

# 'WHAT WE CELEBRATE WORKSHOPS': A PARTICIPATORY APPROACH TO ALIGNING WHAT IS CELEBRATED IN STRATEGIC PLANNING AND OTHER EVALUATIVE CONTEXTS

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**Intro:** Getting strategic planning right is difficult. In spring 2020, at Penn State, we spent months updating our Plan, developing the strategies to advance on goals and objectives, and over four dozen Actions to manifest the outcomes our goals aimed for.

## Then we learned how we missed the mark.

This poster is about an early component of a multi-step process designed to capitalize on shortcomings of the strategic planning process as a vehicle to rebuild trust and catalyze a culture change.

After learning that personnel felt that the recently updated University Libraries Strategic Plan was narrowly focused such that many struggled to see how their roles and efforts contribute to advancing Planning initiatives, a taskforce developed the 'What we Celebrate' workshop series.

The 'What we Celebrate' Workshops functioned as a way to maintain engagement with the Plan by providing personnel opportunity to share where it fell short through the lens of bringing alignment of 'celebrated activities' across contexts.



## Resulting Changes:

- 1) Substantial plan revision in spring 22' integrated 20 new and refined measures
- 2) Integration of Libraries Foundational Values in Action

## Lessons Learned:

- Effort-based measures useful when quantitative metrics are poor fit
- Operational roles often disconnected from strategies for the future
- Treating the Plan as 'living document' can be vehicle to catalyze culture change

## What:

- Seven generative workshops to inform Plan revision
- Prompts aimed to surface activities 'celebrated' in outside of planning into the Planning context to improve alignment across contexts

## Why:

- Large complicated plan left many unable to see how their roles contribute
- Actions were often technical
- Measures difficult to connect with
- Staff felt left out

## Who:

- All library personnel
- 67 total participants
  - 35 faculty
  - 22 staff
- 11 campuses represented

## How:

- Virtual workshops guided by participatory design principles.
- Small groups activities and report outs, focused on what's celebrated presently and what we'd like to celebrate in the future

## When:

- February 2022

## Next Steps:

- Reducing plan to manageable scope
- Annual data collection and follow-up to assess the extent to which people see their contributions reflected

