



NJ
State Library
An affiliate of Thomas Edison State College

CREATING OUR FUTURE TOGETHER

Libraries Leading the Way



These are exciting and challenging times to create our collective future. We live in an increasingly complex and interconnected world that is experiencing unprecedented technological and social change at ever-speedier rates.

Institutions must transform themselves to provide our communities with what they need to thrive. Everything is up for reinvention: how and what we learn, how we communicate, how we define communities and gather in them, where and how we work, how we interact and how we collaborate to create the world in which we want to live.

Libraries are uniquely positioned to lead in this environment. We are facilitators of positive change. We can support and educate our communities—and the people in them—as the future unfolds and help them invent the future itself, one step at a time.

WHO WE ARE

Statewide Strategic Plan

Between November 2012 and June 2013, the New Jersey State Library (NJSL) and LibraryLinkNJ, the New Jersey Library Cooperative (LLNJ), worked with the consulting firm of Maverick & Boutique and many members of the library community to frame forward momentum for the future of libraries in New Jersey.

The purpose of the plan

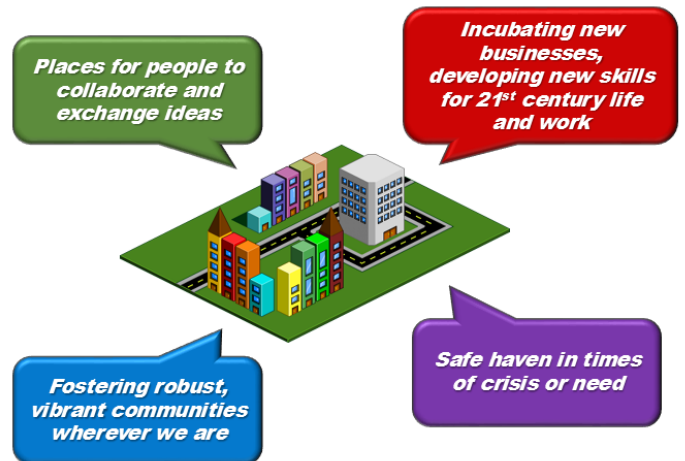
We took a clear-eyed look at both the challenges and opportunities facing libraries in New Jersey and have developed a coordinated way forward that will unite all of New Jersey's libraries in realizing our vision. This shared approach capitalizes on our existing assets to expand our skills and reinvent services to meet the needs of 21st Century citizens.

OUR VISION

We envision every library in New Jersey as a thriving, vibrant hub of its community. Librarians, staff, boards, customers, community members—all library stakeholders—are happy, fulfilled and collaborating productively to realize our shared goals.

OUR MISSION

To position libraries as leaders in creating our collective future. Using the Statewide Strategic Plan, we will position libraries as centers of learning, makerspaces, workforce development centers and places where people can explore the challenges and opportunities of 21st century life. The State Library and LLNJ play a strong role in supporting the library community by providing a wide variety of professional development opportunities, statewide projects and services that help libraries remain on the cutting edge, working for their communities.



Expanding roles for libraries

Libraries as the heart of our communities: Libraries will become a place for people to collaborate and exchange ideas, to gain access to information, knowledge, tools and methods. In partnership with our clients, we will help build more robust, vibrant communities, incubate new businesses, develop new skills for 21st century work and life and be a trusted place to find support in the event of an emergency.

Librarians as wise knowledge facilitators: Librarians will help people make sense of and navigate a world that is increasingly more complex, rapidly changing and uncertain. We will become role models for how to bridge and leverage new knowledge spaces in a multiplicity of ways: as trusted, responsive partners and guides, as content curators and publishers, as teachers and as advocates and facilitators of interaction and learning across the boundaries of cultures, disciplines and worldviews.



WHERE WE'RE GOING

Seven strategic focal areas

New Jersey's multi-type library community identified seven key areas on which to focus in order to implement strategic growth. The following are the visionary statements developed for each of these goal areas.

Goal 1: Communicating the Value of Libraries: Our libraries offer a consistent and trusted brand through which we delight our customers and anticipate their evolving needs. All stakeholders appreciate the value of the libraries in their world, and participate actively in joining and supporting the brand.

Goal 2: Leadership and Coordination: Our libraries are led, organized and managed so that we are able to rapidly adapt our methods, systems and offerings in anticipation of the emerging needs and interests of customers, funders, partners, suppliers, staff and other stakeholders.

Goal 3: Collaboration and Partnerships: Our libraries collaborate productively with each other and with our stakeholders, internally, between libraries and library systems, across functions and disciplines and with our funders, customers, competitors, government and legislators.

Goal 4: Library as Community Anchor: Our libraries are safe, nurturing and inspiring places for people to meet, work, learn, grow and exchange ideas together. Our libraries are seen as community forces and players that actively participate in addressing community issues and challenges.

Goal 5: Cycles of Innovation: Our libraries reinvent methods, models, products and services to keep pace with the "new normal" of transformational social and technological change.

Goal 6: Professional Development and Self Care: Our libraries have the tools, time and know-how for professional development, personal growth and self-care.

Goal 7: Creative Funding Sources: We are reliably funded through diversified sources, including federal, state and foundation grants, business partnerships, seed funding and entrepreneurial activities. We work closely with political leaders to maintain or grow funding from traditional sources.

Five steps of "strategic doing"

We engaged the New Jersey library community in a process of "strategic doing" that produced a living plan, which helps to guide strategic thinking and action at any level of scale: state, county and city or town. The process consists of five steps designed to direct the development, implementation and improvement of the plan.



HOW WE'LL GET THERE



Building blocks for the future

Our strategic plan provides a blueprint for envisioning the future and taking action to create it now in all types of communities across New Jersey.

Resources are available for each step of the process, including planning templates and examples of completed projects that connect to specific strategic goals. Individual libraries may choose an activity from the State Plan or undertake planning activities of their own.



The living plan in action

The Statewide Strategic Plan has already resulted in the development of innovative partnerships and projects throughout the state. Here are some examples of activities that are underway:

Makerspaces: Focus groups conducted during the plan's development revealed that the creation of makerspaces was of great interest to the library community. The New Jersey State Library and LibraryLinkNJ partnered in an initiative called "New Jersey Library Makerspaces - The Leading Edge, 2013-2014" to jump-start makerspace creation. After a highly competitive process involving 40 applicant libraries, 15 contracts were awarded to multi-type libraries throughout the state, offering subsidies ranging from \$3,750 to \$12,500, for a total of \$115,000.

Leadership: Participants in the statewide New Jersey Library Leadership Academy are working on developing projects that are directly related to the goals identified in the Statewide Strategic Plan. These projects will be reviewed and considered for funding at the conclusion of the Academy.

Showcase & Share: The place that spotlights all the statewide and local projects that relate to the Plan's goals. Visit <http://librarylinknj.org/strategic-plan>.

Libraries of all types play a vital role in the communities they serve. Join us as we continue to help them be vibrant, healthy places to live, work and learn, creating our future **together** with the support of the Statewide Strategic Plan.

For more Information, contact:

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