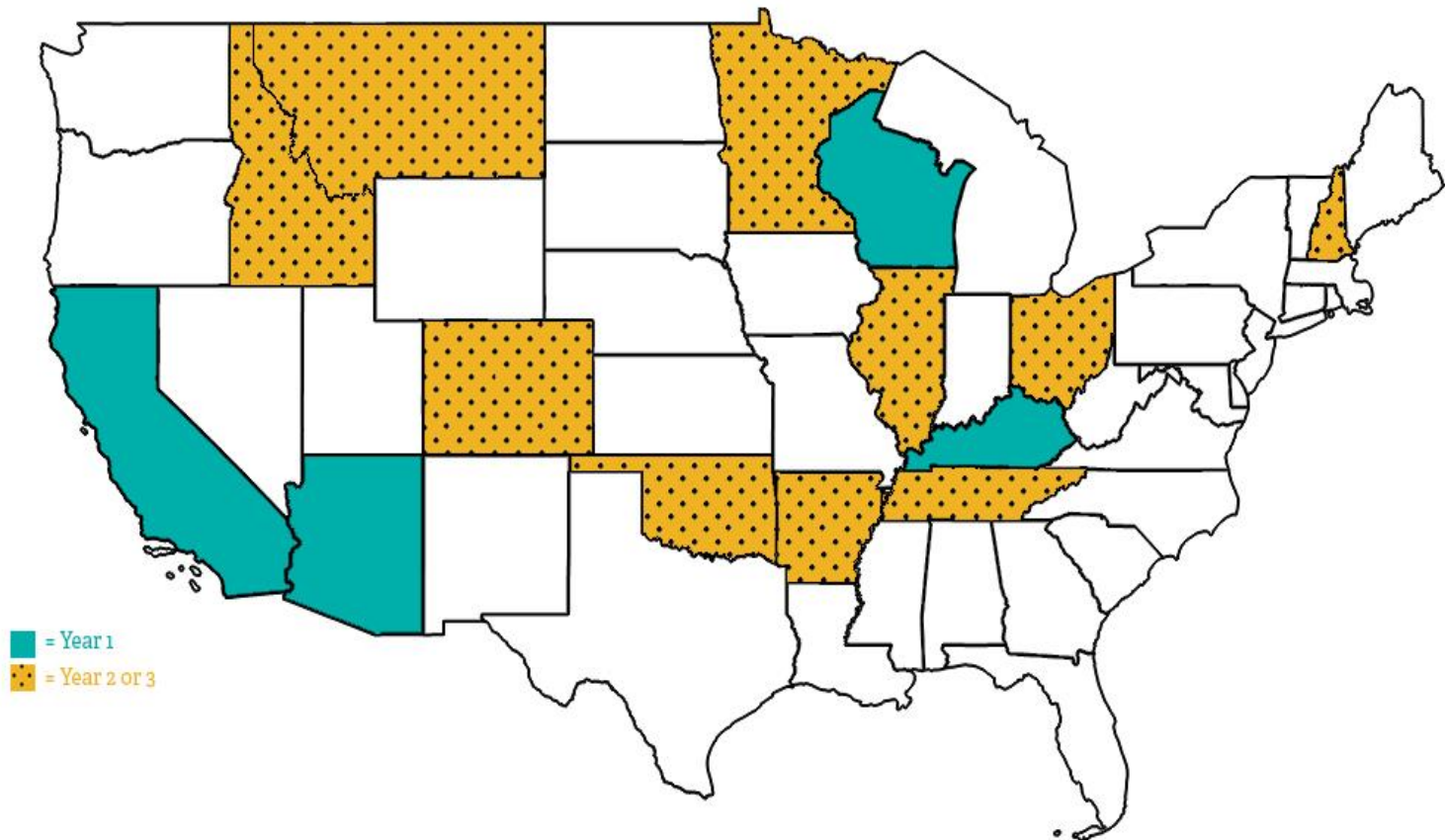


# IMLS Project



Year 1	4 States		200 Librarians <i>50 per state</i>	8,000 Children & Adults <i>40 per librarian</i>
Year 2	12 States <i>4 states from Year 1 + 8 new states</i>	24 Trainers <i>2 per state</i>	720 Librarians <i>60 per state</i>	28,800 Children & Adults <i>40 per librarian</i>
Year 3	10 States <i>new states</i>	20 Trainers <i>2 per state</i>	600 Librarians <i>60 per state</i>	24,000 Children & Adults <i>40 per librarian</i>
<b>Total</b>	<b>22 States</b>	<b>44 Trainers</b>	<b>1,520 Librarians</b>	<b>60,800 Children &amp; Adults</b>

# Participating States



■ = Year 1  
■ = Year 2 or 3



Bay Area  
Discovery  
Museum

 @BADM\_org

## Discussion Prompt #1

What is the “Grand Challenge” in your community?  
(5 minutes)

## Discussion Prompt #2

Who are the key players in your community trying to solve this Grand Challenge?

(5 min)

## Discussion Prompt #3

How is your institution a part of this solution? If not, where do you see your institution fitting in?

(10 min)



## Discussion Prompt #4

~~What are the barriers/roadblocks that your...~~

What are the awesome, amazing, inspiring best possible outcomes from taking on this grand challenge with a partner?