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The Nebraska Library Commission (NLC) along with partners University of Nebraska-Lincoln, Nebraska Innovation Studio, Nebraska Extension, and Regional Library Systems, are excited about the ***Library Innovation Studios: Transforming Rural Communities*** project, funded by a National Leadership Grant of \$715,732 through the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS). The project began July 1, 2017 and concludes June 30, 2021.

The project uses Library Innovation Studios (makerspaces) hosted by libraries to support community engagement and participatory learning experiences by providing access to technological and innovative learning tools not readily accessible locally. This strengthening of the maker culture in rural areas is expected to stimulate creativity, innovation, and the exchange of ideas to facilitate entrepreneurship, skill development, and local economic development.

The multi-faceted project features:

- Community Action Teams established in forty rural and small communities;
- Equipment and related materials, procured and maintained for four rotating Innovation Studios;
- Instructional materials and user equipment certification processes developed and maintained;
- The use of sustainability strategies for permanent studios;
- Instructional training on the use of the equipment, focusing on Train-the-Trainer strategies;
- Marketing efforts, programming, and events (open houses and maker showcases); and
- Annual Makers Showcases – typically held the first Sunday of the Nebraska State Fair.

Host periods for the first 31 selected host libraries are as follows: (dates are approximate)

Public Library	First Week	Final Week	Public Library	First Week	Final Week
Plattsmouth	11/6/17	3/26/18	Kimball	2/18/19	7/8/19
Ainsworth	11/13/17	4/9/18	Beatrice	5/27/19	10/7/19
Ashland	11/27/17	4/23/18	Hastings NE	6/17/19	11/4/19
Crete (Mini Studio)	12/4/17	5/7/18	Laurel (Micro)	7/15/19	2/17/20
Loup City (Mini)	12/4/17	5/7/18	Plainview (Micro)	7/15/19	2/17/20
South Sioux City	3/26/18	8/13/18	Verdigre (Micro)	7/15/19	2/17/20
Neligh	4/9/18	8/27/18	Chadron	7/8/19	11/18/19
Broken Bow	4/23/18	9/17/18	Nebraska City	10/21/19	3/16/20
Bridgeport	5/7/18	9/24/18	Blue Hill (Mini)	11/4/19	4/20/20
Norfolk	8/27/18	1/14/19	Nelson (Mini)	11/4/19	4/20/20
North Platte	9/3/18	1/21/19	Grant NE	11/18/19	4/6/20
Ravenna	9/17/18	2/4/19	Pierce	3/9/20	7/27/20
Scottsbluff	9/24/18	2/18/19	La Vista	3/16/20	8/17/20
Wayne	1/14/19	5/20/19	McCook	4/6/20	9/7/20
Geneva	1/28/19	6/17/19	Superior	4/20/20	9/21/20
Central City	2/4/19	7/1/19			

Eight to nine additional accredited public libraries will be selected following the February 3, 2020 final application deadline.

Benefits and Services for Participating Libraries/Communities

- Library Innovation Studio equipment for a hosting period of approximately twenty weeks, including components from the following categories:
 - **Digital fabrication (3D printer, laser cutter, vinyl cutter, CNC router);**
 - **Electronics (prototype kits, microcontrollers, robotics);**
 - **Textiles (heat press, embroidery/sewing machine);**
 - **Digital media creation (filmmaking/digital photography);**
 - **Music technology; and**
 - **Specialized software, computers, printers, button maker, laminator, etc.**
- Opportunity for the community to see the benefits of a makerspace.
- Train-the-Trainer session at Nebraska Innovation Studio and locally.
- Troubleshooting videos, instructions, and access to project staff (virtually and in-person).
- Assistance with community engagement process and local programming and events.
- Annual Makers Showcase in Grand Island or Lincoln following the library's hosting period.
- Access to project staff including Nebraska Library Commission, Nebraska Extension, and Nebraska Innovation Studio.
- Connection to a network of makerspaces and Nebraska Innovation Studio.
- Eligibility to receive one or more pieces of studio equipment at the end of the project.

Expectations of Participating Libraries

- Organize a Community Action Team and conduct Community Engagement activities that will engage local organizations, get buy-in, and identify volunteers.
- Identify staff and recruit volunteers (5 or more) for two Train-the-Trainers opportunities.
- Prepare space for installation of equipment including tables, carts, and/or counters to hold the components and tables and chairs for groups working together on projects.
- Market the Library Innovation Studio prior to and during the hosting period, conduct outreach visits to community groups, and distribute promotional materials to target audiences.
- Make studio components available to the public on a regular basis and report issues.
- Schedule an open house, a Maker Showcase, open studio hours, local training and user equipment certification sessions, and regular weekly programming hours to feature particular content areas.
- Assist users with equipment certification, enter new certifications into the database, and verify users are certified to operate equipment (applies to select components only).
- Encourage users to showcase their creations/inventions at the annual Inventors Showcase.
- Collect information and surveys from participants and during activities, as directed.
- Work with your Community Action Team to secure and maintain makerspace equipment in your library or within your community AND/OR use the community engagement process to work with community partners on other initiatives related to library services.

To learn more about the project and the equipment included in the Library Innovation Studios, visit our website at: <http://nlc.nebraska.gov/grants/InnovationStudios/> For more information contact: JoAnn McManus, Library Innovation Studios Project Manager, Nebraska Library Commission, 1200 N Street, Suite 120, Lincoln, NE 68508-2023, 402-471-4870, joann.mcmanus@nebraska.gov

