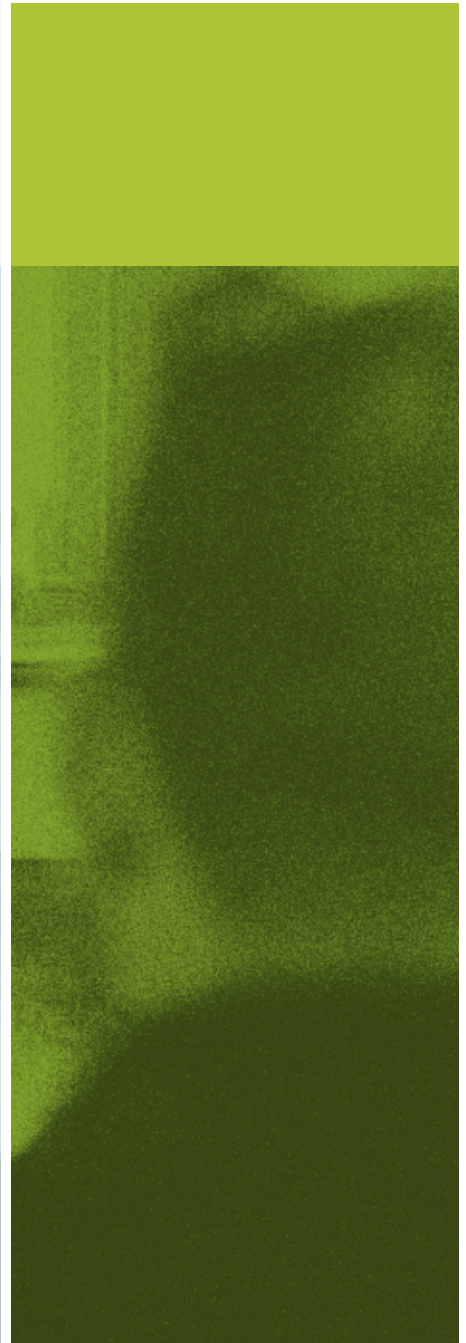
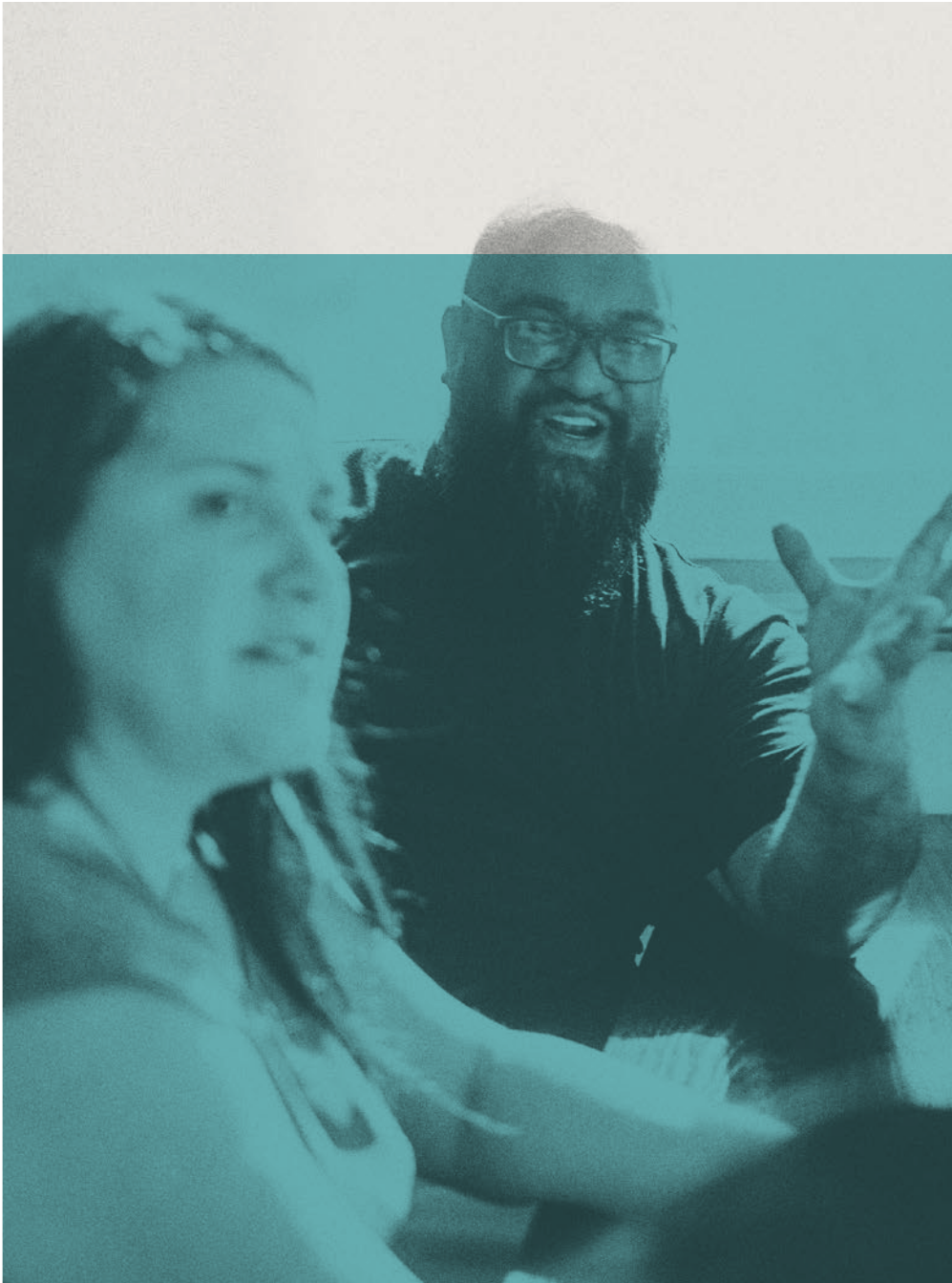


December 2018

Strategic
Planning for
Professional
Development

How PLA's Theory
of Change Will
Advance a Vision
for the Public
Library Field





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Introduction

The Public Library Association (PLA) envisions a dynamic public library at the heart of every community, and PLA's core purpose is to strengthen public libraries and their contributions to communities. Just as library programs and services evolve to meet the current needs of communities, PLA programs evolve to move the profession to ever more innovative places.

01



Recognizing that professional development (PD) of library staff and leaders is one of its primary avenues for strengthening public libraries, and that outcome-based planning for PD would best support progress toward its vision, PLA worked with ORS Impact to develop a Theory of Change (TOC). Informed by a survey of the PLA membership, the TOC shows what changes need to happen among individual public library professionals, public libraries, and PLA to achieve the desired field-level goals aligned with its vision, and helps PLA identify strategies for PD that will facilitate those changes.

This paper tells the story of the TOC development process, shares the TOC and PLA's plans for its use, and incorporates perspectives from three library professionals with extensive experience and knowledge around PLA's PD efforts.

PLA changes in step with public libraries to ensure libraries are equipped, and library professionals are excited, to help all people learn, grow, and do.

Every Child Ready to Read is one of PLA's cornerstone products. The techniques it teaches libraries have become the standard for developing early childhood literacy. As new technologies became more prevalent, libraries recognized their role in supporting a host of additional literacies. PLA has responded by offering PD resources such as digitallearn.org, to support digital literacy skills, and a variety of health literacy opportunities offered in partnership with the National Network of Libraries of Medicine.

Background

PLA provides high-quality PD to its membership through PLA and American Library Association (ALA) conference programs and workshops, training programs, webinars, podcasts, online courses, and networking opportunities. These offerings reflect the collaborative efforts of many different people, including PLA staff, members, and adult education professionals.

02



PLA's long-held strategic planning goals reflect a vision for the public library field in which libraries are oriented outward toward the community and well supported via effective public library advocacy (see table on page 9).

In May 2016, PLA was awarded funding from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation (BMGF), as one of three library support organizations entrusted with the legacy of the BGMF's Global Libraries initiative.¹ In alignment with the goals of the other legacy partners and their own strategic priorities, PLA committed to focusing on five field-level goals, outlined in the middle column of the following table.

Understanding the utility that outcome-based planning would have for their anticipated strategic planning process, in late 2016, PLA hired ORS Impact to facilitate a TOC-development process designed to:

- » clearly state the short-, intermediate- and long-term changes or outcomes among individual public library professionals and public libraries, and within the public library field and PLA, that represent progress toward the field-level goals;
- » help PLA develop PD-related strategies or activities for supporting progress on the identified outcomes;
- » increase understanding and alignment among PLA leaders and staff regarding desired outcomes of PD that inform the development of PD content and delivery; and
- » be informed by a survey of PLA members' learning needs and priorities.

Professional development and continuing education are terms often used together, and sometimes interchangeably, but they refer to distinct kinds of learning.

CONTINUING EDUCATION

Continuing education focuses on discrete learning activities or programs. In PLA's context, this includes conference programs, preconferences, workshops, webinars, and other learning events.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Professional development is a broader term that includes continuing education, but also encompasses other activities for lifelong learning and career progression. For PLA, this would include volunteer service to the profession, networking opportunities, and the coaching/mentoring aspects of Leadership Academy.

¹ The other two partners are the Technology and Social Change group at the University of Washington's Information School and the International Federation of Library Associations.

Alignment Among PLA Strategic Plans and BMGF Global Libraries Legacy Work

Goals in 2014-17 PLA Strategic Plan

Leadership & Transformation:

PLA is a leading source for learning opportunities to advance transformation of public libraries and helps to position the library's institutional and professional orientation from internal to outward toward the community.

Advocacy & Awareness:

PLA plays a major role in public library advocacy and in influencing public perception about the library.

Organizational Excellence:

PLA is positioned to sustain and grow its resources to advance the work of the association.

Literate Nation:

PLA is a leader and valued partner of public libraries' initiatives to create a literate nation.

BMGF Global Libraries Legacy Goals for 2016-2026 (aka Field-Level Goals)

Community-aligned service development and advocacy become essential leadership attributes.

Performance and outcome measurement become standard practice.

Innovation accelerates, and impactful practices are iterated and scale more quickly.

Working collaboratively through networks becomes standard practice.

PLA's evolution creates a progressive orientation that models outcome-based leadership, critical self-assessment, and deep member engagement.

Goals in 2018-22 PLA Strategic Plan

Transformation:

PLA advances public libraries' transformation from a library focus to a community focus, to meet the specific needs of people and communities.

Leadership:

PLA builds and supports leadership for public libraries that is reflective of the needs of each community and the profession.

Advocacy and Awareness:

PLA leads in public library advocacy and influencing perceptions of public libraries.

Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, & Social Justice:

PLA advocates for equity, diversity, inclusion, and social justice in order to enable every member, library, and community group to fully and equally participate in a society mutually shaped to meet their needs.

Organizational Excellence:

PLA is entrepreneurial, resilient, and successful in the sustaining and growing of resources to advance its mission and work.

Spotlight: Experiences *with* PLA PD

“The PLA conference is, for me, a must-attend for public librarians and I have been attending them since the 1980s... There has never been a PLA conference that I didn’t come back with at least two ideas that I implemented—it’s very helpful, it’s very timely, it’s very pragmatic—or it pushed me a little bit on my thinking.”

GINA MILLSAP
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER
TOPEKA & SHAWNEE (KANSAS) COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY

“It was super neat to be able to chair the conference program subcommittee. I really enjoyed that opportunity. Essentially my perspectives helped to shape the PLA program content. Because I used to be a teacher and education is still a big part of my life, that just felt special—something that I’ll always treasure.”

MIKE BOBISH
REGIONAL MANAGER
MULTNOMAH (OREGON) COUNTY LIBRARY

“[When developing training content for Project Outcome, PLA was] very responsive to switching toward digital content with a different format. The tutorial videos... [reflect] the idea of providing the training when it’s needed [and] providing it in bite-sized chunks... a philosophy in training called micro-learning. So this is where having people with a training background who [know] best practices for training is really helpful... That research informed the type of content delivery for training is very important, and I was glad to be part of a project that allowed for that.”

CRYSTAL SCHIMPF
PRINCIPAL TRAINING CONSULTANT
KIXAL

Although the TOC was developed primarily to guide PLA, its leaders and staff recognized the TOC's potential to inform resources for public library professionals who are considering their own plans for growth or plans for growth among an affiliated group of professionals.

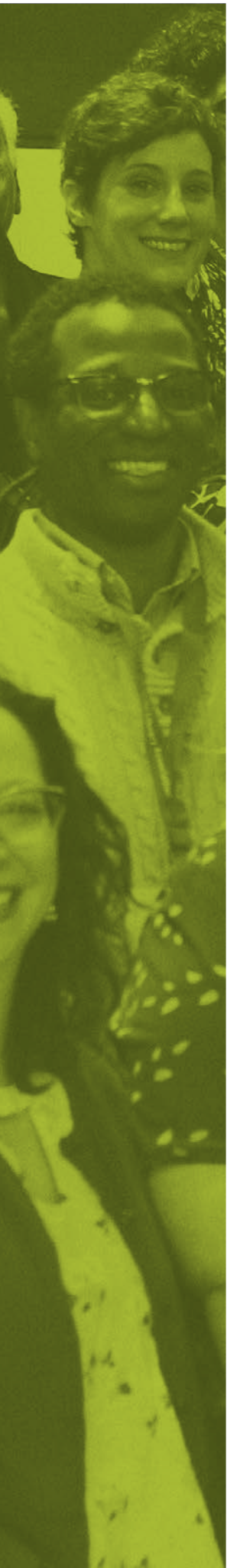
Just as public libraries are shifting from making decisions about strategy and programs based on traditional ideas of what libraries do best to considering patron and community outcomes, PLA took a similar approach in developing the TOC.

As part of its commitment to an outcomes orientation, PLA developed Project Outcome, which offers public libraries tools and resources for using library outcome-based thinking and outcome measurement to develop and measure progress on their strategic plan (among other things). Similarly, PLA wanted their strategic plan for PD development to be informed by their vision and goals for the public library field.

Just as public libraries are shifting their emphasis from providing services to engaging their communities in identifying and solving problems together, PLA looked to members to inform the TOC.

Previous PLA membership surveys have focused on satisfaction: Did members like what PLA had to offer? Such surveys did not provide much direction for future activities. Like many libraries, PLA decided it would be valuable to ask its users what they need, not what they like.





TOC Process and Products

*To develop a TOC that would inform
PLA's strategies related to PD, ORS
Impact guided PLA through the
following co-designed process:*

03



TOC Development Steps

Agree on “*success*” for the process and identify the roles that public library leaders and staff play in contribution to the field-level goals and the competencies they need to fulfill those roles.

Conduct a member survey.

1

2

3

4

Build a TOC that incorporates the survey findings and refine it based on feedback from PLA staff and stakeholders.

Develop “*PD Pathways*” that show learning opportunities that support the attainment of each outcome, based on the TOC.

Alignment on “Success” and Generation of Roles and Competencies

To kick off the TOC development process, ORS Impact facilitated an in-person work session with a small group of PLA directors and managers to foster alignment on goals and key parameters. This session also generated the information needed to design and field the member survey to inform the TOC. Through a visioning activity and discussion, the group established that the TOC would

- » focus on the learning needs of public library staff and leaders (versus those of trainers or teachers that interact with public libraries or Master of Library and Information Science students);
- » recognize opportunities for PD offered by other entities, such as PLA partners or potential partners;
- » include outcomes and activities related to the accessibility of PD, such as PD modality and awareness of PD opportunities;
- » represent the breadth of PD opportunities; and
- » inform the development of “PD Pathways” to help public library staff and leaders navigate PD opportunities in alignment with their own professional goals.

Within a silent generative activity, each work session participant shared their ideas regarding the roles that public library leaders and staff need to take on to achieve each of the five field-level goals, as well as the competencies they need to fulfill those roles. The table on page 15 lists the final goal-aligned roles, refined through an iterative process after the work session (see Appendix for the competencies associated with each role).

Public Library Professional Roles Aligned with PLA Vision *and* Field-Level Goals

Role		Description
Strategic Thinker /Planner	→	Prioritizes investment of resources to successfully meet goals and obligations
Community Liaison /Partner	→	Understands the local community and its priorities and how the library helps advance those priorities
Community Leader	→	Successfully works with the community to support shared goals and aspirations
Library Advocate	→	Communicates the library's value in a compelling manner
Change Agent /Pioneer	→	Take risks, learns from successes and failures, and shares lessons with colleagues
Steward of The Public Library	→	Manages and deploys resources in alignment with the library's vision and goals
Champion of Public Library Values	→	Actively supports core values such as access, privacy, intellectual freedom, and inclusion
Evaluator	→	Measures performance through outcome data
Champion of Outcome Measurement	→	Supports and engages others in library outcome measurement and its use for strategy development and advocacy
PLA Member	→	Understands the value of continuous PD, networking, and national engagement to move the profession forward

Member Survey Results

In March 2017, ORS Impact administered an online survey to all PLA members and to ALA members who worked in public libraries but were not PLA members. The survey gathered information on their perceptions of the importance of each competency for public library staff and leaders, beliefs about the level of training they would need if they wanted to work toward having the competency, and additional learning needs. Respondent feedback on the survey itself included both positive remarks (e.g., affirming the meaningfulness of the competencies) and negative remarks (mostly regarding the survey length).

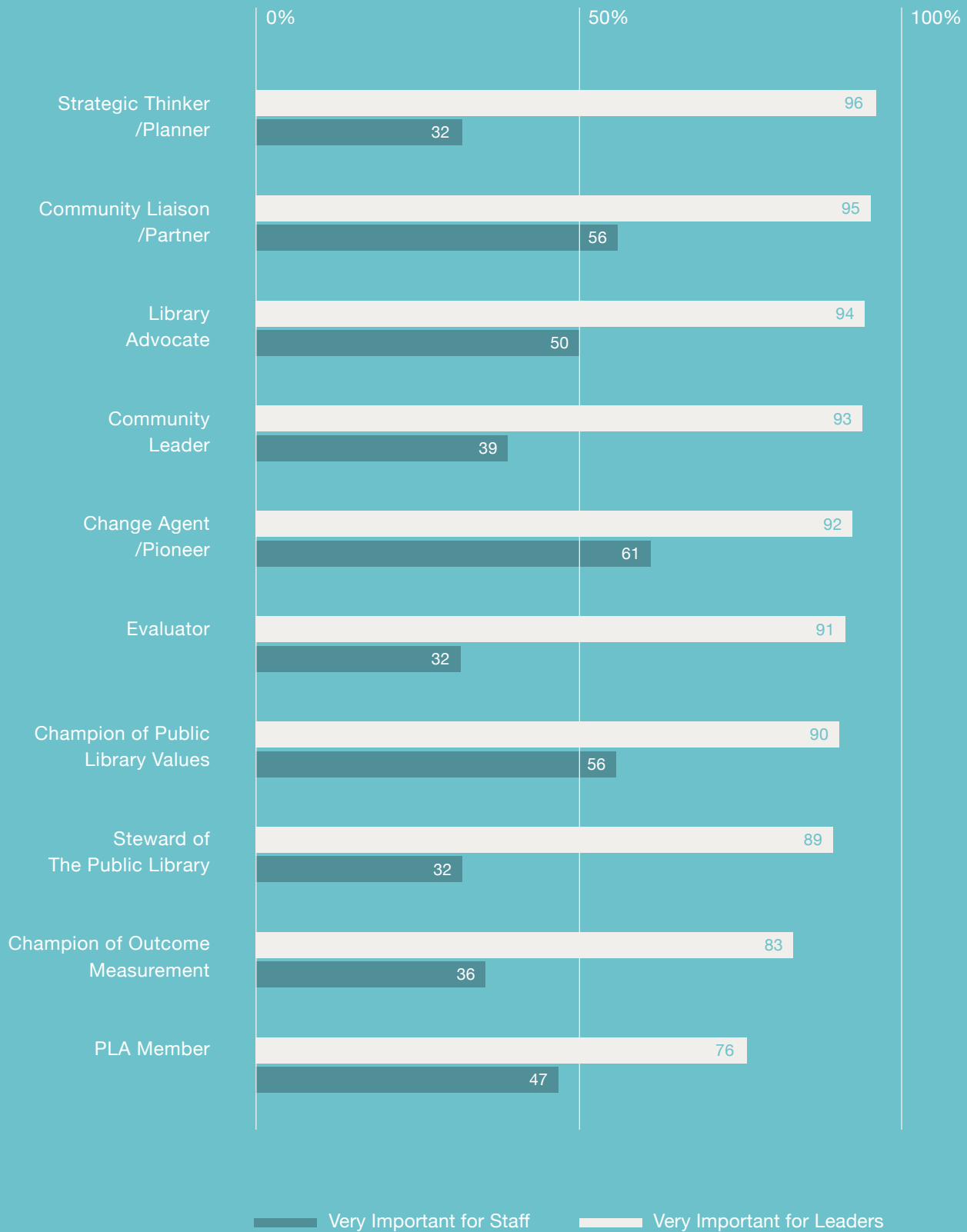
The 3,539 public library professionals who responded to the survey (31% of those invited; 33% of those listed as PLA members and 27% of those listed as ALA-only members) were predominantly female and diverse in terms of age, number of years in the public library field, role within their library, and the size of the library where they worked.

By and large, the survey results confirmed PLA's ideas regarding the importance of the proposed competencies for public library professionals. Most survey respondents rated each competency as "very important" for leaders (white bars); for staff (blue bars), about half of the competencies were seen by a majority as "very important" and about half were seen by a majority as "somewhat important" (see figure on page 17). For leaders, Strategic Thinker/Planner competencies were also very frequently and consistently endorsed as "very important"; and for staff, Change Agent/Pioneer competencies were also very frequently and consistently endorsed as "very important." Interestingly, for staff, Strategic Thinker/Planner competencies were least frequently and consistently endorsed as "very important".

Respondents were most likely to indicate they needed intermediate or advanced PD (versus indicating they needed foundational PD or they already had the competency sufficiently) in order to work toward having each of the competencies included on the survey. Among the different roles, respondents were most likely to say they need intermediate or advanced PD to make progress on competencies associated with the Strategic Thinker/Planner role (an average of 56% across competencies within the role) and the Community Liaison/Partner role (an average of 55%). They were most likely to say they need foundational PD to make progress on the competencies associated with the Champion of Outcome Measurement role (average of 35%) and the Evaluator role (average of 29%). The competencies most staff and leaders felt they already sufficiently possessed were Communication skills (41%), Appreciation of the value of being networked with others in field (39%), Appreciation of the value of compromise and letting others lead/playing a contributory role (37%), Appreciation of the value of transparency (36%), and Ability to articulate public library values including open access, inclusiveness, neutrality, and privacy (36%).

»
Percentages on page 17 correspond to respondents indicating each competency within the role was 'very important' for leaders or for staff, averaged across the competencies associated with the role (see Appendix for competencies associated with each role).

Importance of the Competencies *for* Public Library Leaders and Staff



PLA's Professional Development for Public Library Staff TOC

Many respondents also suggested additional competencies they felt were important for public library professionals, which most commonly included:

- » Ability to engage in “systems thinking”
- » Staying current on trends
- » Ability to engage in “future-oriented thinking” and predict trends
- » Understanding local government and relevant state laws
- » Understanding how to navigate tension between privacy and inclusion

Additional member survey results related to access included:

- » PLA continuing education events most commonly attended by respondents were webinars (46%), PLA programs at ALA conferences (39%), and pre-conferences at PLA conferences (20%).
- » Whereas topic was much more likely to be the most important factor for respondents when deciding whether to attend an online PD event (61%), topic, cost, and location were likely to be the most important set of factors for deciding whether to attend an in-person PD event (35%, 28%, and 27%, respectively).
- » Aside from PLA, the most common source of online and other continuing education programs for respondents was the State Library Association (77%), followed by ALA (71%).
- » Even among these PLA and ALA members, a little over half felt their institution provides the right amount of financial support or time during the work day to pursue PD (54%); over one third get “some, but not enough” (39%).

Based on the initial work session with PLA directors and managers, informed by the member survey results, and refined through an iterative process that included incorporation of feedback by additional PLA staff and stakeholders, ORS and PLA developed the two-part TOC depicted on pages 20-23.

The first page details outcomes resulting from high-level strategies to successfully build, deliver, and maximize access to PD that builds competencies for roles of public library professionals that drive to the field-level goals. More specifically, the TOC posits that PLA will build access to and demand for field-level goal-aligned PD through

- » defining PD content and modes informed by target learning outcomes based on field-level goals, understanding of potential modes and prior successes/failures (based on prior evaluation), and engagement of the Subject Matter Expert/ Continuing Education Advisory Group;
- » developing PD content and modes for targeted purposes² and combining them to optimize delivery;
- » developing partnerships with other organizations that offer field-level goal-aligned PD, nationally and regionally;
- » engaging in marketing and communications that capitalize on existing PLA infrastructure and resources to raise awareness of available field-level goal-aligned PD and perceptions that it meets members’ needs; and
- » delivering PD content that builds networked innovators, data-driven leaders, public library advocates oriented toward community needs, and stewards of the public library and its values.³

Increased access and demand will lead to the aspirational goals that

1. libraries are open to, and seen as essential by, all;
2. people access the library to do, connect, and engage; and
3. communities strive and thrive through libraries, by increasing public library staff's purposeful and recurrent use of PD that is aligned with PLA's field-level goals and members' learning needs and mode preferences. This in turn, continuously builds the knowledge and skills needed for staff to help achieve the field-level goals.

The second page of the TOC articulates outcomes resulting from PD content—delivered across topics and through various modes—aimed at building competencies needed to assume four roles⁴ that would help drive toward the field-level goals:

- » Data-driven leaders
- » Public library advocates oriented towards community needs
- » Stewards of the public library and its values
- » Networked innovators

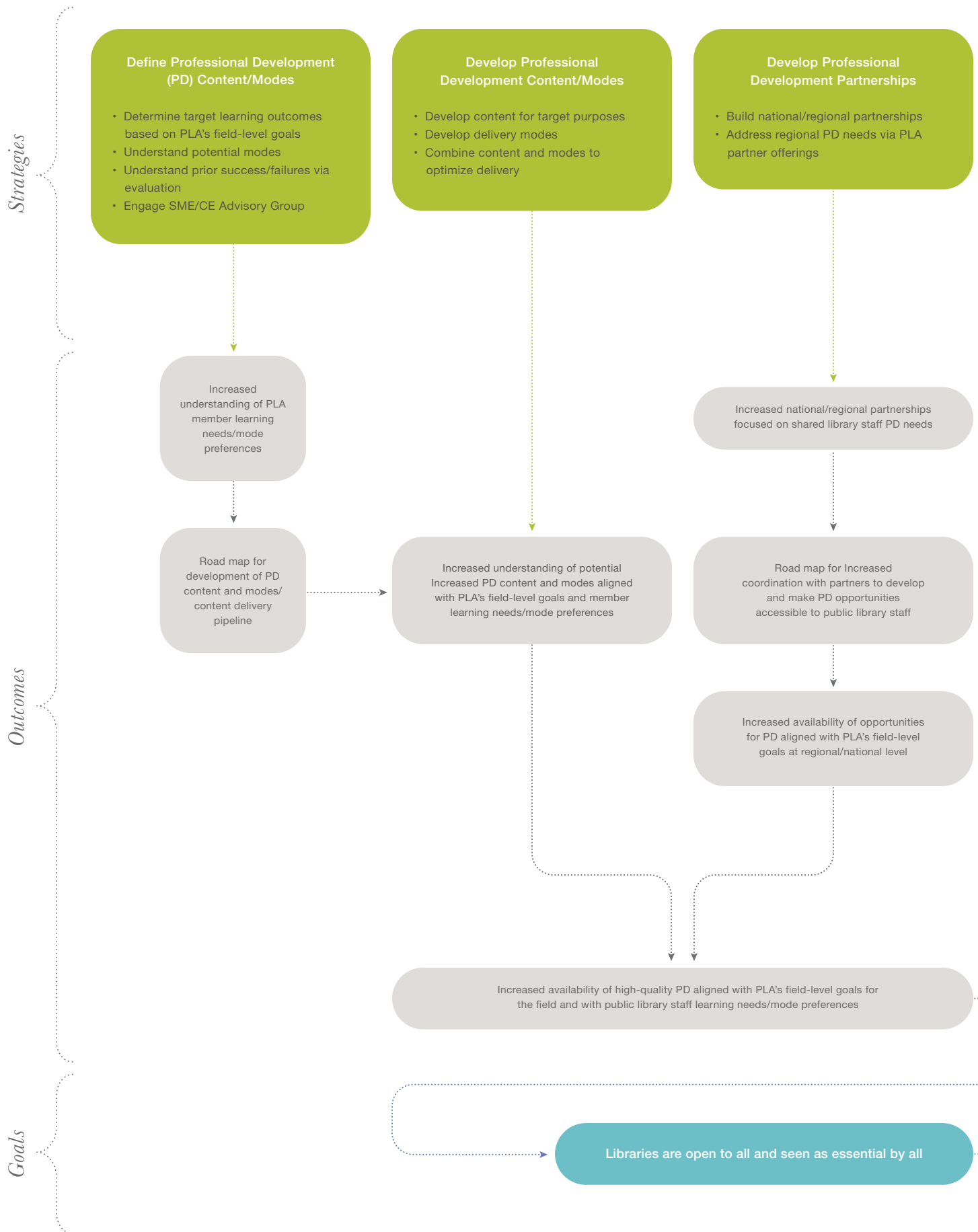
The Theory of Change is not meant to be read as a linear process map. Rather, it describes linked outcomes that build toward the field-level goals. The outcomes themselves describe learning objectives embedded in PLA PD offerings. They are not necessarily standalone training topics, but skills to be developed through participation in an array of content offerings and prioritized by the learner.

2 "Purposes" are two-fold: (1) progressing toward priority results (including intended outcomes for individuals, libraries, and PLA) and (2) reaching more public library staff with PD.

3 The core values of librarianship, as elucidated by ALA, are access, confidentiality/privacy, democracy, diversity, education/lifelong learning, intellectual freedom, the public good, preservation, professionalism, service, and social responsibility.

4 These four roles represent a consolidation of the much larger set of roles represented in the Appendix, based on a determination that the competencies needed to fulfill the consolidated roles were sufficiently aligned.

PLA PD *for* Public Library Staff: TOC Outcome Map



Market / Communicate PLA PD Opportunities

- Describe possible PD pathways for individuals
- Develop targeted marketing of PD opportunities for PLA members and non-members
- Develop shared marketing of PD opportunities with partners
- Incorporate “making the case” language for possible PD pathways and each PD opportunity

Deliver PLA Professional Development Content

- Build networked innovators
- Build data-driven leaders
- Build public library advocates oriented toward community needs
- Build stewards of public library and its values

Increased use of existing member-facing resources to market PD opportunities for library staff

Increased awareness of PLA PD opportunities and understanding of possible PD pathways

Increased perception that PLA PD programs meet PLA member needs and provide opportunities for long-term growth/ support career goals

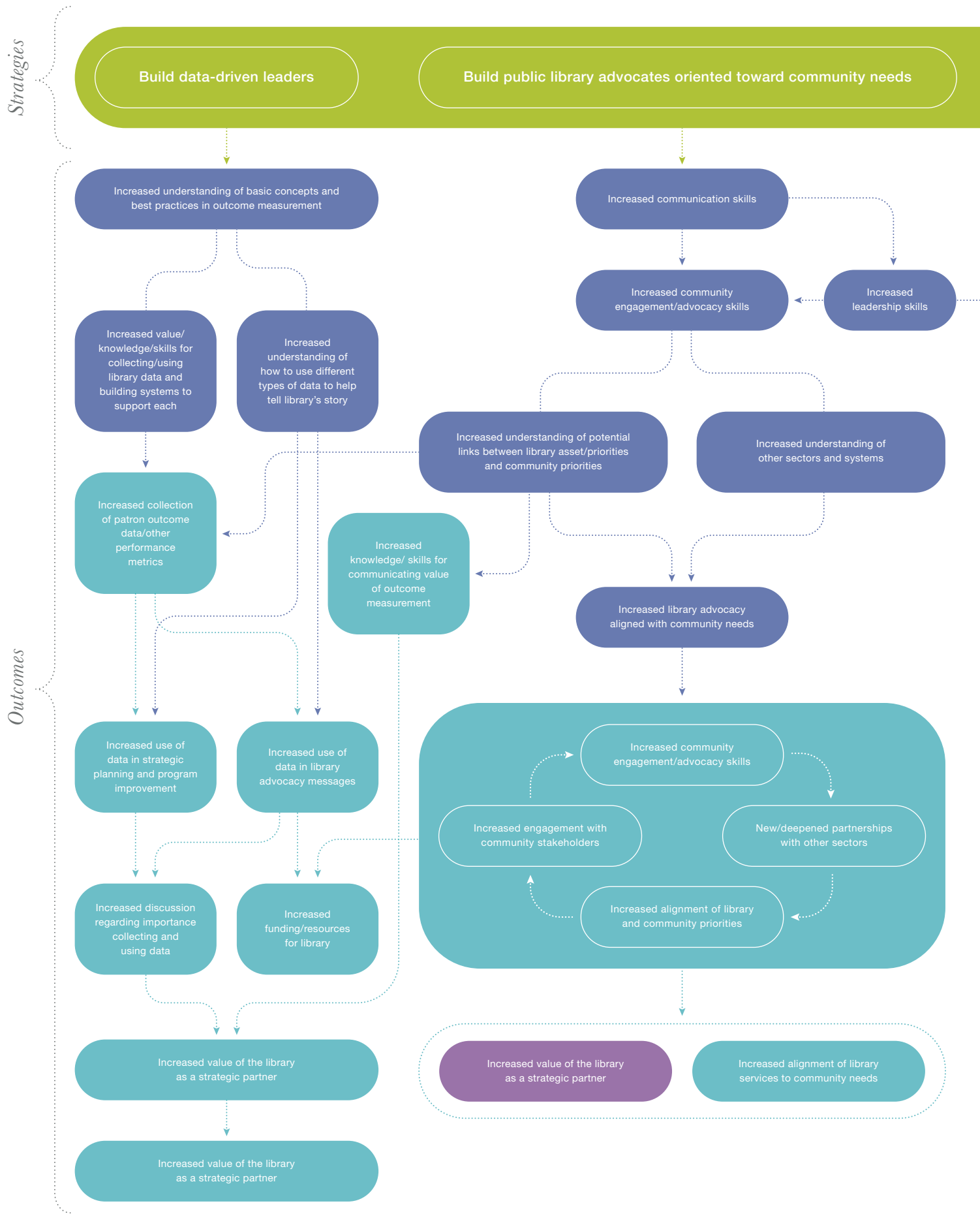
Increased use of PD aligned with PLA's
Increased prioritization of PD aligned with PLA's field-level goals for the field and with public library staff learning needs

Increased use of PD aligned with PLA's field-level goals for the field and with public library staff learning needs

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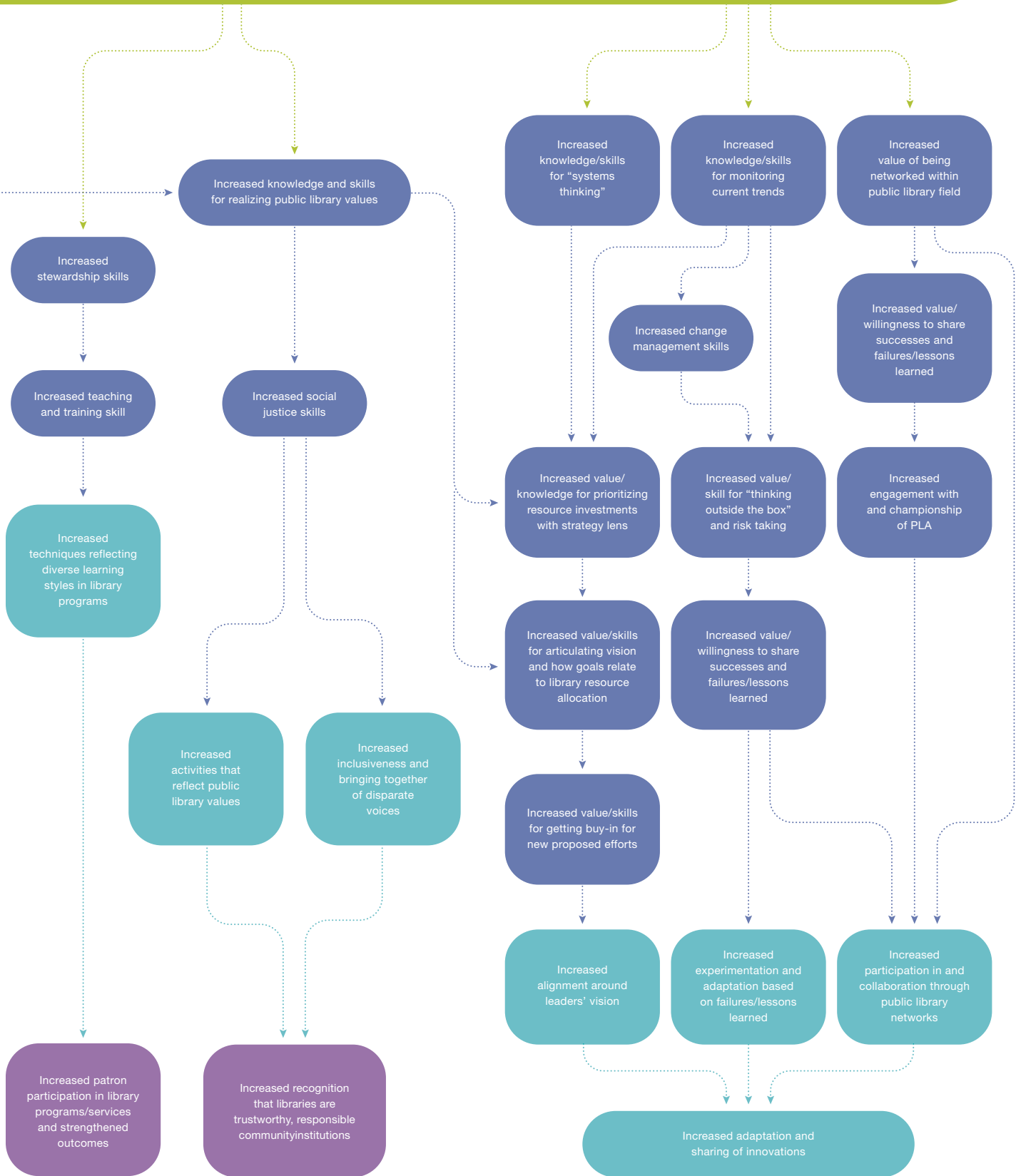
People access the library to do, connect, and engage

Communities strive and thrive through libraries



Build stewards of the public library and its values

Build networked innovators



TOC Assumptions and Considerations

Throughout the TOC development process, ORS Impact captured PLA's assumptions related to the TOC and areas for further consideration.

Fundamental assumptions and considerations included:

- » It takes sufficient and consistent funding to achieve the goals represented in the TOC, including funding for public libraries to keep their doors open and support staff PD; and funding for PLA to develop and deliver PD, create new continuing education opportunities, and develop partnerships.
- » PLA will continue to offer opportunities for continuing education around traditional services.
- » PLA and its staff will model desired outcomes, including using their evaluation of prior PD successes and failures to inform decisions regarding PD content and delivery (being a learning organization).
- » PLA wants its PD to reach non-members (as well as members), as reflected in the title of the Theory of Change: "...for Public Library Staff" versus "...for PLA Members" and the strategies to offer priority field-level goal-aligned PD through partners and to co-market PD with partners.
- » PLA needs to address questions about its relationships to members versus non-members within the public library field, i.e., is continuing education open to all public library staff, whereas non-continuing education PD is open only to members?
- » PLA recognizes the challenge of reaching non-members and needs to better understand barriers to non-member use of PD offered by PLA.
- » Leadership skills are important at all career stages and individuals can support progress toward PLA's field-level goals for the field by "leading from where they are."
- » It is not intended for PD topics to correspond to particular skills/intended outcomes, but rather for particular skills/intended outcomes to be built within PD on various topics.
- » PLA will need to navigate tensions between social justice and other library core values.

Spotlight: PD “Access” *or* Reach

“I feel really strongly that we need to be better about bringing people into our tent, making sure we articulate our value to the thousands that are in the profession but not necessarily PLA members... If you want to build library advocates oriented toward community needs, you need to make sure there are accessible programs for that type of development. A big part of it is how do you leverage different channels... It’s great if you have these programs at ALA Annual or the PLA conferences, but there are so many people out there who, because of personal circumstances or work environments that don’t have the budget, that aren’t able to attend those conferences. So can something like webinars be used to cover the gap there, and how do you make people aware of those programs when they’re not getting PLA emails? How do you loop those people into the wonderful things that PLA offers?”

MIKE BOBISH
REGIONAL MANAGER
MULTNOMAH COUNTY (OREGON) LIBRARY

“PLA’s [Leadership Academy] I know is lifechanging, but the problem is it doesn’t scale very well—and that’s true of any residential leadership program—and so as we begin to look at scalability, how can we get people to have those kinds of experiences knowing that not everybody is going to be able to spend a week together at a location.”

GINA MILLSAP
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER
TOPEKA & SHAWNEE (KANSAS) COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY

Assumptions and considerations specific to increasing demand and access included:

- » PD marketing/communications should articulate the unique value proposition of PLA-provided and -supported PD experiences.
 - » PLA should consider recognizing and/or tracking learning through certificates and/or badges.
 - » PLA should consider potential barriers to PD demand/access in forms of ALA membership requirement, difficulty among ALA members to find PLA, and institutional barriers (resources, culture).
- » Based on their experience, PLA leadership believes PD modes should
 - » reflect the philosophy that “everything can be a learning experience”;
 - » optimize interactivity among participants (formal and informal) to support peer-to-peer learning and, when part of formal PD, to support likelihood of extending learning through formation of Communities of Practice;
 - » support public library staff who are more introverted;
 - » consider how train-the-trainer model can increase access; and
 - » consider inclusiveness (e.g., diversity among presenters, ADA compliance of in-person PD)

Spotlight: Importance *of* Networks

“The most wonderful networking opportunities I’ve had through PLA have been when I’ve encountered mentors, less so than the electronic infrastructures or the Wiki or other channels of communication. That might be individual to me, but I suspect that the people who thrive are really the ones that have some sort of person to show them the ropes and kind of lead them through the process. I’ve really benefited from that, in that both my director having been a PLA president and being able to watch her example, and making friends with people on various boards who can answer my straightforward questions... that idea of somebody who’s within your organization or really close to it who can take you by the hand and guide you I think is really valuable and I would like to see more pushing in that direction.”

MIKE BOBISH
REGIONAL MANAGER
MULTNOMAH COUNTY (OREGON) LIBRARY

“We have so many bright younger people now in the profession coming up, but they’re not getting the training and the mentoring and the coaching... on the ground, day to day, how do we support people?... The Library Leadership and Management Association, another division of ALA, for a number of years had a mentoring program you could sign up for and I was a mentor for several years—and they had way more mentees than they had mentors... I’m still in touch with my mentees, when they’re thinking about a change or moving to that next step in their career they touch base, and I learn just as much from them as they learn from me, and I had [my] own mentors growing up professionally. They make almost an immeasurable difference in the quality of work you do and decisions you make in your career. [And they expand] your professional network so when you have questions or want to have a check-in on something you’re thinking about, you have colleagues that you can trust who will tell you the truth or challenge you.”

GINA MILLSAP
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER
TOPEKA & SHAWNEE (KANSAS) COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY

PD Pathways

PLA has heard from librarians that they would like to be able to track their PD. PLA would also like to demonstrate its own role in supporting advancement of the profession. To achieve both, PLA envisions creating a PD Pathways tool which would enable librarians to chart a path of competency development that leads to new and more advanced expertise. It would also help PLA identify where it can play an enhanced role in supporting PD. PLA will use the result of this exercise to tie existing opportunities to specific outcomes. New opportunities will be developed to further support the outcomes and goals.

PLA hopes public library professionals will use the PD Pathways tool, along with the TOC for outcome-based strategic planning, to plot their own career growth. Becoming a Networked Innovator may sound abstract and aspirational, but making these changes is a process, not an on/off switch. The outcomes in the TOC provide guideposts for reaching this goal. By engaging in multiple PD opportunities that support these outcomes, librarians will continuously build competencies that support progress toward the field-level goals.

As an early effort in developing the PD Pathways tool, PLA is currently taking stock of PD opportunities offered within the past five years that build the outcomes represented in the TOC, in the following categories:

- » PD that has already been offered by PLA through conferences and webinars
- » PD that has already been offered by other ALA units
- » Initiatives and resources offered by PLA and partners, such as publications and toolkits
- » PLA membership engagement opportunities, such as volunteering and committee service.

PD is a continuous process. The mapping exercise demonstrates the many ways both PLA and librarians are already working toward higher goals by tackling the intermediate outcomes.

Next Steps

PLA will use the Professional Development Theory of Change to continue cultivating a community of talented public library professionals where anyone can contribute, and everyone can grow.

04



Internally, PLA will develop PD opportunities that reflect and support the outcomes. The TOC will aid internal decision making on priority areas and help PLA craft programs and services that support the field-level goals.

PLA recognizes that it is not the only provider of PD opportunities for public librarians. It is hoped that both partner organizations and local libraries see value in the TOC, adopt the goals, and develop their own opportunities around the outcomes.

Most crucially, PLA hopes that librarians will use the pathways described in the TOC to chart their own career development. As individuals build competencies aligned with the field-level goals, the field as a whole will evolve to better serve communities.

Just as libraries support lifelong learning in their communities, PLA is committed to supporting continuous PD in libraries. PLA's Professional Development Theory of Change articulates both strategies and pathways to build knowledge, skills, and confidence for dynamic librarians, libraries, and communities. The process of learning never ends, and the Theory of Change provides context for ongoing evolution.

Spotlight: Change *and* Continuous Learning

“What PLA offers through PD could help influence change... There’s real change that happens within the individuals that are working in libraries... they can see alternative pathways to change... to bring that growth into their jobs and into their libraries and therefore change their communities. So there is a personal growth that has to happen there in order for the community to see the outcome benefit... I think that would be the hope, that it’s a truly transformative level of training, in that it’s helping the individual change their perspective and see new possibilities for doing their job... Even if you are a person who is like “Yes, I really want to change, I want my library to move into the future,” [you’ll] still be able to acquire those skills and identify what [your] own needs are through the PD offerings.”

CRYSTAL SCHIMPF
PRINCIPAL TRAINING CONSULTANT
KIXAL

“If we want to facilitate literacy and learning in our communities, we have to model that. This [TOC] is about learning—about continuous learning. The implication here is that you’re never going to be done, there’s always going to be more to learn. This is intended to support librarians working in libraries that have aligned their goals with the goals and needs of their community and those change over time. To me that’s really exciting. I don’t think there has ever been a better time to be a librarian than right now.”

GINA MILLSAP,
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER
TOPEKA & SHAWNEE (KANSAS) COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY

Appendix

Public Library Professional Roles and Competencies Aligned with PLA Vision and Field-Level Goals



Appendix

Role	Competency [better-established skill sets in purple]
<i>Strategic Thinker/Planner</i>	<p>Appreciation of: need to limit the number of efforts in which a library can engage (i.e., prioritize resource investments)</p> <p>Ability to: assess various options in terms of strategic importance and likelihood of success, and make decisions regarding which to pursue based on such assessments</p> <p>Understanding of: how to use data to inform planning and measure progress toward goals</p> <p>Understanding of: community priorities (i.e., desired improvements in the community)</p>
<i>Community Liaison/Partner</i>	<p>Understanding of: different roles libraries can play in addressing different community priorities</p> <p>Understanding of: how to link library assets (infrastructure, services, and programs) with community priorities</p> <p>Understanding of: other sectors and systems, generally (e.g., government, education)</p> <p>Understanding of: one's own local community landscape, in terms of potential partners and their capacities</p> <p>Understanding of: how to identify priorities common to libraries and community members, partners, and leaders</p> <p>Communication Skills</p>

Appendix

Role	Competency [better-established skill sets in purple]
<i>Community Leader</i>	<p>Understanding of: entry points for engagement with other local leaders (e.g., which people/groups, which meetings)</p> <p>Appreciation of: the value of compromise and letting others lead/playing a contributory role</p> <p>Leadership Skills</p>
<i>Library Advocate</i>	<p>Understanding of: different advocacy audiences</p> <p>Understanding of: how to tell library's story using data, including outcomes, outputs, and other data-based information</p> <p>Understanding of: value of risk-taking/learning from failure</p> <p>Advocacy Skills</p>
<i>Change Agent/Pioneer</i>	<p>Understanding of: how to "think outside of the box" (e.g., look outside of library field for ideas)</p> <p>Appreciation of: the importance of sharing successes and failures/ lessons learned</p> <p>Change Management Skills</p>

Appendix

Role	Competency [better-established skill sets in purple]
<i>Steward of The Public Library</i>	<p data-bbox="721 701 1187 726">Appreciation of: the value of transparency</p> <p data-bbox="721 768 1455 793">Ability to: articulate how resource allocations relate to vision/goals</p> <p data-bbox="721 835 883 861">Staffing Skills</p> <p data-bbox="721 903 1065 928">Volunteer Management Skills</p> <p data-bbox="721 970 1179 995">Board Management/Governance Skills</p> <p data-bbox="721 1037 1040 1062">Budget Management Skills</p> <p data-bbox="721 1104 1117 1129">Development/Grant Writing Skills</p>
<i>Champion of Public Library Values</i>	<p data-bbox="721 1209 1422 1272">Ability to: articulate public library values including open access, inclusiveness, neutrality, and privacy</p> <p data-bbox="721 1314 1487 1377">Knowledge of: issues/challenges and best practices related to public library values</p> <p data-bbox="721 1419 1487 1482">Ability to: develop library systems and infrastructure based on public library values</p> <p data-bbox="721 1524 959 1549">Social Justice Skills</p>
<i>Evaluator</i>	<p data-bbox="721 1619 1503 1682">Understanding of: basic evaluation concepts (e.g., difference between outcomes and outputs)</p> <p data-bbox="721 1724 1511 1787">Knowledge of: best practices in outcome measurement (e.g., choosing what to measure, collecting outcome data)</p>

Appendix

Role	Competency [better-established skill sets in purple]
<i>Champion of Outcome Measurement</i>	<p>Understanding of: public library staff skills needed to engage in/use outcome measurement</p> <p>Understanding of: systems within libraries that support sustained engagement in/use of outcome measurement</p> <p>Understanding of: how to speak with patrons, other library staff, partners, and community leaders about importance of outcome measurement</p> <p>Willingness to: share with others in the library field experiences/successes with outcome measurement</p>
<i>PLA Member</i>	<p>Appreciation of: the value of being networked with others in field</p> <p>Understanding of: ways individuals or organizations can contribute to library field through different kinds of engagement with PLA</p>

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