Building Collective Capacity for Assessment And Advocacy: A Model for Academic Library Consortia

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A Presentation for the 2022 Library Assessment Conference
• Laura Bush 21st Century Librarian Program Grant: $243,885
• Four-year project: October 1, 2018-March 31, 2023
  • Development and Three Cohorts
• CARLI in partnership with:
  • University of Illinois Library at Urbana-Champaign
  • Lewis & Clark Community College
• Website: https://www.carli.illinois.edu/products-services/prof-devel/carli-counts

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Program Overview

Continuing Education Library Leadership Immersion Program:
- Prepares librarians to make effective use of research findings on the impact of academic libraries on student learning success for service development and library advocacy
- Participants learn how to use local library data analytics to improve their services and demonstrate their value in budgeting processes, accreditation reports, and program reviews

Principles:
- Peer-to-Peer Learning
- Community of Practice

One Cohort Per Year:
- Each Cohort Comprised of Multiple Teams
- Each Team Comprised of Five+ Members and One Mentor

Learning Experiences:
- Two Immersive Workshops
- Webinars
- Team Meetings
- Poster Session at CARLI Annual Meeting
From Individual to Collaborative Projects

Cohort 1
- 8 Teams of Individuals

Cohort 2
- 6 Teams of Individuals
  - 1 Collaborative Project Team

Cohort 3
- 7 Collaborative Project Teams
Project Evaluation

Capturing the learning and cohort/team-based experience

- Online participant surveys (3)
- Rapid workshop evaluations (4)
- Project reports
- Mentor interviews (1)
- Alumni survey (1)
Learning:

Key findings

- Learning 13 key evidence-based practices increased from start of each cohort to completion
Leadership & Library Advocacy:

Key Findings

- More confidence about assessing the impact of the library
- Perceive themselves a leader at their library & on their campus
- Increased collaboration on campus
- Campus recognition of expertise
“Collective impact” describes an intentional way of working together and sharing information for the purpose of solving a complex problem.”

(National Council of Nonprofits)
Elements of Collective Impact (Stanford Social Innovation Review)

Shared Goals
- Increase awareness of the impact of libraries on student learning and success
- Document the impact of libraries on student learning and success

Measure/Monitor the Same Things
- Cohorts 1 & 2: library impact on student learning and success at the local level
- Cohort 3: library impact on student learning and success at a state level

A “Backbone”
- CARLI – physical and relational

Mutually Reinforcing
- Multiple-year project
- Cohorts
- Teams

Shared Learning
- Learning process
- Multiple layers and means of communication

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Collective Impact & Building Collective Capacity

Lessons Learned

*Find the common amidst the differences*

- Multiple types of colleges and universities
- Different roles and expectations of academic librarians
- Is it “R” or “r”? 
Lessons Learned

Find the common amidst the differences

“I had a real solidarity moment when talking with my group members of realizing that libraries regardless of size have similar problems and that the majority of problems we try to solve individually are systemic problems that should be solved with solidarity and profession-wide change.”

- Cohort 3 participant

“I appreciated the diverse representation of institution types on my team, as we can get in our own bubbles quite easily.”

- CARLI alum

“We learned the intricacies of IRB as it applies to four different colleges.”

- Cohort 3, Research Consultations Team
Collective Impact & Building Collective Capacity

Lessons Learned

A strong “backbone” for structure and support (CARLI)

- Keeping the issue of library impact front and center
- Statewide initiative different from, but complementary to national efforts
- Providing a structure
- Facilitative approach
Lessons Learned

A strong “backbone” for structure and support (CARLI)

“CARLI has the ability and opportunity to just hold space for librarians to create communities of practice. Simply giving space to allow mentorship to develop across institutions does leaps and bounds to creating connections.”

- Cohort 3 participant

“[CARLI should continue] facilitating a space for a community of practice focused on library assessment. There are national spaces but a state-specific one might feel more immediate and accessible.”

- CARLI alum
Collective Impact & Building Collective Capacity

Lessons Learned

*Team-based projects reinforce the “mutually reinforcing”*

- Each contributes to the whole
- Mutual, scaffolded learning
- Team accountability

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Lessons Learned

Team-based projects reinforce the “mutually reinforcing”

“I can't imagine doing this in isolation, so having more than one person contributing to the project was so helpful and collegial. This will be one of my fondest collaborative projects in my library career.”

- CARLI alum

“Working/networking with other librarians was the best part of CARLI Counts for me, although weekly team meetings sometimes became a chore, but were still very necessary to move forward with our project.”

- Cohort 3 participant
Collective Impact & Building Collective Capacity

Lessons Learned

*Sustained focus gains momentum*

- Multi-year project
- Participants/Alumni: Plan to continue or have continued engagement with evidence-based practices
Lessons Learned

**Sustained focus gains momentum**

“I definitely feel more connected to other CARLI librarians which I think opens a space for future collaborations and initiatives.”  
- Cohort 3 participant

“Our exploration has raised many interesting questions that could serve as rich areas for future research.”  
- Cohort 3, Library Tutorials (PRIMO) Team

*I personally did not have problems seeking buy-in from others since another member of my library had already participated in CARLI Counts Cohort 2. She was invaluable in being able to talk about the mechanics of CARLI Counts and also what to expect as I went through this project.*  
- Cohort 3, Research Consultations Team Member

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Collective Impact & Building Collective Capacity

Lessons Learned

Sustained focus gains momentum

Have you initiated or participated in any additional evaluation or assessment projects since your participation in CARLI Counts? (Check all that apply)

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>ANSWER CHOICES</th>
<th>RESPONSES</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes, in my library</td>
<td>66.42%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Yes, at my institution</td>
<td>35.84%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Yes, as part of a CARLI committee/working group</td>
<td>5.26%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Yes, working with people at other institutions</td>
<td>15.70%</td>
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<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>15.70%</td>
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How has your collaboration with other academic libraries in Illinois changed since your participation in CARLI Counts?

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<tr>
<th>ANSWER CHOICES</th>
<th>RESPONSES</th>
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<tr>
<td>I have collaborated</td>
<td>10.92%</td>
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<tr>
<td>I have collaborated with people at 1-3 other institutions</td>
<td>90.90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have collaborated with people at 4 or more other institutions</td>
<td>31.58%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have not collaborated with people at any other institutions since my participation in CARLI Counts</td>
<td>57.89%</td>
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How have you shared your CARLI Counts experience and/or project results with others? (Check all that apply.)

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<tr>
<th>ANSWER CHOICES</th>
<th>RESPONSES</th>
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<tr>
<td>Articulate in a planning</td>
<td>20.00%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Conference presentation</td>
<td>10.00%</td>
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<td>Conference poster</td>
<td>10.00%</td>
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<td>Social media message or post</td>
<td>10.00%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Campus presentation</td>
<td>10.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have not had an opportunity</td>
<td>10.00%</td>
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QUESTIONS / COMMENTS