

# Interim Report: LG-13-19-0029 The Library as a Hub for Volunteer-Led Adult Learning Programs

*June-Dec 2020*

This is a high-level overview of the work done so far on this project, as we move towards Phase II, which will bring the entire project team together to test and refine resources and practices supporting volunteer-led nonformal adult learning programs.

During the first phase of this two-year project, the project team has laid the groundwork for our pilot phase, April-October 2020, by establishing a communication approach, gathering resources for our deliverables, getting early input from stakeholders and intended end users of our project deliverables, and writing drafts of the resources that we will be testing next year.

Beginning in February and March 2020, project team libraries will have access to drafts of the deliverables, plus generalizable marketing content developed by CLP's in-house marketing team, for review and input.

Project team representatives will meet in Pittsburgh April 13-15th to learn the materials and develop a plan to implement them as a pilot. The pilot will run through Fall 2020. After the pilot, feedback will be incorporated into the resources, and the project team will publicize the results through mid-2021 as the third phase of the project.

## Project Team Meetings and Calls

The project began over the summer with a series of calls to onboard and establish a working relationship with all of the members of the project team. Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh (CLP) organized calls with P2PU, Multnomah, and Onondaga to communicate a more [detailed timeline](#) for the project, discuss everyone's goals, and establish preferred communication channels. The team agreed to communicate using the [P2PU community message board](#) along with occasional emails for timely messages. We also established a process for payment of project stipends, and sent the first installment of payments to project team organizations.

In September, members of the project team also had an opportunity to meet in person, along with other Learning Circles stakeholders, in Boston at the [P2PU Gathering](#). The flexible format of the gathering allowed the project team and other library stakeholders to discuss the project; CLP led an open session on working with volunteers, and the project team gathered to [discuss possible barriers](#) to integrating a new service that can be addressed in our project deliverables.



**Project team members in Boston.**

In October, P2PU visited Pittsburgh to formally kick off development of project deliverables and to convene a network of librarians and partners for a learning circle facilitator training. During this visit, P2PU and CLP collaborated to accomplish the following:

- Led facilitator trainings for staff at CLP and other regional libraries, along with community stakeholders from University of Pittsburgh and Remake Learning Network. This training was designed to build a supportive network of partners who can support nonformal learning in Pittsburgh during the project pilot.
- Held meetings with stakeholders at CLP, including leadership from public service, external affairs, marketing, and information technology, to get input about their goals and expectations for the project deliverables.
- Held an extended work session to outline project work through the April project team meeting in Pittsburgh. This work includes drafts of all project deliverables, user testing, and sharing and discussing drafts with project team members.



Nico from P2PU talking with Ani Martinez from Remake Learning Network at a training during his Pittsburgh visit.

CLP and P2PU staff will spend the remainder of Phase I working on the draft deliverables, and will continue to share drafts for input on the P2PU community message board as we prepare for the in-person project team meeting this April, where we will train project team members in using the resources and plan our pilots.

## Prototype at CLP

The project plan calls for CLP to run a prototype using adapted versions of existing training materials to train volunteers, hold volunteer-led learning circles in libraries, then gather feedback about those experiences to guide the development of project deliverables.

CLP recruited four volunteers for the pilot. The volunteers were chosen based on conversations with recent volunteer applicants who had expressed an interest in adult learning; the volunteers committed to attending three 90 minute training sessions, running one learning circle, and providing us with feedback. We chose to focus on learning circles because there was existing training material that we could pull from; our deliverables will generalize and adapt the material for other types of nonformal learning.



Volunteers Ade, Ehrinn, Emily, and Liz during training with Ginny from CLP.

The volunteers [completed the training](#), and, with topic suggestions gathered from community members with the help of library staff, ran four learning circles in October and November 2020. The learning circles were ASL (3 attendees), Computer Basics (2 attendees), Social Justice (1 attendee), and Basic Line Drawing (10 attendees). All volunteers who were trained completed their learning circles.

In December, the volunteers met with CLP to provide feedback. Highlights included:

- Volunteers enjoyed the training and were willing to commit to more than three 90 minute sessions to allow for more time for practical learning.
- Volunteers requested more hands-on training in facilitation and using the P2PU website.
- Volunteers were generally comfortable in their role as facilitators, but some topics and/or audiences seemed better suited to a more traditional teacher/student format.
- Staff were comfortable in their role supporting volunteer-led learning by offering technology, set-up, and raising awareness of the sessions.
- Volunteers unanimously cited the relationships they formed with participants as the most successful element of their learning circles.

The CLP team recorded the feedback and will use it to create the draft version of deliverables that will be presented to the project team in April. CLP will also do another round of prototype learning circles at neighborhood libraries in February and March to give us more data and to build on the momentum in establishing this service at CLP.

## Deliverable Drafts

Based on the work described above, project team members are creating working drafts of the project deliverables. Following a meeting in Pittsburgh in 2020, the project team libraries will use these resources to implement volunteer-led, nonformal adult learning in their respective communities in 2020.

This content will eventually be published on P2PU's website. Links here go to shared folders where drafts are stored:

- A [website](#) that will serve as an entrypoint for volunteers, participants, and staff supporting volunteer-led nonformal learning programs.
- [Facilitator Training](#) materials that will be used by library staff to train volunteers to lead nonformal learning programs.
- A [Staff Guide](#) to provide information and support to library staff who are recruiting and managing volunteers, hosting volunteer-led nonformal learning in their library, and marketing nonformal learning to their communities.

## Next Steps

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