21st Century Libraries:
Learning to capture impact
Learning to lead enterprise

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What is the 21st Century Library Context?

• Challenging financial context
• The need to demonstrate ‘value for money’
• Changing usage patterns
  – book borrowing is down
  – more events supporting employment, integration, literacy and wellbeing

• Alternative provision models: Mutualization, Trusts, Volunteer-Led Libraries

• Communities are passionate about their libraries and what they do
What does a 21st Century Library do?

Library as social hub
- Tackling isolation
- Working with older people, disengaged people
- Support to schools and early learning
- Services for people with disabilities
- Library as community hub
- Information about services for people in public services

Library as cultural centre
- Promoting literature
- Home study clubs
- Library spaces

Library as learning hub
- Supporting literacy
- Reading for pleasure
- Reading books and learning

Library as economic enabler
- Maximising income
- Encouraging enterprise

The Social Value/Financial Value Challenge

- Library work is about building ‘social value’ – through information services, access to community networks, supporting wellbeing, literacy and employability

- But how do we capture this? How do we know what difference libraries make?

- Increasingly, libraries also have to connect this social impact to ‘financial value’

- Capturing, presenting, and even putting a monetary value on social value helps to:
  - Persuade and influence LA commissioners
  - Support funding applications (BLF, ACE)
  - Developing new revenue pathways

Important for mutual and local authority run libraries
Developing #UnlimitedValue

3 Research Questions:

• What social value do libraries create and how do they do so?

• How can libraries connect social value to financial value in ways that amplify the essence of what makes a library ‘special’ in the eyes of the public?

• How can library leaders best respond to this challenge of needing to work in more ‘socially enterprising’ ways?
2 Pathways to #Unlimited Value

1. Technology and Data Analytics:
Using data to develop a better understanding of service user patterns
Mapping onto other data sources for wellbeing, literacy etc

2. Staff Development
Building leadership capacity throughout the organization
Enhancing understanding of social impact capture and analysis
Data Discovery Days – incorporating friends groups, members of the public, senior leadership team, library supervisors, trustees, members of other mutuals and libraries.

What data do we have? What data do we want?

Collaborative and ‘non-techy’ co-creation activities.

Data Prototyping Day: begin to work on prototypes (apps, web-pages, products which could shine a light on libraries social impact) – mix of ‘tech wizards’ and other stakeholders
What does a 21st Century Library do?

Staff Development

• Empowering staff to lead change towards social value awareness and capture

• Building leadership capacity at all levels of the organization (CILIP/SCL Skills Strategy)

• Enhancing understanding of social value and its link to financial sustainability

• Supporting collaborative approaches to minimise ‘silhouette thinking’
Action Learning with Library Supervisors

- An interactive problem-solving method
- Make change and develop leadership skills
- Support and get feedback from peers
- Focusing on ‘real life’ challenges at work
- Groups meet every 4-6 weeks to discuss progress.
Action Learning helps us navigate LEADERSHIP challenges in real time

‘The capacity of a human community to shape its future, and specifically to sustain the significant processes of change required to do so…’ (Senge et al 1999)

Enabling people to participate in change towards social value generation

Would you like to set up Action Learning Sets in your organization? Contact B.C.Hawkins@exeter.ac.uk
Our first Action Learning Set celebrated its final meeting last month
Outcomes from Action Learning

Social Impact Projects:

• Innovative use of library space – thinking ‘out’ as well as ‘in’

• Social history projects to build community and collaboration, reducing loneliness in isolated rural communities

• Innovative ways of working in the organization, enabling collaboration and reducing repetitive work
Outcomes from Action Learning

Leadership Skills (identified by the participants)

Making presentations and running ‘Taster Sessions’ at:

The #UnlimitedValue Research Summit

Collaboration Days and Staff Conferences
Outcomes from Action Learning

Leadership Skills (identified by the participants)

• Developing networks for collaboration
• Using AL Questioning Approach within our own teams at work
• Increased confidence when communicating or presenting ideas
• Ability to challenge taken-for-granted behavior or thought patterns
• Thinking strategically (it helps you to tackle important issues that often get ‘put off’ because of constant operational demands)
• A more positive approach to change
• An improved sense of connection to the organization, its staff and purpose.
What next?

- Embedding insights into other libraries in England
What next?

• Embedding insights into Libraries through CILIP presentation at Southwest AGM in April and NEXT Libraries Conference, Århus 2017, and Berlin 2018.

• Proposed partnership with DDCMS to create leadership development toolkit for Public Service Mutuals

• Research Summit, July 2018

(please email me if you’re interested in attending: B.C.Hawkins@Exeter.ac.uk)