

Data and Reporting

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Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval



Patron Privacy and Practical Steps for Data Management in Montana Public Libraries

Course Description

Managing data effectively is essential for protecting patron privacy and meeting legal obligations in today's libraries. This one-hour presentation is designed for public library directors and staff seeking practical guidance on data management practices that safeguard sensitive information.

Topic

Data and Reporting: Data management and reporting

Presenter Name

Rebekah Kamp

Presenter Credentials

MSL Data Coordinator

Presenter Association

Montana State Library

Cost

None

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval



Elements of Data Visualization and Design

Course Description

This webinar is part of the 12 Months to Better Library Data Webinar Series from the Research Institute for Public Libraries (RIPL). This session will introduce basic data visualization and design elements based on best practices from current visualization research. Participants will be introduced to a story-based design method that emphasizes the target audience's information needs to create effective data visualizations. Tools for color, chart selection and accessibility will be presented and participants will gain practice doing a visualization 'makeover'.

Topic

Data and Reporting: Data management and reporting

Presenter Name

Amanda Johnson

Presenter Credentials

Amanda Johnson started her journey in libraries over 10 years ago and has since worked in academic, public, and state government environments. Starting out she spent many years on public service desks, leading programs and helping community members find and use information. These daily interactions led Amanda to pursue her interest in building skills and strategies to help libraries uncover community needs, develop effective services, and demonstrate value to all levels of stakeholders. Amanda is the co-founder of Alliance Research & Training which provides support to libraries to grow their services, resources, and boost staff capacity to meet the changing needs of their communities.

Presenter Association

Alliance Research & Training

Cost

None

Inspire, Advocate, Communicate: Library Data Storytelling

Course Description

This webinar is part of the 12 Months to Better Library Data Webinar Series from the Research Institute for Public Libraries (RIPL). What can you tell about your library data as a story? Learn how to bring data stories to life for library advocacy of all types, from sustaining the library to transforming its work. Participants will learn about ongoing research identifying classic library stories told to persuade decision-makers as part of the Data Storytelling Toolkit for Libraries project (IMLS). You will gain a better understanding of data storytelling uses for public libraries, and tools to reach different kinds of audiences such as governing boards, executives, and the public and to adapt narrative structures to communicate information and emotion at the same time. Join storytelling expert Kate McDowell for a lively interactive session to make data work as evidence for your compelling library data stories.

Topic

Data and Reporting: Data management and reporting

Presenter Name

Dr. Kate McDowell

Presenter Credentials

Dr. Kate McDowell studies how storytelling works as a form of information and how the long history of storytelling in libraries can improve today's data storytelling. Her work has been published in major library and information science journals, and she wrote an influential article that explains storytelling as a core way people use and understand information. She leads a national project, the Data Storytelling Toolkit for Librarians, which helps libraries use narrative techniques for data-informed advocacy. She is an associate professor at the School of Information Sciences at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign, and in 2022 she received an international teaching award for her storytelling courses.

Presenter Association

University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval



Cost

None

Creative Survey Design: Crafting Survey Instruments to Meet Your Library's Research and Evaluation Needs

Course Description

This webinar is part of the 12 Months to Better Library Data Webinar Series from the Research Institute for Public Libraries (RIPL). Surveys in libraries are often seen as essential methods for collecting data about services, programming, and community needs. But while libraries recognize the benefits of utilizing surveys for their research and evaluation needs, most struggle to fully realize the potential of their surveys for collecting high quality data. Good survey design is an art form, a craft that can be developed through practice. This session will focus on the principles of survey design and development, with an eye towards creating surveys designed to address a variety of library needs. Participants will develop an understanding of the basics of survey design, from initial question development to cognitive interviewing and piloting. This session will equip participants with the ability to identify and apply best practices and principles of survey design, offering opportunities for direct application through hands-on practice.

Topic

Data and Reporting: Data management and reporting

Presenter Name

Kawanna Bright

Presenter Credentials

Kawanna Bright (PhD, MLIS) is Assistant Professor of Library Science at East Carolina University. Dr. Bright holds a doctorate in Research Methods & Statistics (2018, University of Denver) and an MLIS (2003, University of Washington). She teaches courses on research methodology, leadership and management in libraries, academic librarianship, and collection development. Her research focuses on library assessment, research methods in library and information science, and the liaison librarianship role in academic libraries.

Presenter Association

East Carolina University

Course Catalog

Proposal for MSL Commission Approval



Cost

None

What Counts? Finding Meaningful Metrics

Course Description

This webinar is part of the 12 Months to Better Library Data Webinar Series from the Research Institute for Public Libraries (RIPL). Metrics are one way we frequently measure success in libraries. But finding the right metrics isn't easy. "Not everything that can be counted counts, and not everything that counts can be counted," a quote from sociologist William Bruce Cameron, neatly summarizes why finding meaningful metrics is often challenging. Libraries count all kinds of things, many of which take a great deal of effort to collect and analyze. Which metrics have the most meaning and impact? In this session, you will learn about how metrics only have meaning in context. Our entire discussion will be framed by the understanding that metrics reflect and drive the values of your organization. So how do you create meaningful metrics?

Topic

Data and Reporting: Data management and reporting

Presenter Name

Katie Fox

Presenter Credentials

Katie Fox serves as a liaison between the State of Colorado and local communities, supporting efforts to improve access to digital resources and services. Throughout her career, she has worked closely with libraries to strengthen their ability to partner with and serve their communities, with a particular interest in measuring complex outcomes such as relationship building. Previously, she was Senior Evaluator at Denver Public Library and a Research Analyst with the Library Research Service at the Colorado State Library. Her earlier experience includes roles as an information literacy librarian and middle school teacher. She holds an M.A. in Library and Information Studies from the University of Wisconsin–Madison and an M.A. in Curriculum and Instruction from the University of Denver.

Presenter Association

Colorado Department of Labor and Employment

Cost

None

How to Swim in a Sea of Data: Data Literacy for Libraries and Nonprofit Organizations

Course Description

Understanding and using data is essential to make informed decisions, demonstrate impact, and identify ways to better serve the community. “Data” is a broad term that can include, but is not limited to, program participation and outcomes, circulation, and participant and user feedback. In this webinar, Karen Drill and Linda Hofschire will share how data literacy supports everyday tasks such as evaluating programs, understanding community needs, telling compelling stories, and strengthening proposals for funding. Through practical examples and accessible strategies, we will highlight how even basic data skills can help you move from simply collecting data to using it meaningfully. Regardless of your role in your organization, improving data literacy can help your organization operate more effectively, communicate outcomes more clearly, and make decisions grounded in evidence. This session is designed for library and nonprofit staff at all levels who want to feel more confident working with data and using it to advance their mission.

Topic

Data and Reporting: Data management and reporting

Presenter Name

Karen Drill and Linda Hofschire

Presenter Credentials

Karen L. Drill, PhD leads the Drill Consulting Group LLC where she specializes in mixed-methods applied research and program evaluation. For over 20 years, Karen has collaborated with nonprofit organizations to (1) develop a clear theory of change and logic model, (2) conduct implementation and outcome evaluations, and (3) build internal capacity in program evaluation, data use, and data analysis. Outside of work, Karen can be found hiking or skiing (depending on the season), reading, watching documentaries, drinking coffee, or spending quality time with her friends and family. Linda Hofschire, PhD is the founder and principal of LJH Consulting. She has more than 30 years of experience conducting social science research and evaluation and providing training in-person and online. Her previous work includes serving as the director of the Colorado State Library’s Library Research Service and working as a researcher at organizations including the University of Colorado and RMC Research Corporation. In her current work, Linda consults with organizations such as Califa, the California State Library, and the Public Library

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Association. She also directs the Research Institute for Public Libraries (RIPL), a national initiative to provide data and evaluation training for library workers. She is passionate about making data accessible and meaningful to users.

Presenter Association

Drill Consulting Groups and LJH Consulting

Cost

None

Return on Investment (ROI): Beyond What Your Library is Worth

Course Description

A library should never be looked at solely in terms of numbers, but adding numbers to your library's narrative can deepen understanding of your library's value to its community. Because libraries receive taxpayer dollars to provide services to their communities, comparing the value of those services to the taxpayer investment can be a powerful tool in telling your library's story. Broadcasting your library's return on investment can help budget decision-makers understand how far a library can stretch a taxpayer dollar and demonstrate that their library is a worthy investment in their community. In this webinar, Al Hayden, Library Advisory Specialist with the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners, will discuss a library's return on investment (ROI): how to calculate it, how to communicate it, and how to combine it with other library data to create a fuller, richer picture of your library. Library administrators and library advocates will come away with an additional tool in their data toolkit and resources that can enrich your library's narrative. Nonprofits, such as Friends of Libraries and 501(c)3 Trustees Boards, can also use this information to communicate to their stakeholders and donors the impact of their donations.

Topic

Data and Reporting: Data management and reporting

Presenter Name

Al Hayden

Presenter Credentials

Al Hayden has been a policy nerd for 2 decades across several careers. She's spent the last decade working in libraries, combining her passions for data, policy, the mission of public libraries, and the power of the communities they bring together. Al has held several managerial and administrative positions in libraries and is currently the Library Advisory Specialist for the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners. Her job is to advise Directors, Friends, Foundations, and Trustees in public libraries throughout the Commonwealth on best practices and solid policies, as well as how to mine useful data that demonstrates how their libraries are uniquely essential to their communities.

Course Catalog

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Presenter Association

Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners

Cost

None

No Data Degree Required: Your Census Data Starter Kit

Course Description

New to Census data? This beginner-friendly session introduces four tools that do the heavy lifting for you: QuickFacts for fast stats at a glance, Narrative Profiles for ready-made community stories, Data Profile Tables for reliable demographic deep dives, and the Profile feature in data.census.gov for customizable snapshots. No data degree required. We'll show you how to find trustworthy numbers, understand what they mean, and use them with confidence—whether you're answering a quick question or building a stronger case with data. Census data just got a lot more approachable. These tools can help libraries better understand their communities, support grant applications, and tailor services to local needs. Whether you're planning programs, justifying funding, or responding to patron questions, Census data can strengthen your library's impact.

Topic

Data and Reporting: Data management and reporting

Presenter Name

Kimberly Davis

Presenter Credentials

Ms. Davis serves as a Data Dissemination Specialist for the U.S. Census Bureau. Engaging with the public, including local governments, tribal nations, businesses, media, universities, and a variety of organizations and data users. Ms. Davis is responsible for developing and maintaining relationships with stakeholders through the dissemination of Census Bureau data products and resources.

Presenter Association

U.S. Census Bureau, Data Dissemination and Training Branch

Cost

None