



# INCLUSIVE INTERNSHIP INITIATIVE TOOLKIT

A Practical Guide for Teen Internships





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# Introduction

**Who is the librarian of the future?** It's a question that is on the mind of many members of our profession. There are certain elements that are evergreen—a passion for books and other information sources, a vocation for service, and a vested interest in our communities.

However, if we want to nurture the next generation of librarians, we also need to make an effort to welcome those that may have traditionally been excluded from the profession. If we want to better reflect the needs of the communities we so want to serve, then opening our doors to be more inclusive and accessible to other voices is an imperative.

This is the foundation of the Public Library Association's Inclusive Internship Initiative. The pilot program ran from 2017–2021 with one clear goal: to offer paid, mentored internships to high school-aged students from diverse backgrounds. The experience allowed teens, who may not have been exposed to librarianship as a profession, to explore the many career possibilities the libraries offer. Support for this program came from the Institute of Museum and Library Services, through a pre-professional Laura Bush 21st Century Librarian Program Grant (grant RE-00-17-0129-17).

The internship included four core components to help make it a success:

1. The internships had to be paid.
2. The internship had to have a designated mentor or mentors.
3. The internship centered on a connected learning project of the intern's choosing.
4. The internship had to create a network or sense of community for the intern.

During its five-year run, 198 high school students from 119 libraries, across forty-four states participated. Its benefits have been documented in a [retrospective survey](#) in early 2022, that concluded the program has had positive impact on interns, mentors, and the participating libraries. Though it requires time, resources, and thoughtful planning, investing in an internship program can transform your local library for the better. Moreover, it gives librarianship a foundation for future growth.

This toolkit is designed to help your local library implement a similar internship program. The first section, "Preparing for the Internship Program," guides you through some of the major issues that arise when starting an internship from scratch, like finding funding and recruitment. The second section, "During the Internship," offers an overview of the internship structure. You will also find more information on connected learning projects and resources for interns and mentors alike. In the last section, "After the Internship", you can find several evaluations to help you prepare for next year as well as tips on maintaining relationships with alumni.

Throughout the toolkit, you will find templates and other worksheets that you might find useful through the different stages of the internship. We have also included some of the rich insights and

**65%**  
of interns are from  
**underrepresented**  
demographics.

**42%**  
of interns speak  
often or sometimes a  
**language other than**  
**English at home.**

inspiring stories from mentors. See the Inclusive Internship Initiative 2022 Survey in [Appendix 2](#) for all statistics and quotes.

We are excited for your commitment to younger generations and cannot wait to see how your teen interns thrive under your leadership. If you need additional information or have questions that are not covered in this guide, please visit [ala.org/pla](http://ala.org/pla) or email us at [pla@ala.org](mailto:pla@ala.org).

## Recommended Timeline

Based on your library's budgeting process, you may need to start preparing well in advance to host an intern. An internship is a different selection process than a summer job and requires a longer planning horizon. If you are interested in securing an internship program for your library, our recommendation is that there is no time like the present! Begin the approval process as soon as you can.

Once you have approval, we suggest the following timeline:

### 6 Months Before Internship

- Consult with colleagues and build the internal team that will support the intern.
- Contact any outside partners you may work with to recruit interns, like local schools or clubs.

### 3 Months Before Internship

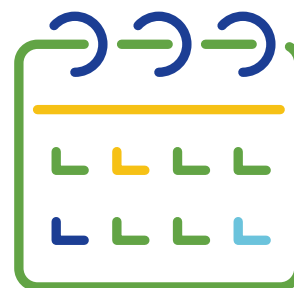
- Decide where to post the job and the amount of time the application period will be open.
- Send the job posting to the appropriate partners and organizations.

### 2 Months Before Internship

- Review applications and select candidates to interview.
- Conduct interviews with candidates.
- Evaluate candidates.

### 1 Month Before Internship

- Select your intern and notify them of their acceptance.
- Be sure to notify candidates who were not selected.
- Work with your HR department to ensure you have all the proper paperwork and onboarding procedures set before your intern's first day.



# PART I

## PREPARING FOR THE INTERNSHIP

# Setting the Foundation

If you have never had an internship program at your library, it is very likely that you will need to request approval from a director, board, or other stakeholder. Whatever the case may be, it is highly advised that you come prepared with a plan to discuss both the value, implementation, and development of the internship program.

Some of the items you may want to include in your plan are:

- Recruitment strategy
- Budget and cost breakdown
- Potential partnerships
- Project examples
- Benefits to the library

For many librarians, the best way to advocate for the program is to explain how the library will benefit from the internship program. There can sometimes be a tendency to assume that it is only the intern who will grow and develop throughout their session. However, The Public Library Association's [evaluation reports](#) on the Inclusive Internship Initiative demonstrate the tangible gains that the participating libraries experienced.

When presenting your plan for approval, you can include the following findings to help make your case. Past participants reported that implementing the Inclusive Internship Initiative:

- helped their libraries improve hiring of teens and young adults to better reflect diversity in their community;
- helped their libraries offer more programs and resources for diverse audiences in their community;
- helped their libraries increase their capacity to provide programming for diverse audiences;
- helped bring new patrons to libraries through the programs the interns created;
- made diverse audiences in their community more aware of library programs and resources;
- changed how libraries approached hiring for internship programs;
- increased diversity in hiring for all library staff;
- embedded programs created by their interns, in some instances.

If you still need assistance crafting a winning proposal, we encourage you to reach out to librarians who have successfully established internship programs. They can offer more insight into the first steps they took to set the foundation. You can find a list of past participating libraries in [Appendix 1](#).



“Participating in the program became a catalyst for our library seriously looking to **create opportunities for BIPOC students as a pipeline to librarianship**, and to get serious about hiring a DEI coordinator at our library, which we did over a year ago.”

—III PARTICIPANT



# Finding Funds

One of the main components of the Inclusive Internship Initiative is that it is a paid internship program. The Public Library Association offered a \$3,500 stipend per intern for approximately 10 weeks. Your library should determine a compensation rate that aligns with local regulations, complies with minimum wage laws, and fits your budget. Please check with your HR department on any other local rules and regulations at the very beginning of this process. They will be able to offer a better picture of what is possible in your specific library and can address any issues regarding internships.



Depending on your library's circumstances, funding may be one of the major points of discussion when advocating for the program. There are many ways to find the resources you need to cover the cost of the program. These include:

- **Library funds:** there may be discretionary items in your budget that could be used to pay the intern. To request this, it is helpful to clearly list the amount you need, how it will be allocated, and why it would benefit the library as a whole.
- **Local organizations:** partnering with local non-profits and other organizations could also help with funding. Organizations that work with teens—especially those that help them find jobs or internship opportunities—will often cover stipends or pay for the cost of summer internship opportunities.
- **Local high schools or colleges:** some school districts and local colleges can provide stipends for students taking part in internships. They can also offer school credit in exchange.
- **State library and library associations:** some state libraries, library associations, and other affiliated groups may offer grants to implement internship programs. They can also point you to other grant opportunities if they are unable to offer any on their own.
- **Municipal programs:** find out if your district offers grants, subsidies, or other sources of funding for student interns.
- **State programs and legislators:** your state government could also have additional funding opportunities. You can also reach out to your local government officials for their help.

If paying a stipend proves to be a significant obstacle, there are other ways to compensate interns for their work. You can offer them lunch, pay for their public transportation, school credit, community service hours, or other benefits.

It is important to stress that this is not a volunteer position. We want interns to feel that their work is valued. Payment also helps to eliminate barriers that may prevent potential interns from applying for the position or being able to accept an offer.

# ANALIZA'S III STORY

Analiza is a branch librarian in a multi-outlet urban library system.

**It takes a lot of advocacy to start an internship program from scratch especially if it's paid.**

You either partner with an organization or advocate from inside your organization. This can be challenging! You have to explain to the administration or to staff outside of your department why we should spend money on it.

For us, one of the challenges was recruitment. The library had a different vision from HR about what that should entail. They wanted to open it to the public and follow the guidelines of a clerk position, because the requirements were so similar. The internship however is closer to a librarian position. It may only require minimal experience, but the interns are going to be treated like professionals and have matching job responsibilities.

Once we worked out those differences, we went rogue with the internship. We looked at our crop of volunteers who had spent years working with us. Those that applied had to go through an interview where questions were based on the broader picture: Why is it important to see librarianship as a career? Why is it important for us to be more inclusive?

When we hired an intern, my approach was to match the internship to his level. Conversations about the logistics were open ended. We also had a weekly meeting where we discussed librarianship. If he had specific interests, we

talked about that. He didn't rely just on me either; he spoke to other people in the library.

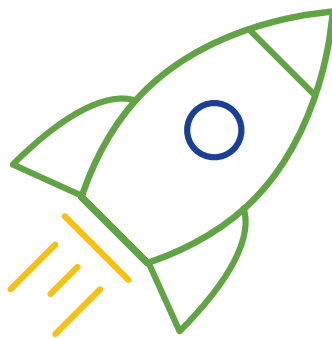
**I learned that being a good mentor means listening to your intern, knowing their interests, and figuring out how to benefit them and the library. It was important to give them an experience where they had autonomy. If they really want to learn about the profession, they need to be trusted to do their own thing.**

In terms of the project, our intern did a virtual reality program through a NASA grant. He researched the variety of equipment available and types of VR systems. He ended up focusing on the OCULUS rift. The intern found space games and simulations, which coincided with our Universe of Stories summer reading program.

He organized a kick-off event where he ran the simulation, met the kids, explained everything to them, and helped facilitate one-on-one experiences for them.

Now, he stops by all the time to let us know how he's doing. We had an informal exit interview and he expressed an interest in librarianship. He is such a part of the library that he'll naturally help us out when he comes in.

When it comes to the internship, I think anything worth doing is going to take time. You have to prioritize the program and you have to make decisions on what to push aside. My advice is to look for the loopholes. Look for the person who is willing to help you, especially when it comes to finding funding. It can be frustrating if you can't get folks on board, but don't give up. **!!!**



# Introducing the Program to Staff



When introducing the program to other staff members and potential mentors, it is helpful to consider the questions and concerns they may have about working with teens. While some employees will be excited about the possibility, others may have some reservations: Will this be a distraction? Will it create more work than necessary? Are the resources used for the internship better used elsewhere?

Here are some ways to communicate the value of the internship program to your colleagues:

- **Share the approved plan:** not only will it give them a general overview of what the internship entails, it will also give them a chance to read over how the program benefits the library as a whole.
- **Explain how this fulfills part of the library's mission:** working with an intern is a way to invest in the young communities the library serves every day. Their presence may help you tap into and grow the number of teens who turn to the library as a resource. An intern will also bring a different, fresh perspective about what their peer group needs.
- **Mention professional development:** staff members who work with the intern, whether as a mentor or as part of the larger team, will have the opportunity to gain and develop leadership experience. Though it is an added responsibility, they can also delegate pertinent tasks and count them as an active part of the workforce.
- **Ask them for their input:** potential mentors and staff members can discuss shared goals and potential outcomes so that they are invested and engaged in the intern's success.

## Recruitment

### Where to Find Potential Interns

One of the goals of the Inclusive Internship Initiative is to introduce library careers to under-represented demographics. Therefore, it is important that you explore different ways to share the opportunity with teens. It will require you to be proactive in your recruitment efforts and diversify your sourcing channels.

Here is a list of potential sourcing channels that could lead to a more diverse and inclusive pool of candidates:

- **In-house:** share the opportunity with teens who are already engaged with the library—volunteers, library program participants, frequent visitors. Give adult patrons information so they can help spread the word amongst their own circles.

- **Colleagues and employee referrals:** Encourage your staff members to spread the word amongst their friends, family, and acquaintances. Additionally, reach out to other departments and branches, as well as those enrolled in undergraduate or graduate programs. Be mindful of contacting colleagues who represent backgrounds different from yours.
- **Local schools:** Share the internship post and related information to school librarians, counselors, and teachers. Connect with school clubs that focus on cultural groups or related interests and invite them to apply.
- **Library website and social media accounts:** Ensure the internship is prominently featured on the library website especially on pages teen patrons might be more likely to use. Utilize platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, or TikTok to share the internship post multiple times for wider reach.
- **Community groups:** Identify local organizations or non-profits working with teens and seek their support. Encourage them to refer potential candidates to the internship program.
- **Past participants:** If your library has previously run similar programs, reach out to former interns for potential referrals. Inquire if they know of anyone who would benefit from working at the library.

## Writing the Internship Job Post

When writing the job post, keep the language as inclusive as possible. For some candidates, this will be their first introduction to the library, and you want them to feel welcome. Past Inclusive Internship Initiative applications required:



- A short essay describing why they are interested in the position;
- A brief plan of their internship project;
- A letter of recommendation from a teacher, school counselor, coach, or other relevant figure;
- A résumé (optional).

Tips for writing the internship listing include:

- **Keep requirements short and sweet:** Only list those that are absolutely necessary, for example a minimum age. Leave out those that may sound impressive, like GPA, but don't actually convey whether the candidate will be the right intern for your library.
- **Give clear instructions about application materials:** Don't assume that young candidates will know to send a cover letter with their résumé, or any other material you may deem necessary. Remember to also add deadlines and contact information.
- **Use gender-neutral language and avoid gender-coding words:** Use "they" pronouns, instead of "he/she" and omit buzzwords like "rockstar" or "bookish," which may come off as being indicative of a gender preference.
- **Avoid racial bias:** Certain terms like "Native English speaker" could lead candidates to believe they don't meet the requirements to apply.
- **Emphasize payment or any other benefit:** Not only is this an incentive, but it could also remove any concerns potential candidates have about applying for the opportunity.
- **Encourage diverse candidates to apply:** Make it a point to include a sentence or two about welcoming applications from underrepresented students.

# Template A-1 Intern Application Template

 [Downloadable .docx file](#)



Template A-1: Intern Application Template

[Name of Your Library]

## Inclusive Internship Initiative Program

Complete the following information and submit it along with a letter of recommendation from a teacher, other school official, community partner, or librarian.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Desired start date: \_\_\_\_\_ Desired end date: \_\_\_\_\_

Internship availability (times/days of week):

\_\_\_\_\_

Age: \_\_\_\_\_

School Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Most recently completed grade: \_\_\_\_\_

Have you worked in the library previously? If yes, please describe:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_


### Short Essay

Please tell us about your skills and interests. How will working in the library build your skills and interests? What part of the library are you most interested in working with and why?



# Template A-2 Internship Post Template

 [Downloadable .docx file](#)



Template A-2: Internship Post Template

[Name of Your Library]

### Inclusive Internship Initiative Program

#### Our Library

*[Provide basic information about your library, including size, history, communities served, and current programs.]*

**[Department or Program Name; for example: Marketing and Outreach]**

*[Offer additional information about the department or program this internship will be working within; for example: "every month, our Youth Department serves 3,000 young people who use the library for everything from researching school projects to receiving homework assistance to learning about new technologies in community workshops."]*

#### Internship Tasks and Responsibilities

*[Describe the specific details of the internship, including tasks the intern will be responsible for, who they will work with and/or report to, where and when the internship will take place (including hours and information on the work environment/culture), length/ time commitment of the internship.]*




With their mentors, interns will develop a connected learning project to be completed over the summer. Interns are expected to spend dedicated time writing, reflecting, and sharing about their experience.

Interns will be paid \$\_\_\_/hour

#### Qualifications

*[Describe what skills and education are preferred, as well as what skills and education are required, of internship candidates.]*

Interns must be entering their junior or senior year of high school, or first year of college.



#### Benefits and Importance of Internship

*[Explain why this internship matters and how the role/project is important to the library. Also describe the benefits that the intern is likely to gain from this experience, including training and professional development opportunities that will be offered.]*

#### How to Apply

*[Details for how interested candidates can apply, including links to any required forms, any questions that you might want applicants to answer and submit along with their credentials, and where/how they should submit application materials. Should also include information on who to contact with questions.]*



# The Interview Process

An interview is key to informing your hiring decision. It levels the playing field, giving candidates an opportunity to show who they are beyond their résumé. It also gives you a chance to ask clarifying questions about their application material. Finally, an interview is also a great way for the candidates to learn more about your library and explore what the internship might entail.



## Preparing the Interview

Before contacting candidates, take a moment to decide how you want the interview to proceed. Consider how much time you want to devote to each interview, what questions you want to answer, and whether you want to do it alone or involve another staff member.

Another factor you may want to consider is whether to hold only in-person interviews, only remote, or offer applicants a choice. Each one of these options has its pros and cons.

An in-person interview can foster a more natural connection. Depending on their living situation, it might prove less distracting for the young adults. It also gives candidates a chance to see their potential workplace and offer a glimpse of what the internship might be like. On the other hand, in-person interviews can be harder to schedule for teens who might not have much flexibility.

Remote interviews are a good option for teens during the busy school year. It might also be easier for candidates to gather their thoughts and review their notes before answering a question. On the other hand, connections can be spotty and there might be unnecessary introductions. You also have to be sensitive towards the living circumstances of candidates, who might not have their own personal private space.

Whatever option you offer, make sure to keep these advantages and drawbacks in mind when conducting the interview.


## Interview Questions

To make the process as inclusive and fair as possible, it is highly recommended that you ask the same set of questions to all candidates. It is also a best practice to send the questions to candidates in advance, so they have time to prepare. This helps level the playing field for the potential interns.

There is a list of potential questions in Template A-3 for you to use, but it is recommended that you also add any questions that may be pertinent to your library's circumstances and vision.

# Template A-3 Intern Interview Template




 [Downloadable .docx file](#)



Template A-3: Intern Interview Template

## Intern Interview Template

1. Tell me a bit about yourself.  
**Why this question is important:**
  - Breaks the ice and relaxes the candidate. We all enjoy talking about ourselves!
  - Allows the candidate the opportunity to introduce themselves using their own words and self-description.
  - Provides the interviewer with a multi-dimensional view of the candidate's diverse perspectives, experiences, and background.
2. Why are you interested in interning with [name of your library]?  
**Why this question is important:**
  - Gauges the candidate's level of interest and engagement in the internship.
  - Gives candidates with different communication and learning strengths the chance to expand on written application responses.
3. Could you tell me about a time when you were able to share something you learned with others?  
**Why this question is important:**
  - Helps interviewers understand the candidate's competencies and abilities using real-life examples (behavioral-based question).
  - Prompts the candidate to talk about connected learning experiences in layman's terms.
  - Provides additional evidence of the candidate's interest in the internship experience.
4. Tell me about a time when you collaborated with others to learn about something you were interested in.  
**Why this question is important:**
  - Helps interviewers understand the candidate's competencies and abilities using real-life examples (behavioral-based question).
  - Provides a complementary perspective of the student's connected learning experiences not as a producer but as a learner, which is equally as significant.
  - Prompts the candidate to talk about connected learning experiences in layman's terms.
  - Provides additional evidence of the candidate's interest in the internship experience.



5. Walk me through the plan you included in your application materials to share your internship learnings.  
**Why this question is important:**
  - Gives candidates with different communication styles and learning strengths the chance to re-articulate and expand on written application responses.
6. What would you like to gain from this internship?  
**Why this question is important:**
  - Re-frames the interview as a two-way discussion about not only the candidate's potential contributions but also how the internship can contribute to the candidate's experiences.
7. Do you have any questions about the internship?  
**Why this question is important:**
  - Gives the candidate the chance to learn more about the library and the internship.





## During the Interview

Send a confirmation the day before. It serves as a reminder and gives candidates an opportunity to request any changes, if necessary.

Remember that this may be the candidate's first professional interview. Do your best to be welcoming and put them at ease.

Let the candidates know that it's ok for them to gather their thoughts before they respond.

At the end of the interview, give them a chance to ask any questions. Offer more information on the internship that may not have come up before.

## Evaluating Potential Interns

Much like the interview questions, it is highly recommended that you create standardized evaluation criteria. This reduces the risk of bias when assessing how the interviews went. Take both the written materials and interview into account during the evaluation process.

Template A-4 on the following pages is an evaluation template that may be useful for your own hiring decisions. Take a moment to think over any additional items you may want to include that are relevant to your library.

**“After the III, we opened up our library substitute position to candidates with high school diplomas (removing the BA requirement). This attracted younger and more diverse applicants. Several of the library substitutes initially hired have moved into permanent, full-time, benefited positions.”**

—III PARTICIPANT



# Template A-4 Intern Evaluation Template

 [Downloadable .docx file](#)



## Template A-4: Intern Evaluation Template

**Applicant Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

### Scoring

For each set of criteria, the evaluator(s) should rate the candidate's response and add relevant comments in the space provided. The numerical rating system is based on the following:

Rating Value	Definition
5	Greatly exceeds requirements
4	Exceeds requirements
3	Meets requirements
2	Does not meet requirements
1	Significant gap or no response

### Written Materials

Criteria	Rating	Notes
<b>Relevant Skills and Qualifications:</b> Does the candidate detail skills and qualifications that would be relevant to the internship (e.g., written/verbal communication, technology, learning projects, past volunteer/work/internship experience, social media)?		
<b>Short Essay:</b> Is the short essay complete and error-free? Are skills and interests described in detail? Does the candidate effectively explain how working in the library will grow the stated skills and interests?		
<b>Plan:</b> Is the plan for sharing learnings complete and error-free? Is the plan specific and detailed? Is the plan actionable?		



## Template A-4 Intern Evaluation Template, continued

 [Downloadable .docx file](#)



<p><b>Recommendation:</b> Is a recommendation from a teacher/school official/librarian/community partner included? Is the recommendation positive? For a 4 or 5 score, there must be specific examples that highlight how the student exceeds expectations (<b>Note: Students should not be evaluated on the writing style of the recommendation as that is largely beyond their control.</b>)</p>		
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### Interview Evaluation

Criteria	Rating	Notes
<p><b>Communication Skills:</b> Did the candidate express thoughts and ideas clearly? Did the candidate respond sufficiently to questions?</p>		
<p><b>Understanding of the Position:</b> Did the candidate understand the requirements of the internship? Did the candidate ask questions to better understand requirements?</p>		
<p><b>Interest in the Position:</b> Did the candidate clearly express interest in the position? Did the candidate sufficiently describe what they hope to gain from the internship experience?</p>		
<p><b>Project Readiness:</b> Did the candidate respond clearly to behavioral-based questions around connected learning? Did the candidate describe passions and interests that could be the foundation of a connected learning project?</p>		
<p><b>Motivation/Initiative:</b> Did the candidate project a high level of motivation and personal initiative as indicated by the plan to share key learnings or examples from behavioral-based questions?</p>		

### General Comments



# TIFFANY'S III STORY

Tiffany is a youth services librarian at a single outlet suburban library.

**If this is your first time, start by working your network. There's no need to reinvent the wheel when other librarians have gone down this path already. Ask them about their first steps.**

Leverage the resources in your community too. Let's say there's no way you can offer paid internships. What about colleges or high school programs? Can you create an internship that fulfills credits? Is there a non-monetary incentive you can offer? Once you have something established, you will be more likely to leverage that into a salary for an intern.

The work you take on for the internship is not just for your library or the student—it is also for you. I learned so much. I learned what roles do not work for me, which is as important as learning if something is a good fit. I recommend figuring out the goals of the internship for both the mentor and the intern. Find out what is important to the intern. They stay invested if it's something they are passionate about. That's where we always start. What is important to you? How can that benefit the library and the community?

The internship tends to focus on programming because it touches on a broad spectrum of transferable skills. They're collaborating with others and learning about project management and budgeting. They are seeing what happens when things don't come together as anticipated and adapting.

Our first intern created our juvenile graphic novel section. We had those cataloged with the fiction books. She researched the benefit of making them their own collection and added some titles. To promote it, she organized a superhero boot camp with elementary kids. We've seen explosive circulation of those materials. I use it as a tool for reluctant readers and to educate parents. Our most recent intern did a boot camp on body image for kids. We talked to local health organizations and

educators who work with teens. Having a teenager in charge made the kids feel safe and heard. It was important for them to see someone not much older than them running the program.

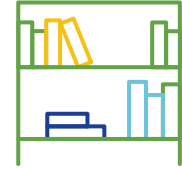
When we're so often driven by numbers, it's important to reevaluate your definition of success. Qualitative is just as important as quantitative data. To me, a successful

internship is one that meets the goals of the intern's growth. Throughout the body image boot camp, we had twelve participants overall. It would have succeeded even with zero, because it had tremendous impact on my intern.

It's important to be vulnerable as a mentor and as an intern. My intern opened up to a small group of us about a skin issue she had and that's where her project took shape. You have to be willing to put yourself out there and to state your boundaries. We have the right to feel safe in our library and supported by our organization. Those rights extend to an intern as well. I'm seeing some of these kids now going to college or travel abroad, and it's exciting to have made a connection with young people who are doing positive things out in the world. ■■■



# Hiring an Intern



## Notifying Candidates

At the end of the interview, tell candidates when they can expect a response. This helps to reduce the stress of the waiting period. Once you have evaluated the candidates and decided on your pick, you should send written notifications to all candidates. When it comes to communicating a rejection, it helps to do so promptly and with empathy.

A few tips for writing rejection letters:

- **Be prompt.** Try to send notifications within 24-48 hours of making a decision and within the timeline you told candidates.
- **Use a sincere, authentic tone.** You can help cushion the blow by pointing out some of their strengths. Mention how much you appreciated the time and energy they invested in their application.
- **Be encouraging.** Ask them to re-apply again or send them information on other library opportunities.

As for the selected candidates, call them with the good news. Make sure to send out a written notification as well afterwards. In either of those instances, it is recommended that you:

- Be clear about the start date, end date, and compensation of the internship program.
- Include a list of any documents or materials they may need to bring on their first day.
- Encourage them to ask any questions or concerns they may have before their start date.

## Parental Permission

Review the labor laws concerning minors in your state and municipality. In many cases, there are minimum-age requirements for jobs or internships. Usually, a parental consent form is also required. Check with HR to make sure your library is following all applicable rules.


Ask the selected candidate for the contact information of their parents and/or legal guardian. When reaching out to the parents, it is often a good idea to introduce yourself and give them a brief overview of what to expect. You may also want to break down the consent form in plain language, highlighting its most relevant aspects. Be mindful as well of any language barriers that may come up—if possible, offer the information in either plain English or their native language.

**“The ESL program designed at III! served as the platform to hear from our community and design other ESL programs to address those needs. It also made a difference in how Spanish speakers interacted with library materials. After building a connection through the ESL class and sharing our resources, Spanish checkouts increased by 100%.”**

—III PARTICIPANT

# Template A-5 Intern Permission Slip, English

 [Downloadable .docx file](#)



Template A-5: English Permission Slip

[Name of Your Library]

I, \_\_\_\_\_, am the parent or legal guardian of \_\_\_\_\_.

We have reviewed the information about the internship together. INITIAL: \_\_\_\_\_

Congratulations! [LIBRARY] is pleased to offer a paid, summer internship to [STUDENT]. The internship period is [START DATE] through [END DATE].

Interns will be paid \$ \_\_\_\_\_ and are required to regularly track and submit their time in accordance with library policy. INITIAL: \_\_\_\_\_

Please review the following program guidelines, rules and regulations, signing and initialing where appropriate, and return a copy of this form to the library [BY, VIA...]




**As an intern in this program, the student agrees to:**

- Contribute to the design and delivery of a [connected learning project](#)
- Work up to 35 hours per week in the library to complete the project
- Spend dedicated time writing about and reflecting on the experience
- Participate in learning and networking opportunities
- Complete short, biweekly surveys
- Be comfortable sharing successes, challenges, opportunities

**We understand library mentors agree to:**

- Assign a staff person to serve as a mentor
- With the intern, develop a connected learning project
- Offer at least 5 hours a week of one-on-one mentoring and coaching
- Provide a safe working environment that adheres to local COVID guidelines and restrictions;
- Provide a safe working environment, including the necessary equipment, furniture and supplies needed to successfully complete the internship project;
- Provide a thorough overview of policy and procedures and ensure the intern is in regular compliance with library policy
- Share successes, challenges, opportunities with other mentors, within the library, and to community stakeholders

After reviewing the above, please sign below in all three places.





**Part I: Permission to Participate**

I have read the information concerning the internship program and give my child/ward permission to participate in the program. I realize that each student must provide his/her own transportation to and from the internship workplace site. I also understand that my child/ward must meet the application requirements to be accepted into the program.

Signature of Parent/Guardian: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Part II: Emergency Authorization**

In the event that I cannot be reached in an emergency, I give permission to the staff of the library or the internship workplace supervisor to secure proper treatment for my child/ward.

Signature of Parent/Guardian: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Daytime telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

In case of emergency, contact: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

**Part III: Liability**

I hereby agree to waive and release any and all rights that I, my child, or our representatives may have to make claim against the PUBLIC LIBRARY, or their respective officers, employees, or representatives arising from injury or damages, including attorney's fees, that may result from my child's/ward's participation in the internship program. I further agree to indemnify and hold harmless the PUBLIC LIBRARY or their respective officers, employees, or representatives from any claims, including attorney's fees, which I or my child/ward might make or which might be made on my or our behalf by others, or which might be made against me or my child/ward by others, arising from my child's/ward's participation in the internship program.

Signature of Parent/Guardian: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_



# Template A-6 Intern Permission Slip, Spanish

 [Downloadable .docx file](#)

[Name of Your Library]

Template A-6: Spanish Permission Slip

[Name of Your Library]

Yo, \_\_\_\_\_, soy el padre/madre o tutor de \_\_\_\_\_.

Hemos revisado juntos la información sobre la pasantía. **INICIALES:** \_\_\_\_\_

¡Felicitaciones! [LIBRARY] se complace en ofrecer una pasantía pagada de verano a [STUDENT]. El período de la pasantía se extiende del [START DATE] al [END DATE].

[STUDENT] ha sido seleccionado para trabajar en una biblioteca pública este verano, como parte de una introducción a carreras de bibliotecario público.

Como pasante recibirá \$ \_\_\_\_\_ y deberá registrar y enviar periódicamente su horario de acuerdo con la política de la biblioteca. **INICIALES:** \_\_\_\_\_

Revise las siguientes directrices, reglas y reglamentos del programa, firmando y escribiendo sus iniciales donde corresponda, y envíe una copia de este formulario a la biblioteca [BY, VIA]

**Como pasante de este programa, el estudiante acepta:**

- Contribuir al diseño y entrega de un **proyecto de aprendizaje relacionado**
- Trabajar hasta 35 horas por semana en la biblioteca para completar el proyecto
- Dedicar tiempo a escribir y reflexionar sobre la experiencia
- Participar en oportunidades mensuales de aprendizaje virtual y de establecimiento de contactos personales
- Completar breves encuestas cada dos semanas
- Sentirse cómodo compartiendo los éxitos, desafíos y oportunidades con su mentor/a

**Comprendemos que los mentores de la biblioteca aceptan:**

- Asignar un miembro del personal para que se desempeñe como mentor
- Desarrollar con el pasante un proyecto de aprendizaje relacionado
- Ofrecer al menos 5 horas por semana de tutoría y enseñanza individual
- Proporcionar un entorno de trabajo seguro que se adhiera a las pautas y restricciones locales de COVID;

entorno de trabajo seguro que incluya los equipos, muebles y suministros  
completar con éxito el proyecto del pasante;  
desarrollar minuciosamente con la política y los procedimientos, y garantizar que  
regularmente con la política de la biblioteca  
los, desafíos y oportunidades con otros mentores, dentro de la biblioteca y  
de la comunidad

firmar a continuación en los tres lugares

**acción**

firmar a la pasantía y le doy permiso a mi hijo(a)/pupilo(a) para participar  
cada estudiante debe contar con su medio de transporte para ir y  
programa.  
entiendo que mi hijo(a)/pupilo(a) debe cumplir los requisitos de

**emergencia**

de emergencia, le doy permiso al personal de la librería o al  
proporcione el tratamiento adecuado a mi hijo(a)/pupilo(a).

Fecha: \_\_\_\_\_

Teléfono de día: \_\_\_\_\_

En caso de emergencia, comunicarse con: \_\_\_\_\_

Teléfono: \_\_\_\_\_

**Parte III: Responsabilidad**

Acepto renunciar a todos y cada uno de los derechos que yo, mi hijo(a) o nuestros representantes  
puedan tener para hacer reclamos contra la BIBLIOTECA PÚBLICA, sus funcionarios, empleados o  
representantes respectivos, que sufran de lesiones o daños, incluidos los honorarios de abogado o  
sean resultado de la participación de mi hijo(a)/pupilo(a) en la pasantía. Además, acepto indemnizar y  
liberar de responsabilidad a la BIBLIOTECA PÚBLICA o sus funcionarios, empleados o representantes  
respectivos, de cualquier reclamo, incluidos los honorarios de abogado, que yo o mi hijo(a)/pupilo(a)

**PART II**  
DURING  
THE  
INTERNSHIP



# Onboarding Your Intern

## Preparing for their Arrival

The first days of the internship can set the tone for the entire experience. That is why it's important to prepare for their arrival and ensure you are setting up a welcoming environment. Work together with HR to have a plan for your intern's arrival. They can help you gather any necessary documents you or your intern need to fill out, as well as help guide you through any workplace regulations you may need to consider.



For many interns, this is their first professional experience. They may be excited but also overwhelmed, nervous, and insecure about what to do. There are ways to mitigate these jitters before they even arrive including:

- Send an email to staff a few days before your intern's arrival, reminding them of their start date. You can also include some brief information about the new team member and what to expect in the next few weeks. Encourage them to be welcoming and enthusiastic.
- Make sure you have a designated workspace for your intern. If a permanent spot is impossible or not pertinent to what they will be doing, at least identify areas where they can hunker down and focus on their tasks when they need.
- Compile any material or documents they may need to carry out their tasks or that you feel will be helpful during their internship.
- Send a friendly reminder or text to your intern with details on time, location, and a list of any specific items they may need for that first day. Giving them a brief description of what to expect on that first day can also assuage any fears they may have.

## Necessary Paperwork and Documentation

You and your intern may spend a significant portion of their first day filling out paperwork. The kind of documents they need to fill out to work and/or get paid will vary state-by-state and can depend on other factors like specific city laws, funding, local library policy and more. Remember to check with your own HR department about the required paperwork and any documents the intern may need to bring with them on their first day.

Some of the most common required documents interns will need to fill out include:

- Application
- State and federal tax forms, like W4 and I-9
- Direct deposit form
- Emergency contact form

- Parental/Guardian authorization
- Personal vehicle form, if applicable

Depending on your own state laws and library policies, the intern may need to show a legal form of ID. Some libraries are also required to issue a formal job offer letter.

## First Day of Internship

There are no hard and fast rules about what you and your intern should do on their first day, but it is an excellent opportunity to give them the tools for a smooth transition to library work. This is your chance to get them acquainted with the location, meet other team members, and establish some working guidelines for the rest of their internship.

Here are some ideas for how to structure that first day:

- Give them a tour of the library.
- Introduce them to department heads and other relevant staff members.
- Go over any house rule like dress code, scheduled breaks, customer service, etc. Remind them of any relevant policies they might need to keep in mind during their internship like what to do in case of an emergency, any tasks they are not allowed to do, and any safety measures, etc.
- Help them set up any IT support they may need like an email account. If your library uses project management software or other platforms, this is also a good time to introduce them to those tools.
- Set aside time to discuss their hopes and expectations for the internship. Encourage them to share any ideas they may have for their project and other thoughts on what they want to gain from the internship.
- If you can, try to include a celebratory social component to the day like taking them out to lunch or inviting them for an afternoon coffee break. This is a good way to break the ice and help set the intern at ease.




*“The whole experience, and especially hearing about all the intern projects at the wrap-up, **definitely made me more aware of just how important it is to work with diverse stakeholders**—whether staff or community members—in developing our services.”*

—III PARTICIPANT

# Template B-1 Sample New Employee Training Guide

 [Downloadable 6-page .docx file](#)



Template B-1: Mock Interview Questions

## Sample New Employee Training Guide

*Adapted from the Piedmont (GA) Regional Library System*

[Name/Logo of Your Library and Document Title Here]

Name:	Title:	Hire Date:
6-month review date:	Supervisor:	Location:

*Organizations who infuse meaning and purpose into their onboarding seed a belief in their employees that "Our work here matters."*

Employee signature: \_\_\_\_\_




Supervisor signature: \_\_\_\_\_

**Before staff member's first day, please complete the following:**

- Call and welcome staff member
- Give schedule to staff member over telephone or email
- Remind staff member to bring driver's license or photo ID, and Social Security card
- Tell staff member how to access library on their first day
- Inform relevant parties (ie: regional office, main branch) of new hire name and start date

**New Employee Packet**

<input type="checkbox"/> Employee Contact Information	<input type="checkbox"/> Direct Deposit Authorization	<input type="checkbox"/> State Withholding
<input type="checkbox"/> I-9 Form Requires _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Copy of Photo ID # SS Card	<input type="checkbox"/> Federal Withholding W-4



**Optional Forms**

Retirement  Health Insurance  Flex Benefits

Will staff member have a key to the library?  Yes  No

*Not all of the following will be applicable to all library positions. Mark NA next to items that are not applicable.*

**On the First Day**

Review library Policies online. Print pages as needed, including the Acknowledgement of Receipt.

**Highlight:**

Collection Development Policy/Library Bill of Rights  Internet Use Policy  Code of Conduct

Explain the Employee Assistance Program, if applicable, and give any printed materials

Give a tour of the library. Mention the emergency exits, fire extinguishers, and alarm pulls.

Issue/Edit Library Card

Home or work email?  Home library  Default pickup location

Profile group-staff  CIRC-1 & USER PERMISSIONS EDITOR

Voter's registration process

**Basics**

Mission & core values  Boards: County & library system  Regional system

Dress code  Timesheets  Breaks and meals

Time off requests/trades  Staff schedules  Email





# Structuring the Internship

The main goal of the Inclusive Internship Initiative is to educate teens about careers in the library profession through the completion of a capstone project. The experience, therefore, will be largely determined by those main objectives.

To immerse them in what librarianship entails, you may want to:

- **Model professionalism.** As a mentor, the intern will look to you for cues and guidance on how to behave in a work environment. Since this may be their first internship, professional etiquette might not come naturally to them. Don't assume, for example, that they will know the correct way to write a professional email or how best to answer simple inquiries. On the other hand, it is also important for them to see a good example of work-life balance. Make sure they take their breaks. Ask them if there is anything you need to clarify for them. Give them encouraging and constructive feedback.
- **Go over library values in a thoughtful way.** Some previous mentors have scheduled meeting times to discuss issues like privacy, access, intellectual freedom, and other core topics. When demonstrating library processes, explain the "why" behind certain decisions. Use their interests to deepen their understanding of how it relates to library work.
- **Give them the opportunity to participate in as many facets of library work as possible.** Introduce them to the heads of departments. Set up a rotation system that allows them to assist in every area of the library.



There are no strict guidelines or plans for what the intern should do on a weekly basis. Instead, the internship should be tailor-made to suit the intern's passions and interests. In addition to working on their project, most interns will spend their time assisting at events, helping with the library's social media presence, doing data entry, or evaluating collections under the supervision of the mentor or other staff member.

It is recommended that:

- You grant certain autonomy to the intern. Lean into their strengths and interests when assigning tasks. Because the project is a core component of the experience, their responsibilities should closely align with their proposed plan.
- Set up weekly goals and check-ins to keep the intern motivated, focused, and on track with their project. This will help both of you create a structure for their time at the library.

**95%**  
of mentors  
strongly agreed  
or agreed that I'll  
helped **improve**  
**their skills as a**  
**librarian.**

- Invite them to departmental meetings and events that are relevant to their interests and can help them make progress on their own objectives.

Remember that this is an educational and professional opportunity. While there is a lot of flexibility within the program itself, there are certain tasks that are not considered appropriate for them:

- If your library is unionized, make sure that none of their responsibilities violate union agreements.
- As a rule of thumb, do not ask interns to do something the staff wouldn't normally do. For example, do not ask them to clean the bathroom or fetch coffee.
- Do not ask them to do anything that requires solo travel or attendance.
- While the interns may feel comfortable helping patrons with small requests, it is best they ask a staff member to deal with any high-level requests or complaints.
- It is best to not have them work directly with patrons at the circulation or reference desk.
- Do not ask them to do anything that may go against their religious beliefs.
- Do not ask them to do anything that makes them feel unsafe or puts them in a risky situation, like doing wellness checks on patrons who are under the influence or may be experiencing a mental health crisis.

**85%**

of mentors strongly agreed or agreed that III helped them grow their professional network.



*"I learned so much from this internship experience on how to be a mentor, a project manager, a supervisor, and a communicator. This was an invaluable experience in showing me how to value and encourage ideas that are not my own, and to provide the resources and support to those who have incredible contributions. I continue to*

*have teen volunteers year-round, and I have implemented so much of what I learned in this internship experience in working with them. I love helping teens follow projects through, encouraging them to work through and around barriers, but keeping my mind open to possibilities.*

**Teens are passionate and dream big, and it's been amazing to allow some of that big dreaming into our work when often budgets and other constraints can be an issue. This internship really helped me problem solve barriers like this, and I use that knowledge and flexibility every day in my work."**

—III PARTICIPANT

# The Mentor-Intern Relationship

One of the core components of the Inclusive Internship Initiative is mentorship. A strong relationship with their mentor allows interns to better understand the scope of library work, build professional skills and confidence, and pursue their interests within the library environment.

According to an article from the *Harvard Business Review*, mentorship across difference is also beneficial to the mentor. The experience:

- Increases awareness and appreciation for diversity
- Provides opportunity for self-reflection
- Builds professional skills
- Increases their self-esteem

The experience of past III mentors reflect these findings. In our latest retrospective survey, mentors reported that the internship helped them improve their skills as librarians and leaders. The internship also gave them an opportunity to grow their professional networks and expand their programming. Finally, mentors expressed that it also expanded and influenced their approach to issues of race, equity, social justice, and diversity.

## Tips for Mentoring Across Differences

As a mentor, you will, without a doubt, be guiding someone who is younger than you and who has little professional experience. It is also likely that you will be mentoring someone who is part of a different racial, ethnic, religious, and/or linguistic demographic group than your own. During the internship, it is important that you are mindful of those differences so that you can most effectively help the intern fulfill their potential.

The Oregon Health and Science University (OHSU) has identified three key principles in building a successful mentor-mentee relationship:

- Be aware of your own assumptions
- Get curious about your mentees' life experiences
- Talk openly about your differences

What does this mean in practice?



*“Being a mentor to a young person taught me the importance of listening, self-awareness, and self-reflection.*

**I realized that my worldview as an older person needed to be interrogated.”**

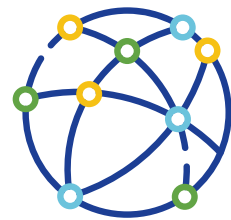
—III PARTICIPANT

- Recognize the power imbalance and try to understand how that could potentially impact your relationship with your intern.
- Take time to learn more about your intern and appreciate their perspectives.
- Be honest about the support you can or cannot offer your intern. If there is a type of support you cannot fulfill, connect them to someone who can.

The number one tip though, according to previous III mentors, is to practice active listening.

Ask them about their interests and concerns. Understand what it is they are trying to accomplish in the internship. Establish the kind of relationship where they feel comfortable opening up to you. “I think it’s important for both of you to be willing to be a little bit vulnerable,” said Tiffany Harkleroad, a former III mentor. “You have to be willing to put yourself out there, a little bit, you have to be willing to get outside your comfort area.”

## Connecting Intern to Local Networks



One of the most valuable lessons interns learn is that libraries are there to serve the public. This will become especially pertinent when working on their projects, which will usually involve working with members of the local community.

Throughout their internship, you want to encourage interns to connect with people outside of the library staff. Meeting other community members and organizations can help them better understand the needs of their hometown. It can also provide additional support for their projects in terms of resources, guidance, and potential audience.

Here are some ways that your intern can begin to expand their professional network:

- Have them accompany and assist the outreach team throughout the day.
- Invite them to meetings with local partners, like schools, professional associations, and other library branches.
- Ask them to attend and actively participate in local festival and events where the library has a presence.
- Share pre-existing contacts with them, especially those that are relevant to their interests and passions.
- Task them with researching and seeking out community resources and organizations for their project.
- Remind them of the importance of their own contacts and community. How can the library best serve them?

**“Participating in the PLA’s Inclusive Internship helped my library re-acknowledge the importance and centrality of our teen patrons. A few months ago, after a few years of planning, we opened a new Teen Room, which our teen patrons are using and enjoying.”**

—III PARTICIPANT

# LAUREL & RACHEL'S III STORY

Laurel is the teen services manager at a single outlet suburban library. Rachel is a teen services librarian at the same library.

**W**hat we have found is that programs are a natural way for young people to express what they want for their community.

They are awesome at contributing ideas because they're seeing library services with new eyes. The goal is to get somebody in who's not overly represented in the libraries, after all.

One of the goals is to show interns opportunities in librarianship. We discuss what they want to do and why, and who they are serving. It makes explicit some of the things that have become implicit in our day-to-day. We get so much out of it for that very reason. It's also a good tip to include nerdy library things. We brought in philosophies of librarianship that we might take for granted, like issues of privacy and intellectual freedom. We had planned only one meeting to talk about principles of librarianship and ended up extending it to multiple days. They had so many great questions.

We connected them with meetings or colleagues based on their passions. You want to think strategically about what meetings are going to engage the intern and what they can add to it. Explain beforehand what to expect. Sometimes they're nervous since it's often their first job ever. Part of being a mentor is modeling good professional habits, including work-life

balance. There's also the human relationship—it's important to make sure they're doing well.

Is being a mentor going to imply more work? Probably. But it also makes work easier because you can delegate certain tasks. They also bring invaluable feedback because it's a perspective that we can't get from our own heads. We care a lot about our interns and their experiences.

Having the opportunity to invest in the young people that we work with and have that be a formative, paid experience for them is everything.

If you are hesitant, I suggest pulling information from other libraries who have successfully worked with interns. When you see their projects, it speaks for

itself. One of our interns created a program about financial literacy for younger kids. A tie-dye program worked out well for other interns. We had a bilingual intern who wanted to organize a story time. She learned from the youth librarians about the process, but she used nursery songs she had learned from her mom. It was very sweet.

One of the huge benefits of the internship is that they are ready to be library ambassadors to their friends, teachers, and family members. We stay in touch with all our interns. It's easy because they are still part of our community, as patrons. They share ideas they think we might be interested in. They invite us to their school clubs. We write letters of recommendation for them. Overall, when it comes to teen interns, it's a huge win. **iii!**



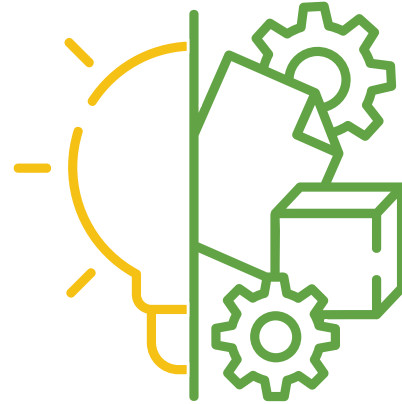


# The Internship Project

The internship project will largely determine the intern’s experience. As they learn the many different aspects of librarianship professions, they will use their newfound skills to work on developing a program or service. This project should be their own original idea, reflecting their passions and skills, and aligning with library values of inclusivity and community-building.

In the past, interns have developed the following projects:

- Conversation groups for English-language learners
- Job and education fair for teens
- Panels on race and the community
- Zine and documentary showcasing their local LGBTQ community
- Composting and gardening program
- Period action drive
- Social justice movie night
- Gender and Sexuality Alliance
- STEM and engineering workshops
- Interactive YA diverse books list
- Latinx book club
- Virtual body image bootcamp



and much more! This is only a small sampling of the many impressive and inspiring projects interns have completed across libraries nationwide.

## How to Help Interns Complete their Project

As a mentor, you will play a crucial role in helping your intern get their project off the ground. While you want to grant them a healthy amount of autonomy in this area, you are there to offer support, guidance, and assistance.

Here are some ways you can help your intern on this exciting part of their journey:

1. **Let them follow their interests.** Your intern will be more emotionally and professionally invested if they are allowed to explore their passions and concerns. Give them space to bring in their perspectives on how best to serve the community. This is an opportunity for them to hone their skills, build their confidence, and feel validated as an important member of the library staff.
2. **Start early.** During the application process, you may want to ask potential candidates about their ideas—mostly so they can get a head start on brainstorming the possibilities. They may only have the busy, summer weeks to complete a major undertaking. The experience will be more rewarding and less stress-inducing the sooner they begin.

3. **Let them plan it from scratch and give them a budget, if possible.** You want the intern to take ownership of their project. This will teach them important skills like pacing, time management, budgeting, organizing, and more. You also want to make sure that the project does not feel like an imposition from above, but an opportunity for them to showcase their own talents.

4. **Encourage them to get to know their community and listen to their concerns.** Librarianship also requires adapting library services to best fit the community's needs. While your intern might have a stellar idea from the get-go, they may realize that their target audience might want something else entirely. Several of the interns adapted their original project idea after talking to local patron, attending library events, and immersing themselves even more in the community. You can teach them how to use surveys, informal questionnaires, group discussions, and more to help shape their project.

5. **Share guidelines and tips for communicating with potential partners, vendors, and other collaborators.** Sending emails to request assistance or cold calling people you do not know can be an overwhelming experience for teens, especially in a professional setting. Modeling email and phone etiquette can go a long way. Offer to give them feedback before sending invites to panelists, for example, or help them write a script they can use when asking for quotes.

6. **Check in on their progress.** Set aside a time to discuss their project and whether they are encountering any obstacles. Use the meeting to answer any questions, offer additional support, and clarify any issues. It is also a way for the intern to keep track of their own to-do list and avoid falling behind.

7. **Help manage expectations.** Emphasize that the success of the project does not hinge in number of attendees, likes, or viral content. The work itself is the reward. Let them know that you are proud of their achievements and their contribution is important to the library.

*“My mentoring experience strengthened my professional commitment to DEI initiatives in the library. It opened*

**my eyes to the social and financial barriers to greater diversity in librarianship.**

*During conversations with our new director, I was one of several staff who advocated for the creation of a DEI coordinator role, which we now have.”*

—III PARTICIPANT

**38%**

of mentor relationships matched a **White mentor with an intern who identified as a POC.**

**19%**

of mentor relationships matched a mentor and intern **who each identified differently as a POC.**

# Resources for Interns

To learn more about the Inclusive Internship Initiative:

- [“Teens Experience Librarianship Firsthand,”](#) American Libraries, October 6, 2021
- [“2019 Inclusive Internship Initiative Concludes in D.C.: This year’s interns and mentors meet at Library of Congress to discuss successes, challenges,”](#) American Libraries, October 6, 2021

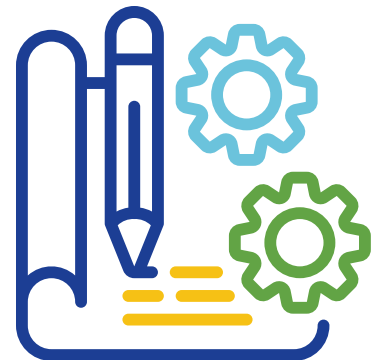
Resources to help them generate ideas for their project topic:

- [Social Identity Wheel](#), University of Michigan
- [Ideate Worksheet](#)
- [SMART Goals](#)

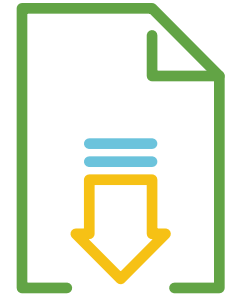
Resources to help them implement the project:

- [Timeline Template](#)
- [Marketing Template](#)
- [Budget Template](#)
- [Evaluation Template](#)
- [Final Product Checklist](#)

Other resources that might be useful include an employee handbook, and other interns—if you know of other local libraries with teen internship programs, it could be fun and useful to meet fellow participants.



# Resources for Mentors



For further reading on the Inclusive Internship Initiative:

- [PLA Inclusive Internship Initiative](#)
- [“Librarians On: Working With Interns \(So Everyone Wins\)”](#), Programming Librarian, December 3, 2021

Resources on working with teens:

- *The Teen Library Internship Handbook* by Diane P. Tuccillo, Rowman & Littlefield, 2021
- [Connected Learning Alliance](#)

Resources on mentoring across differences:

- [“When Mentorship Crosses Cultures, Both Sides Learn,”](#) Harvard Business Review, August 05, 2016
- [“Mentoring Across Differences,”](#) RCN Mentoring Monthly Newsletter, June 2020
- [Inclusive Mentoring: Effective Mentoring Practices](#), The Harriet W. Sheridan Center for Teaching and Learning Brown University

Another idea that might be useful is to find current and former mentors. Contact past participating libraries in [Appendix 1](#) to ask if there are any staff members who might be interested in giving you an overview of their experience and best practices.



# JENNIFER'S III STORY

Jennifer is a branch librarian in a multi-outlet county library system.

**If your library is thinking about bringing on interns, there are many ways to advocate for the program.**

Contact state organizations and policy departments to inquire if they can provide a list of legislators in your area or offer contact information for any relevant persons. They can help with things like recruitment and support. Inform them of how this is a good opportunity to bring people to the library and expose them to the library professions.

Whenever you're advocating for the program, make sure to have a plan and recruitment strategy. More than anything, have a price. Whether it's legislators or other potential sources for funding, they want to see the breakdown in numbers. It's important to highlight what libraries do, as well. Show them we continue to serve the community as we always have, even in times of crisis like COVID. Make clear how, why, and what the community will get from an intern. Work with the library board to make sure they are on board with an internship program, too.

Partnerships with schools or organizations can be important sources of support. Again, it's key to show how an internship program can be equally successful for both. Contact the local school district to see what intern or job shadowing opportunities there are. Look at state libraries and state library associations and always check your town and municipal hires. Ask if you can have a summer hire or intern for the library. The worst thing they can say is "no."

Gauge your staff as well. Sometimes, staff members are skeptical because they see


working with teens as being more work. But that's the wrong way to approach it. Try to get them on board. When given a chance, interns will succeed, and we will help them succeed.

My main tip for mentors is to find out what the intern's passion is and how their passion can relate to librarianship whether through programming, tech, or customer service. High schoolers are sometimes shocked by everything we do—several think that librarians just sit around and read all day. I like to tell them that anything you're passionate about can be found at the library.



We've seen their passion on display in their projects. One of our interns was an autistic person. They used puppetry to organize a tour of the library which showed kids how to check out books. We had another intern with an anxiety disorder. She took her project and tooled it into a staff wellness

project. Our interns also become leaders for younger kids. It shows them how to positively interact together.

Checking in with previous interns is always great, as long as it's welcome. My approach is to say, "feel free to reach out sometime, here's my card." Then I leave it up to them. Regardless of whether they do or not, I know the internship has an impact on them. For example, we had an intern who also worked at a fast-food chain. The library changed her outlook on careers. She had a career test that said she'd be a good school guidance counselor, but she didn't want to do that. When she had the library internship, though, she realized it was a perfect fit. She put it this way: "I can still reach people and help them at the library." 

# PART III

# AFTER THE INTERNSHIP

# Intern Evaluation

In the final days of the internship, you want to encourage your intern to reflect on their experience. One of the goals of the program is to help teens gain professional experience they can later apply in future opportunities. You want to ensure that they are ready to talk about their experience to peers, teachers, and potential employers in a way that leaves them feeling empowered. As a mentor there are several exercises you can offer your intern to help hone those skills:

## Mock Interview

Provide them with a list of sample general questions and internship-related questions they may be asked in college or job interviews. Give them a few days to prepare. This allows them to reflect on their own experience and gather their thoughts, so they can have go-to answers for a variety of situations. Once they are ready, set up a time to conduct a mock interview. Offer them feedback after the exercise, pointing out the answers that shone and those that remained unclear.



## Internship-Related Questions

1. Can you tell me about your project and its impact on your community?
2. What was one challenge you encountered during your internship and how did you overcome it?
3. What was the most important thing you gained from your internship?
4. Apart from your internship, how else are you involved in your community?
5. Why are public libraries important to communities and society at large?

## General Interview Questions

1. Tell me about a time you encountered conflict with a coworker or peer and what steps you took to resolve it.
2. Tell me about a time you demonstrated leadership (either at work, school, volunteering, or an extracurricular activity).
3. Tell me about a time you worked with someone whose backgrounds, beliefs, and/or interests differed from yours. How did you handle any challenges that may have come up?
4. What are your three strongest skills?
5. Do you have anything you'd like to ask me?

Template C-1 is an editable document of these mock interview questions to help you get started.

## Template C-1 Mock Interview Questions

 [Downloadable .docx file](#)



Template C-1: Mock Interview Questions

### Mock Interview Questions

#### Internship-Related Questions

1. Can you tell me about your project and its impact on your community?
2. What was one challenge you encountered during your internship and how did you overcome it?
3. What was the most important thing you gained from your internship?
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#### General Interview Questions

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3. Tell me about a time you worked with someone whose backgrounds, beliefs, and/or interests differed from yours. How did you handle any challenges that may have come up?
4. What are your three strongest skills?
5. Do you have anything you'd like to ask me?






## Accomplish Statements

Learning how to write accomplish statements can help the intern build up their résumé in a way that is strong and effective. Ask them to brainstorm a list of statements by using the template below. Set up a time where you can meet to give them feedback and help them overcome any block they may have about describing their experience at the library. This may be good time to also give them a useful overview of how to structure résumés and best practices for writing them. See Template C-2 below for an easy formula for writing accomplish statements.

### Template C-2 Writing Accomplishment Statements

 [Downloadable .docx file](#)

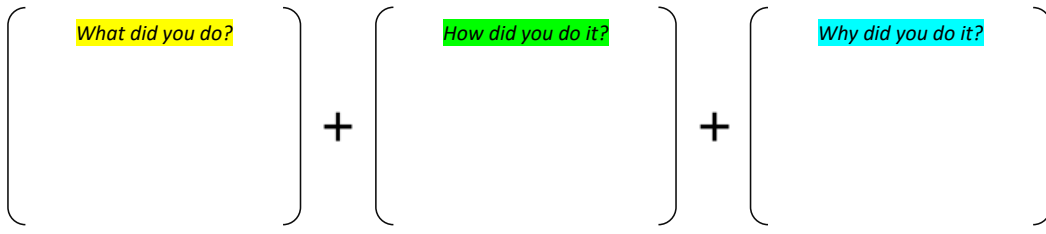


Template C-2: Writing Accomplishment Statements

#### Writing Accomplishment Statements


Verb + Example + Result

**Accomplishment statements** are the bullet points on your résumé that start with strong, descriptive verbs and highlight your skills and experience through concrete examples.



**Examples:**

- Promoted the library's teen programs by creating a Facebook marketing campaign that resulted in an 80% increase in program participation.
- Modernized the library's online college resource guide through collaboration with the technology services department to increase patron usage of digital resources.
- Engaged in community outreach to high school students by organizing a series of college readiness workshops in order to support underserved students.

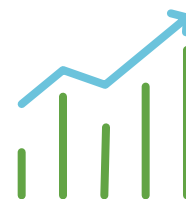


## Exit Interview

Thought they are not mandatory, you might want to consider scheduling an exit interview with your intern on their last day. The exit interview serves two purposes. First, it gives you the opportunity to give your intern overall feedback on their performance. More importantly, though, it allows the intern to share candidly about their experience. This not only gives you a chance to address any unresolved conflicts or questions, but it can also help you identify ways to improve the internship for future candidates.

Here are some resources on exit interviews that include sample questions:

- [The University of Maine's Sample Internship Exit Interview Questions](#)
- [Northwest Missouri State University's Sample Exit Interview](#)
- [Indeed's 8 Exit Interview Questions for an Internship](#)



## Mentor Evaluation

In many ways, taking the time to do your own self-assessment as a mentor gives you the same benefits that it gives the interns—it can help you find ways to describe your mentorship experience during performance reviews, grant applications, job interviews, etc. Give yourself time to take stock of how the internship has helped you become a better leader. Think about the ways it has changed your views on librarianship. Consider the challenges that arose and how you can improve your own mentoring skills.

Here are a few samples questions that can help you evaluate your own role as a mentor:

1. Did the internship help you improve your skills as a librarian?
2. Did the internship help you grow your professional network?
3. In what ways did you practice your mentorship skills?
4. How did the internship influence your views on equity, diversity, inclusion, and social justice?
5. How did the internship influence your library practices?
6. How did the internship influence your approach to programming?
7. What were the biggest challenges you faced as a mentor?
8. What were the biggest triumphs you experienced as a mentor?
9. Brainstorm a list of accomplishment statements regarding your experience as a mentor.

**72%**

of mentors strongly agreed or agreed that participating in III **helped their library improve their hiring of teens and young adults so that they reflect the diversity in their community**, and helped their library offer more programs and resources for diverse audiences in their community.

# Library Evaluation

Whether in a formal or informal setting, it could also be beneficial to evaluate how the internship experience was for the library as a whole. Check in with staff members who worked with the intern and ask for their thought. Their experience might add more insights into how the internship proved beneficial for the community or they might be aware of challenges that you missed.

Whether as a group or on your own, here are some sample questions that might help you evaluate the kind of impact the internship program had on the library:

- 1. Did it change how your library approached internship or other early career roles?
- 2. Did it change how the library approached hiring to better reflect the community?
- 3. Did it help the library offer more programs and resources for diverse audiences?
- 4. Did it help make diverse audiences in the community more aware of library programs and resources?
- 5. What were some of the challenges for the library?
- 6. What were some of the benefits for the library?
- 7. Brainstorm a list of accomplishment statements for the library, highlighting its role in the internship.

**“Participating in this program has helped to spark new teen leadership opportunities at our library.**

*While we do not have funds this year to support a paid internship, we have formed a Youth Board that works with our library system’s Board of Trustees to help the library reach teens throughout our community.”*

—III PARTICIPANT



**“We think far more often of how to encourage diverse young audiences to consider librarianship as a career.**

*Previously our efforts had centered on those already holding a BA, master’s or with longer work histories.”*

—III PARTICIPANT

# When to Keep an Internship Project

The evaluations can also help you determine whether it is beneficial for the library to maintain the internship project long after the session is over. There are many worthwhile and admirable projects that are meant to be one-time events and are successful as such. There are others, however, that could continue to serve library patrons throughout the years.

You may want to keep internship projects as part of the library's regular programming or as a resource if:

- It meets an ongoing need in your community, like ESL classes.
- It forms part of an ongoing library program or a resource, like a revamped YA section of the library's website.
- It fulfills the requirements of a grant you already have in place, like the creation of a funded virtual reality program.
- It brings or connected with new and underrepresented audiences, like a bilingual story hour.
- It established a new or deepened an existing partnership.
- It increases the use or circulation of a resource, like a dedicated section for graphic novels.
- It is an evergreen resource, like a diverse books library guide.

Other factors to consider when deciding whether to sustain an internship project after the program is over:

- Does it align with your overall strategic goals?
- Does it have an audience?
- Is it low or no cost to keep? Does it align with the library budget's priorities?

*"My experience helped me to be prepared while working with many different people, and being exposed more I was able to gain more confidence in talking. **All the knowledge that I got will help me improve even more in my education and career.**"*

—III PARTICIPANT

**"I improved my professional skills as well as my public speaking skills. This has taught me how to be confident.** *It taught me how to remain calm and prepared for any challenges I may face when speaking about something, as well as the challenges I may face in school or in the workplace."*

—III PARTICIPANT

# Maintaining Relationships with Former Interns

The relationship with your intern does not have to end when the program does. Past mentors have said that they still maintain ties to their interns. If they form part of the library's community, it can be very easy for them to stop by, become regular patrons, or decide to volunteer at the library. Whether the intern desires to maintain more frequent contact will depend on each individual and comfort level.

Mentors have different ways of approaching this issue. Offer to serve as a professional reference to interns, at the very least. Several recommend giving your intern your contact information, like a phone number and email, and letting the intern decide whether to reach out or not. Other mentors will make the effort to check in through professional channels, like email. There are some mentors who prefer to meet the interns where they are at, like via text or social media platforms. No method is better or worse—it will boil down to the bonds you have created with your mentees.

You may want to check your library's policy regarding interactions on social media with staff or communications with former workers. Within the guidelines and boundaries you set, though, remember that the interns are now part of your professional network, and you are part of theirs. Remind them that you are happy to answer questions, serve as a reference, write a letter of recommendation, or help them out in other ways about librarianship.



**53%**

of intern alumni have post-III experience in a **library, archive, museum, or a related organization.**

**76%**

of them indicated that their III experience **impacted their decision to pursue these work experiences** "very much" or "quite a bit."

# Preparing for Next Year

Congratulations! With a successful first year under your belt, you have probably overcome the major challenges of implementing an internship. On this foundation, you will be able to maintain the program for years to come. There are still a few aspects of the program that might need an annual reassessment to help the internship continue and flow better than before.

Here are a few questions you may want to ask yourself to help you prepare for the following year:

- Did the hiring timeline work well, or do you need to readjust it? Would it be better to start the process sooner or later?
- Were you satisfied with the candidates that applied? Is there a way you can expand the pool to include more diverse or overlooked candidates?
- Was the allocated budget enough to cover the intern’s payment and any other expenses that may have been associated with the internship program? Do you need to look for additional funding sources?
- Were the intern’s workspace and materials adequate?
- Is there any way you can improve the internship experience for the intern? For yourself? For the library?

**79%**  
of mentors strongly agreed or agreed that participating in III **made diverse audiences in their community more aware of library programs and resources.**



*“When I was an intern at the library . . . I focused more on my project to make the services known to the young people who have just arrived in this country. **Now I work as a Spanish outreach clerk in the same library, I also work with the group of young newcomers.**”*

—III PARTICIPANT

# JOY'S III STORY

Joy is an adult services librarian at a suburban library.

**The internship is phenomenal and much needed. As we know, librarianship is predominantly white, female, and of a certain social economic status.**

To have younger people exposed to this career can only be good. It's something I wish I had been exposed to when I was a kid.

I was fortunate to have a director that was excited about this program from the start. Our entire team has been on board with offering their time and energy towards making the internship a well-rounded experience. What I would say though, to someone who is hesitant, is that the value is not just to the intern. It's across the board. You find leaders within your team that maybe wouldn't have stepped up until somebody showed interest in their role. It revitalizes them.

It also benefits the library as a whole. For example, we had a local history room that had not been updated since the mid to late 80s. It was not reflective of our current community, which has a large immigrant and diverse population. The local history room only reflected the founding families and folks who already had a voice. We needed to expand our audience. Our first intern, D., read our minds. Her project centered on capturing the stories of people who are underrepresented. She involved teens who weren't regularly coming to the

library. They put on a show, shared their talents, and told their stories. It was terrific.

Our second intern, V., worked on a project with an underrepresented group of senior citizens in the community. She had them draw flower petals and write in them stories about themselves. Those petals will be part of an upcoming bigger exhibit in our library about community. We can now expand our local history room to incorporate their stories.

My advice is to treat the intern as you would treat a new hire. Give them adequate work equipment and workspace. Invite them to meetings so they can see the whole picture. Listen to what they are trying to accomplish and support their project as much as you can. But remember that they're still young and this may be their first job in a professional setting. They're learning planning skills, communication skills, and how to manage expectations. They're also learning to face disappointment. One of the heartbreaking parts of the job is that you can work very hard to only have a handful of people at an event. You have to teach them that the work itself is the reward. The icing on the cake is when you can share it with the community.

I learned a great deal from the other interns because they have a different way of seeing the world. I realized they're full of fresh ideas and energy to tackle the issues of the day. It was extremely rewarding, inspiring, and energizing to see that kind of positivity. I felt a renewal of hope that I had lost for a bit. These kids are going to change the world. **!!!**



# APPENDIXES



# APPENDIX 1

## PARTICIPATING LIBRARIES

### Alaska

Anchorage Public Library  
Haines Borough Public Library  
Juneau Public Library  
Kenai Community Library

### Alabama

Athens-Limestone Public Library  
Auburn Public Library  
Birmingham Public Library  
Elba Public Library  
Lewis Cooper Jr. Memorial Library

### Arizona

Casa Grande Public Library  
Coolidge Public Library

### California

Alameda County Library  
Huntington Beach Public Library  
LA County Library at East Los Angeles  
Long Beach Public Library  
Los Angeles Public Library  
Oakland Public Library  
San Jose Public Library  
Santa Clara County Library  
Sonoma County Library

### Colorado

Anythink Libraries  
Arapahoe Libraries  
Denver Public Library  
Denver Public Library  
Pikes Peak Library District  
Poudre River Public Library  
Poudre River Public Library District  
Pueblo City-County Library District

### Connecticut

Prosser Public Library

### Delaware

Laurel Public Library

### Florida

Jacksonville Public Library  
Lantana Public Library  
North Miami Beach Public Library  
Palm Springs Public Library  
Seminole County Public Library  
St. Johns County Public Library System - Anastasia Island Branch

### Georgia

Auburn Public Library  
Camden County Public Library  
Conyers-Rockdale Library System

### Hawaii

Waipahu Public Library

### Iowa

Algona Public Library  
Altoona Public Library

### Idaho

Meridian Library District

### Illinois

Berwyn Public Library  
Evanston Public Library  
Niles-Maine District Library  
Rockford Public Library  
Schaumburg Township District Library  
Schaumburg Township District Library  
Skokie Public Library  
Skokie Public Library

### Indiana

Allen County Public Library  
Evansville Vanderburgh Public Library  
Indianapolis Public Library  
Kokomo-Howard County Public Library  
Pike County Public Library

### Kansas

Goddard Public Library  
Lawrence Public Library  
Lincoln Library

### Kentucky

Boone County Public Library  
Logan County Public Library

### Louisiana

New Orleans Public Library

### Massachusetts

Milton Public Library  
Springfield City Library  
Ventress Memorial Library

### Maryland

Baltimore County Public Library, Owings Mills Branch  
Calvert Library  
Cecil County Public Library  
Prince George's County Memorial Library System

### Maine

Bridgton Public Library  
Portland Public Library

### Michigan

Capital Area District Libraries  
Clinton-Macomb Public Library  
Grand Rapids Public Library

**Minnesota**

Great River Regional Library  
Hennepin County Library  
Saint Paul Public Library

**Missouri**

Kansas City Public Library  
Kirkwood Public Library  
Springfield-Greene County  
Library District  
St. Louis County Library

**Montana**

Blackfeet Community College

**North Carolina**

Cabarrus County Public  
Library  
Catawba County Library  
System  
Chapel Hill Public Library  
Charlotte-Mecklenberg Library  
Cumberland County Public  
Library & Information Center  
Wilkes County Library

**New Hampshire**

Minot-Sleeper Library

**New Jersey**

Cumberland County  
Library  
Gloucester County Library  
System  
Montclair Public Library  
Montville Township Public  
Library  
Piscataway Public Library  
West Caldwell Public Library

**New Mexico**

Grants Public Library  
National Hispanic Cultural  
Center Library  
Rio Abajo Community Library  
Santo Domingo Pueblo Library

**New York**

Buffalo & Erie County Public  
Library  
Greece Public Library  
Greece Public Library  
New York Public Library—  
Washington Heights Library  
Ossining Public Library  
Patchogue-Medford Library  
Pioneer Library System

**Ohio**

Bucyrus Public Library  
Cleveland Public Library  
Columbus Metropolitan Library  
Cuyahoga County Public Library

**Oklahoma**

Purcell Public Library

**Oregon**

Cottage Grove Public Library  
Hillsboro Public Library  
Multnomah County Library  
Salem Public Library

**Pennsylvania**

Butler Area Public Library  
Centre County Library &  
Historical Museum  
Kutztown Community  
Library  
Manheim Community Library

**South Carolina**

Charleston County Public  
Library

**South Dakota**

Huron Public Library  
Siouxland Libraries

**Tennessee**

Cleveland Bradley County  
Public Library  
Nashville Public Library

**Texas**

Austin Public Library  
Austin Public Library  
Chico Public Library, Inc.  
El Paso Public Library  
Houston Public Library  
Laredo Public Library  
Round Rock Public Library

**Utah**

Salt Lake City Public  
Library

**Virginia**

Alexandria Library  
Central Rappahannock  
Regional Library  
Henrico County Public  
Library

**Vermont**

Springfield Town Library

**Washington**

Everett Public Library

**Wisconsin**

Hedberg Public Library  
Kenosha Public Library  
Madison Public Library  
Thorp Public Library

**West Virginia**

Brooke County Public  
Library  
Burnsville Public Library  
Cabell County Public Library  
Martinsburg Public Library

**Wyoming**

Fremont County Library  
System

# APPENDIX 2

## FULL RETROSPECTIVE EVALUATION

As you have read throughout, interns, mentors, and host libraries all benefitted from participating in III. PLA, in accordance with its IMLS grant requirements, fully evaluated the program, including conducting a retrospective evaluation in 2022 of past mentors and interns across all cohorts. Through this, PLA was able to demonstrate the broad impact of III. The full report follows and includes a mix of data and stories. This information may be useful as you begin planning and designing your own internship, from using statistics to generate leadership buy-in, to understanding the highest impact elements of the program, to anticipating changes you hope to see as a result of hosting an intern.



# Inclusive Internship Initiative (III)

## Findings from a 2022 Survey of Intern and Mentor Alumni

April 2022

Jake Cowan

Independent Consultant to the Public Library Association

### Evaluation Report Contents

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Do III intern alumni continue to work in libraries?.....	6
How did III prepare intern alumni for their education and career? .....	7
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### Executive Summary

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The Public Library Association’s (PLA’s) [Inclusive Internship Initiative \(III\)](#) was first piloted in 2017 and continued through 2021, with the 2020 program being cancelled because of the COVID-19 pandemic. Key elements of the III program include paid summer-long internships for high school students at their local public library working with a library mentor on a community-based learning project, and PLA events for interns at program kickoff, during the summer, and at the end of the summer.

These program elements are designed to help high school students better understand the scope of library work and how their interests and skills align with library work. The program also aims to develop in participating high school students an understanding of how libraries positively influence their communities. Other outcomes III seeks to influence include building library capacity to provide programming for diverse audiences and support diverse professionals, and helping library staff better understand their role in supporting diversity in early library career pathways.

In early 2022, mentors and intern alumni across the different program years of III were asked to participate in a follow-up survey to learn more about these outcomes. The findings from the survey show that the first five years of III have accomplished what the program set out to do. Intern alumni explored their passions through III, and created programs that strengthened their libraries connection to the community. Libraries continued these programs, with many also changing their hiring practices with

the goal of having a workforce that reflects their community. Mentors improved their professional skills, and valued working with their interns and with librarians from around the country.

### How did III impact interns?

Intern alumni shared that participation in III helped them build skills and confidence to work in a professional environment. Many intern alumni also shared that they had limited or no exposure to public libraries prior to participating in III, and that working in a library increased their understanding of the library and information technology field. They also learned the importance of libraries reflecting the communities they serve.

Many intern alumni continue to explore their interest in libraries - 75% of intern alumni that participated in the survey reported that they either had post-III work experiences related to libraries, archives, museums, or related organizations, or are still interested in pursuing these experiences. In addition, 35% of intern alumni that participated in the survey indicated that they are interested in pursuing a Master's in Library Science.

While some intern alumni have continued to pursue an interest in libraries, others identified that they found their passion for other interests during their internships. Intern alumni also valued the opportunity III provided to meet people from different places, and who had different identities. Intern alumni experienced personal growth and learning from interacting with people who introduced them to new perspectives.

#### Intern Alumni Stories

- Participating in the Inclusive Internship Initiative allowed me to dive deeper into my passions through the mentorship project while also helping others. I feel more connected with my interests through the internship, and this has helped me in deciding what to study in college.
- It is so important to feel like you are represented in your library. They are places of great power and comfort for children, teens, and adults. Going through this program helped me understand that the future of libraries is what we make it.
- Through participating in III I was able to meet a wide variety of people; some were very similar to me and others had very little in common with me. Being surrounded by many unique and driven people really shaped my future.

### How did III impact Libraries and Mentors?

Participating in III helped mentors improve their skills as librarians, and helped them grow their professional networks. They valued the opportunity to practice mentorship skills, and for several mentors, III provided a first opportunity in a role that supervised teens. Mentors also valued learning about race, equity, diversity, and social justice alongside librarians from around the country.

Mentors shared that III interns created programs that brought new patrons to the library, including many examples of sustained change where libraries have embedded programs created by their III interns. They also described that participating in III changed how their library approached internships so that they focused more on hiring people that reflect the community. Several mentors shared that participating in III influenced their library to increase diversity in hiring for all library staff, not just interns and young adults.

### Mentor and Library Stories

- After the III, we opened up our library substitute position to candidates with high school diplomas (removing the BA requirement). This attracted younger and more diverse applicants. Several of the library substitutes initially hired have moved into permanent, full-time, benefited positions.
- This was one of my first experiences as a mentor and supervisor. I enjoyed working with the intern and helping her develop in the role. It was a major factor in my decision to seek a promotion and become a supervisor. I've presented with my intern at local conferences to spread her program idea and help other libraries replicate it.

## Evaluation Report Detail

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### Are III intern alumni interested in library science education?

#### *MLIS Interest*

Intern alumni were asked a series of questions to document their post-secondary education decisions and interests. 35% of survey respondents indicated that they are interested in pursuing a Master's in Library Science. Over two-thirds of these 24 survey participants that are interested in pursuing an MLIS do not identify as White/Caucasian. 10 identify as Hispanic or Latino of any race, 7 identify as White/Caucasian, 3 identify as African-American or Black, 2 identify as Asian, 1 identifies as Middle Eastern, and 1 identifies as multiracial.

Are you interested in pursuing a Master's in Library Science?		
Yes	24	35%
No	45	65%
<b>69</b>		

92% (22) of these intern alumni indicated that their experience as an III intern encouraged their interest in a Master's in Library Science.

#### *Post-Secondary Education Decisions*

87% (60) of the intern alumni survey respondents are currently enrolled in school. Among the 13% not enrolled in school, some completed their post-secondary education or are planning to pursue more education.

Are you currently enrolled in school?		
Yes	60	87%
No	9	13%
<b>69</b>		

Among the 60 intern alumni still in school, 82% are enrolled in a four-year college or university. Seven are enrolled in Community College, and 3 are in graduate school.

What kind of school do you attend?		
High school	1	2%
Community College (2-year degrees)	7	12%
Four-year College or University	49	82%
Graduate School at College or University (Master's or Doctorate)	3	5%
<b>60</b>		

Among the 49 intern alumni who are enrolled in a four-year college or university, 3 are pursuing a degree with coursework in library and information technology. Some intern alumni interested in pursuing an MLIS are pursuing different undergraduate majors. One intern alumni wrote that, "I'm still in my undergrad - English with an emphasis on writing, rhetoric and technical communication. I plan on getting my Master's in Library and Information Science."

Are you pursuing a bachelor's degree with coursework in library and information technology?		
Yes	3	6%
No	46	94%
<b>49</b>		

### Intern Alumni Undergraduate Majors

**Responses to 'what is or was your undergraduate major at your college or university'?** Responses with a "\*" indicate the intern alumni also expressed interest in a MLIS.

Accounting (3)	Elementary Education	Physics and Technology/Applied Design
BFA Musical Theatre	English* (5)	Physics of Medicine and Bioethics
Biochemistry and Biological Sciences	Entrepreneurship Business*	Psychology and Criminal Justice
Biology	Government and International Relations*	Public Affairs*
Business*	Graphic Design	Public Health
Business and Marketing Education Comprehensive	History (2)	Social Science*
Business Finance	International Political Economy	Social Work*
Chemical engineering	Liberal Studies*	Spanish and Business*
Communication and Philosophy	Math	Technical Theatre and Anthropology*
Communication Arts	Media Studies, Political Science, and Spanish	Theater*
Computer Engineering*	Music Education	Urban Studies*
Computer Science*	Nursing	Visual Media (Media Studies)
Criminal Justice	Pastoral Ministries	Writing, Literature, and Publishing*
Criminal Justice	Pharmaceutical Sciences	
Digital Film Making		



## Do III intern alumni continue to work in libraries?

53% (37) intern alumni have post-III experience in a library, archive, museum, or a related organization. 21 intern alumni are currently working in a library, archive, museum, or a related organization, and another 16 have worked in a library, archive, museum, or a related organization since their III internship experience. Among these 37 intern alumni, 76% (28) indicated that their III experience impacted their decision to pursue these work experiences “very much” or “quite a bit”.

<b>Work or intern experience in a library, archive, museum, or a related organization post-III?</b>		
Yes – Currently	21	30%
Yes – Not currently	16	23%
No	32	46%
	<b>69</b>	

<b>How much did participating in the Inclusive Internship Initiative positively impact your decision to pursue a job or internship in a library, archive, museum, or a related organization?</b>		
Very Much	21	57%
Quite a bit	7	19%
Some	8	22%
Very Little	1	3%
	<b>37</b>	

Among the 32 intern alumni that did not have work experience in a library, archive, museum, or a related organization post-III, 47% (15) are still interested in these kinds of work experiences. The 15 respondents who did not have post-III work experience in a library, archive, museum, or a related organization were asked to share ideas about what would help them achieve their goal of working in a library, archive, museum, or a related field. Responses emphasized needing scholarships for their education, and access to work opportunities/experiences.

In total, 25% (17) of all intern alumni that responded to the survey did not have post-III work experiences related to libraries, archives, museums, or a related organizations, and were not interested in pursuing these experiences.

<b>Are you interested in working in a library, archive, museum, or a related field?</b>		
Yes	15	47%
No	17	53%
	<b>32</b>	

Intern alumni were asked in an open-ended question to describe in more detail what their role was and the work they did in the job where they work(ed) or intern(ed) at a library, archive, museum, or a related organization. Some intern alumni described that they were continuing to work in the library where they interned with the III program, while others described experiences working in a different

*challenges I may face when speaking about something, as well as the challenges I may face in school or in the workplace. Interning at the library has prepared me for higher education and made me well prepared for a career.*

Another theme from these responses is participating in III **educated intern alumni about the library and information technology field**. Intern alumni identified that they had limited or no prior exposure to public libraries, and **that working in a library increased their understanding that libraries are valuable and important**.

- *The internship taught me that there is a lot more to a library than just checking out books. The internship made me fall in love with the library, being able to spend a few days in essentially each role in the library was an eye opening experience. I worked in accounting, translation, cataloging, special collections, property management, security, basically anything you can think of I got to experience during the internship.*
- *The III opened my eyes to what librarianship really was, and further ignited my passion for libraries. Working in a public library really helped me develop problem solving skills, customer relationship skills, and overall gave me a curiosity for learning. I also got to work closely with community programs and learned the basics of developing one. All of these skills have helped me be a better student, and have given me an insight into what is waiting for me as a librarian.*
- *The III program opened my eyes to the world of information related careers dedicated to maintaining the use of the collective knowledge of humans. I took libraries and other forms of knowledge wells for granted, I thought it was all easy. I could not have been more wrong, and now I wish to help people accumulate and reference more knowledge.*

Intern alumni also described that participating in III **helped them make decisions about their education and professional interests**. Some intern alumni were inspired to pursue careers in librarianship. Others found their passion for other interests through III.

- *Participating in the Inclusive Internship Initiative allowed me to dive deeper into my passions through the mentorship project while also helping others. I feel more connected with my interests through the internship, and this has helped me in deciding what to study in college.*
- *It helped give me a glimpse of a meaningful career and it guided what undergraduate program would be best for me with the options that I had.*
- *It prepared me a lot. It gave me an actual idea of what I want to do with my life, and I ended up interning at the same location through AmeriCorps the three summers after the Inclusive Internship Initiative because I loved it so much!*
- *The inclusive internship initiative became a start for my future endeavors to help the Latino community despite not pursuing a career as a librarian or social worker. The III was helpful in preparing what to expect of high standard programs.*

Some intern alumni described how III influenced them in multifaceted ways, **sharing what they learned, why that learning was valuable to them, and how they use what they learn**.

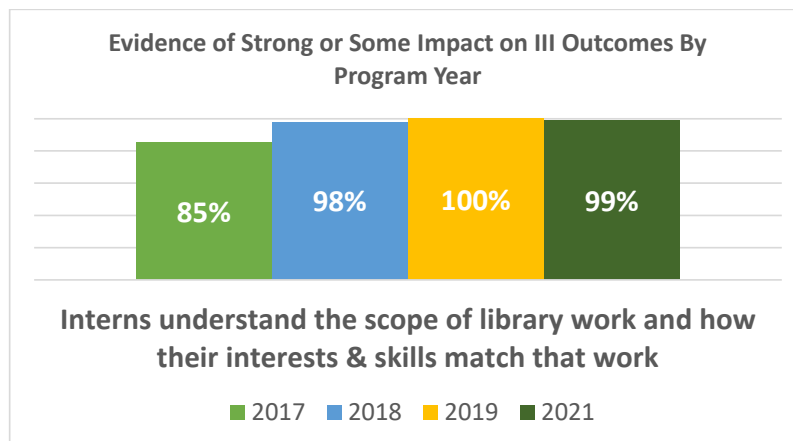
- *III gave me the skills I needed to be successful academically, professionally, and socially. I learned how to network and forged friendships with people that I still talk to, to this day. The freedom we were given to plan and implement our own projects still sticks with me. Today, at University I am putting together an art gallery and musical review for Black History Month; I don't think this project would have been as successful as it is without the skills I learned during my time with III.*

*While at this time I don't intend to pursue a career in the library field, the skills I learned working at a library has given me a newfound respect for people in that field and it rekindled my love for reading.*

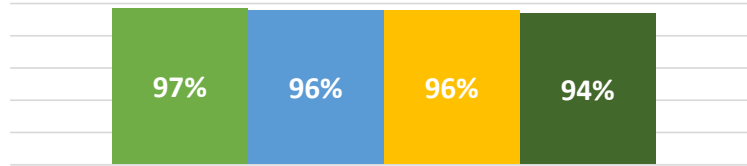
- *III prepared me for my educational and career experience by instilling in me the passion and desire to inspire my community to learn, tell, and create our stories. Educationally speaking I learned a lot by asking librarians and points of resources about their studies - that has influenced me to take a similar path. Overall, creating an event for my community felt like I had the power to combine my love for art and empowerment. My educational journey has been strengthened with the knowing that I have resources that believe in me and help me see the desired result that allows me to further my fight in social justice.*
- *I believe that this internship prepared me for larger roles in my life in the future, with the freedom granted to me by my mentor, I was able to have complete control over my events and ideas. This was my first internship, and I can honestly say that the experience has made me more confident in public speaking and more independent in idea brainstorming. I learned more about history than I did in high school, and I got to meet a lot of other people who had great ideas to share. I am confident that I will be fully prepared for any internships I may have in the future, regardless of the profession.*

#### *Evidence of III's Impact on Interns from Past Surveys*

Prior surveys also support that III helped prepare interns for their educations and careers. For four key outcomes that interns were asked about in surveys administered immediately after their participation, there was strong or some evidence of impact each year. In some program years, every intern (100%) showed strong or some evidence of impact for these outcomes. For each outcome, for each program year, at least 81% of interns showed strong or some evidence of impact for these outcomes.



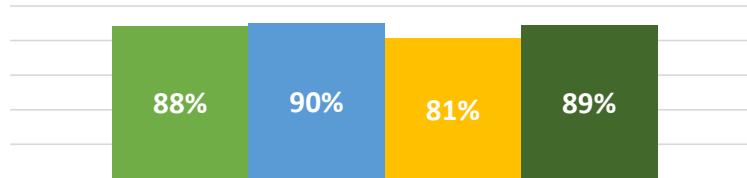
Evidence of Strong or Some Impact on III Outcomes By Program Year



Interns better understand the ways that librarians positively serve their communities

■ 2017 ■ 2018 ■ 2019 ■ 2021

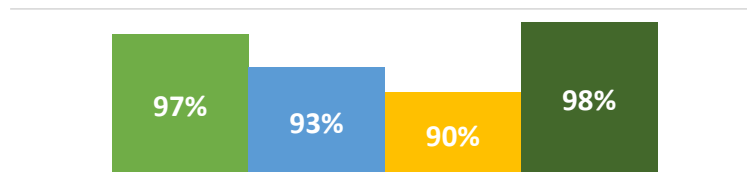
Evidence of Strong or Some Impact on III Outcomes By Program Year



Interns view librarianship as a viable, rewarding and meaningful career path

■ 2017 ■ 2018 ■ 2019 ■ 2021

Evidence of Strong or Some Impact on III Outcomes By Program Year



Interns gain tools to make decisions about the educational directions that will lead them to library service & leadership

■ 2017 ■ 2018 ■ 2019 ■ 2021

## How did III influence intern alumni views about equity, diversity, inclusion, and social justice?

Intern alumni were asked to describe how their participation in III influenced their views about equity, diversity, inclusion, and social justice.

One major theme from these responses is that III showed intern alumni that **public libraries are places where equity, diversity, inclusion, and social justice are valued**. Intern alumni also learned from III the importance of **libraries reflecting the communities that they serve**.

- *It is so important to feel like you are represented in your library. They are places of great power and comfort for children, teens, and adults. Going through this program helped me understand that the future of libraries is what we make it. I got to meet so many like minds that just seemed to want to be apart of positive change for their libraries, apart of change that emphasized equity, diversity, inclusion, and social justice.*
- *My participation in the internship made me think about the community in an entirely new way. Prior to the internship, I had looked at the world through blinders, and I only saw the things that I believed applied to me and my situation in life. This internship enabled me to surround myself with and learn about people from all walks of life, whether they were patrons or other interns that I met while in DC and Chicago.*
- *It did not particularly because I was aware of much of the information that was said during our conference beforehand, however, it did influence my opinions on the ways libraries are and can be involved with that work*
- *I have learned that equity, diversity, inclusion, and social justice are all important topics that need to be heard. I've learned that the library should be a place where you can gain a lot of knowledge not only through books but by learning and being active in your community. Many people can really build relationships through their community library and with that community, people can effectively fight for equity, diversity, inclusion, and social justice.*

Another theme in the responses is that III provided intern alumni the opportunity to **meet people from different places**, and who had different identities. Intern alumni **experience personal growth and learning** from interacting with people who introduced them to new perspectives.

- *Through participating in III I was able to meet a wide variety of people; some were very similar to me and others had very little in common with me. Being surrounded by many unique and driven people really shaped my future. My time at III encouraged me to continue to surround myself with people who are driven. It opened my eyes to how well people can work together even if they are diverse and the importance of inclusion. Hearing the stories of some of the other interns and their rise above adversity encouraged me to be a helping hand to those around me. I was encouraged to care more about social justice and to speak up more when I saw something unfair happening. I still vividly remember the presentation on equity and I try to keep those values with me as a college student surrounded by diversity.*
- *I think the inclusive internship initiative gave me a great host of networks to learn from people different in experiences than my own.*
- *It gave me a fuller understanding about people who were different from me and influenced me to care and fight for social issues.*

Intern alumni also reported in these responses that their experience with III either **reinforced or expanded views** they came to the programs with about equity, diversity, inclusion, and social justice.

- *I was passionate about equity, diversity, inclusion and social justice even before the internship, but felt there was little I could do. This internship gave me the confidence, support, and resources needed to make the change I wanted to see in my community.*
- *It influenced my views because I've learned to look at everything more broadly. I also work to look at things with an inclusive mindset.*
- *My views for equality, diversity and inclusion were very strong from a young age. But how to propose a solution within a space such as libraries to make them more inclusive, wasn't something I had knowledge in. So having the opportunity to develop a program was eye opening in the sense that there are plenty of ways and with help of others to make space for inclusiveness.*
- *Increased my views, learned more about my peers across the country and how urban libraries work, power dynamics within librarianship and how they should be modified for equity*
- *As a minority myself, it expanded my views on the work that has been done to achieve equity and what else can be done to continue pushing social justice.*
- *Growing up I always knew the U.S. still struggled with racism, sexism, ableism, almost every "ism" imaginable but it wasn't until the III program that I realized I could do something for the community. That I could help provide a safe space for everyone to enjoy.*

One response to this question came from an intern alumni who experienced racism in an academic setting. While it is the only example of a response like this in this survey, any example of an experience like this is unacceptable and an indicator of the importance of continuing to advocate for the adoption of equity, diversity, inclusion, and social justice practices in the library field.

- *My experience of library school at [university name redacted] was quite difficult, due in large part to the racism I experienced from professors and others. Thus the primary influence it had on my views was the result of being exposed to harm. It was one of a number of experiences that led to me eventually leaving the field.*

In addition to these themes, there **are several examples of open-ended responses** where intern alumni described in detailed and personal terms how III influenced their views about equity, diversity, inclusion, and social justice.

- *It had a huge influence. I'm Latina but I'm from a prominently white community and I didn't even feel comfortable describing myself as Latina because I'm mixed and don't speak Spanish. III helped me, not only feel comfortable in my identity, but learn more about the community I've grown up in and how the library helps (and has failed) to support minority groups. Being able to meet with other interns really broadened my worldview and helped me think outside of my own state and step into the broader conversation. I still talk a lot about the importance of diversity in children's literature (actually have written several papers about that) and recently have been thinking critically about how banned books disproportionately affect minority authors (because the news) as well as how being a person of color in the library professions contributes to burnout.*
- *As a big LGBT supporter even before the internship it didn't do a lot in terms of that. I am however currently the treasurer of the libraries LGBTQIA committee and you could argue that*

*that opportunity wouldn't have been available to me without the internship. More so than gender related equity, diversity and inclusion though, the internship really opened my eyes to wealth related equity. The library is a home for everyone, regardless of how poor or rich they are. There are plenty of homeless people that rely on our libraries and I think the internship was the first time I realized that. I'm glad we can be there for them.*

- *III allowed me to see equity and inclusion through another lens, not of my own. I was able to meet and hear stories of librarians and fellow interns from other cities different from my own that were more disadvantaged. I got to learn in what ways libraries are trying to bridge the gap in inclusion and also make content more diverse. Lastly, III emphasized speaking our own truth and creating a place for all backgrounds within the library leadership setting.*

### Did participating in III change practices at libraries?

72% of mentors strongly agreed or agreed that participating in III helped their library improve their hiring of teens and young adults so that they reflect the diversity in their community, and helped their library offer more programs and resources for diverse audiences in their community.

79% of mentors strongly agreed or agreed that participating in III made diverse audiences in their community more aware of library programs and resources.

	Participating in the Inclusive Internship Initiative...					
	...helped our library improve our hiring of teens and young adults so that they reflect the diversity in our community		...helped our library offer more programs and resources for diverse audiences in our community		...made diverse audiences in our community more aware of library programs and resources.	
Strongly agree	25	30%	28	33%	14	17%
Agree	35	42%	33	39%	52	62%
Neither agree nor disagree	20	24%	21	25%	15	18%
Disagree	4	5%	2	2%	3	4%
Strongly disagree	no responses in this category for any question					

Mentors also shared insights about how participating in III influenced their library in response to an open-ended question. They described that participating in III **changed how their library approached internships** so that they focused more on hiring from the community, and hiring people that reflect the community. Several mentors shared that this included **increased diversity in hiring for all library staff**, not just interns and young adults. Some mentors described that their libraries changed how they approached internships so that they are more substantive and engaging experiences for interns.

- *It helped start conversations about who we are hiring in the library and who gets to see themselves reflected in our staff.*
- *The year prior to our involvement, we started our own paid inclusive teen internship program. Our district is large and it has been difficult to offer more than one teen the opportunity to work*

*with us. Joining Inclusive Internship Initiative gave us ideas for structuring the internship in the future. It also helped us set a pay level we feel is fair for the position and HR agreed on. It paved the way for ideas moving forward with this position.*

- *After the III, we opened up our library substitute position to candidates with high school diplomas (removing the BA requirement). This attracted younger and more diverse applicants. Several of the library substitutes initially hired have moved into permanent, full-time, benefited positions.*
- *My library already regularly hired youth from our immediate community. This however created an opportunity for youth to focus more on the big picture work the library does as well as help craft a program, which is not an opportunity we had previously had for youth. We realized we could incorporate our youth workers into this kind of work more, and it has given them a more holistic library work experience.*
- *I think it helped demonstrate that high school level students could be directed to do more substantive projects instead of shelving books and cutting out craft components.*
- *We changed the language of our intern application to make it more inclusive and also restructured the internship to give interns more power.*
- *This initiative started us on a path of placing more value on language skills when hiring at our library. We also hired our intern on a part-time basis after this internship concluded.*
- *Participating in the program became a catalyst for our library seriously looking to create opportunities for BIPOC students as a pipeline to librarianship, and to get serious about hiring a DEI coordinator at our library, which we did over a year ago.*
- *We think far more often of how to encourage diverse young audiences to consider librarianship as a career. Previously our efforts had centered on those already holding a BA, Master's or with longer work histories.*

Mentors also identified that their III interns **created programs that brought new patrons to the library**, including many examples of sustained change where **libraries have embedded programs created by their III interns**.

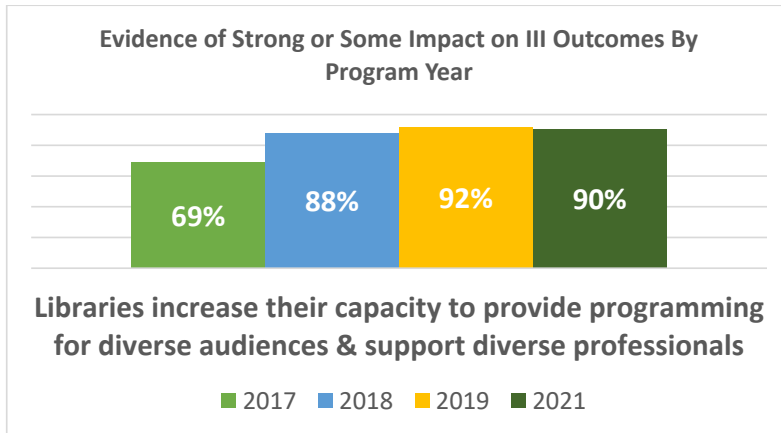
- *Insight gained during the III experience has led to such library projects as initiating and leading the development of a citywide Spanish Facebook page, the purchase of equipment to allow simultaneous translation of live library programs, and seeking funding to hire simultaneous translators for live and virtual library events, and successfully advocating to move the Spanish-language young adult books into the teen collection (they were mixed in with adult).*
- *Participating in the PLA's Inclusive Internship helped my library re-acknowledge the importance and centrality of our teen patrons. A few months ago, after a few years of planning, we opened a new Teen Room, which our teen patrons are using and enjoying.*
- *Participating in this program has helped to spark new teen leadership opportunities at our library. While we do not have funds this year to support a paid internship, we have formed a Youth Board that works with our library system's Board of Trustees to help the library reach teens throughout our community.*
- *Some of our staff began to see library program as an opportunity for outreach to all communities*



- *The ESL program designed at III! served as the platform to hear from our community and design other ESL programs to address those needs. It also made a difference in how Spanish speakers interacted with library materials. After building a connection through the ESL class and sharing our resources, Spanish checkouts increased by 100%.*
- *We were able to gain insight about teens in the community and needs at the high school, which has improved our teen services.*
- *Raised awareness of library programs and opportunities for teens in our area.*
- *We have participated in III 3 times. Each time, our intern's influence among their peer group brought more young people to the library which persisted after the internship ended.*
- *Partnering with a teenage intern helped to introduce library services to other teens through partnering with High School clubs (science and robotics). It was a great way to involve this demographic in participating in library services.*
- *We are still reaping the benefits from our experiences with iii. We are relaunching one of the programs initially developed by one of our interns. We have been offering increased science-based programs because of one of our other interns.*

*Evidence of III's Impact on Libraries from Past Surveys*

Prior surveys also show that **III helps libraries increase their capacity to provide programming for diverse audiences and support diverse professions**. Approximately 90% of libraries showed strong or some impact for this outcome in III program years 2018, 2019, 2020.



*III Library Internship Program Offerings*

Among mentors participating in this survey, 37% had a regular paid internship program in their library prior to participating in III. For the majority of respondents (63%) participating in III and offering paid internships was new to their library.

In 2022, 42% of mentors indicated that their library will employ teens and/or young adults in paid internships. 55% of mentors indicated their library has not decided whether to hire interns in 2022, or that they would like to do this but are not able to.

<b>Before participating in the Inclusive Internship Initiative, did your library regularly employ paid teens and/or young adults in internships or other early career roles?</b>		
Yes	31	37%
No	53	63%
	<b>84</b>	

<b>Will your library employ paid teens and/or young adults in internships in 2022?</b>		
Yes	35	42%
Haven't decided yet	21	25%
No, Interested, but can't do this in 2022	25	30%
No, Not interested	3	4%
	<b>84</b>	

Mentors were given space to share additional insights about their 2022 internship program plans. Many mentors elaborated on the internship programs they are operating now, including descriptions of partnerships they have in place. A number of mentors also shared that lack of funding is the main barrier they have to implementing an internship program. A few mentors also noted that the COVID-19 pandemic impacted their plans for offering internships.

- *I used the III model to write a grant for older teens to teach coding and run programs for younger teens at the library. We've received the grant 3 times since we participated in III and are currently employing 4 part time teens.*
- *We partner with a county program that provides teens paid internships. We also have teen volunteers who receive stipends for helping with our Lunch at the Library program.*
- *We plan to employ an intern this summer with funds from a STEAM Equity grant.*
- *We would love to and have some future ideas if certain things came to pass, but current funding would not allow for it right now.*
- *Covid-19 has greatly reduced our teen patronage. I am currently not allowed to perform outreach of any kind. I would love to be involved in PLA III in the future or encourage someone at a different branch. Our library funding has really stagnated and we do not have the funding or support from administration to fund an internship program of our own.*

## What did mentors learn through participating in III?

Participating in III helped mentors improve their librarianship skills and helped them grow their professional networks.

	Participating in the Inclusive Internship Initiative helped me improve my skills as a librarian.		Participating in the Inclusive Internship Initiative helped me grow my professional network.	
	Strongly agree	39	46%	36
Agree	41	49%	35	42%
Neither agree nor disagree	4	5%	10	12%
Disagree			3	4%
Strongly disagree	no responses in this category for any question			

Mentors were also asked in an open-ended question to describe how being a mentor influenced their professional development as a librarian. Mentors described that their work as an III mentor helped them **refine and develop skills that enabled them to grow in their profession.**

- *Being a mentor changed my outlook. Before, I was just doing the job, but having to mentor required that I took great care in presenting the best practices of the profession to the intern. It caused me to learn more, seek out new information and in the end, I think it made me better.*
- *I learned so much from this internship experience on how to be a mentor, a project manager, a supervisor, and a communicator. This was an invaluable experience in showing me how to value and encourage ideas that are not my own, and to provide the resources and support to those who have incredible contributions. I continue to have teen volunteers year-round, and I have implemented so much of what I learned in this internship experience in working with them. I love helping teens follow projects through, encouraging them to work through and around barriers, but keeping my mind openness to possibilities. Teens are passionate and dream big, and it's been amazing to allow some of that big dreaming into our work when often budgets and other constraints can be an issue. This internship really helped me problem solve barriers like this and I use that knowledge and flexibility every day in my work.*
- *This was one of my first experiences as a mentor and supervisor. I enjoyed working with the intern and helping her develop in the role. It was a major factor in my decision to seek a promotion and become a supervisor. I've presented with my intern at local conferences to spread her program idea and help other libraries replicate it.*
- *Through the internship, I realized that I needed to work on my ability to communicate and lead staff at all levels and just be a better communicator in general. While I'm still improving, I gained valuable opportunities through serving as a mentor.*

Mentors also talked about the **value of being in a network with other mentors, and the value to they find in connecting with peers.**

- *I have met other mentor librarians that I admire and connect with. I have joined PLA and have asked my library to send me to Portland in March. I became one of the first members of our*

*district inclusion committee where I am working with other members to ask the hard questions and confront the difficult situations that are keeping our library from being as equitable, diverse and inclusive as it should be.*

- *I was able to hire and supervise the intern completely on my own, which was a new experience and helped me for the future. I was able to meet librarians from around the country, when I usually only meet librarians from my state.*
- *It has helped me innovate and connect with other rad librarians across the country.*
- *It was very useful to meet other librarians across the country who are also working in teen services and learn about their struggles and successes.*
- *The PLA III mentorship afforded me access to a much broader pool of librarians, which allowed me to see how librarianship is practiced all over the United States. The innovations and ingenuity of more experienced librarians helped me to perform my job better and gave me confidence to try new things. This role as mentor also made me evaluate what libraries think they are offering their communities versus what they are actually delivering. I realized that I need to close the gap between theory and execution and do a better job of making connections within the community I'm serving.*

Mentors **strongly valued the opportunity to practice mentorship skills**. For a number of mentors, III provided a first opportunity in a role that supervised teens.

- *Being a mentor allowed me to develop my training skills, which is integral to my new role. It also gave me countless ideas for partnerships, programs, and services that my library system can offer.*
- *I feel like being an III mentor made me a better supervisor and mentor for teen and young adult volunteers and employees. I have a better grasp of both the support they need and the talent and perspective they can bring to our organization.*
- *I hope I am better at reaching out to others and helping them grow as individuals. I am no longer intimidated about working with teens and have been a mentor to four graduating seniors over the last two years.*
- *It helped me to see a gap in programming and engagement for young adults and has inspired me to fill that gap through youth participatory action research projects that see youth as co-facilitators and co-researchers. III's structure and funding helped me to see what could be possible for collaborative work with youth in support of community aspirations and goals.*

Mentors also shared that **working as an III mentor helped them reconnect with why they decided to work in the library field**, and helped broaden their perspective on how to approach their work.

- *Being a mentor helped me by expanding our outreach to our entire community and also in meeting the needs and interests of our teens.*
- *Being a mentor to a young person taught me the importance of listening, self-awareness, and self-reflection. I realized that my worldview as an older person needed to be interrogated.*
- *I enjoyed sharing what made me go the path I went, why I am on the path still, and what paths teens can take in libraries (which are so varied that it really is a great career path).*
- *I learned a better sense of empathy for others and to bring people up by celebrating their differences.*

- *It has helped me to determine how we should design our programs, based on the community's needs and wants, but considering their assets as well.*

## How did III influence mentor views about equity, diversity, inclusion, and social justice?

Mentors were asked in an open-ended question to describe how being a mentor influenced their views about equity, diversity, inclusion, and social justice. Their responses included reflections on how III influenced them, as well as reflections on how III influenced equity, diversity, inclusion, and social justice practices in their libraries.

Mentors described that they took what they learned from participating in III and **implemented new equity, diversity, inclusion, and social justice practices in their libraries.**

- *My mentoring experience strengthened my professional commitment to DEI initiatives in the library. It opened my eyes to the social and financial barriers to greater diversity in librarianship. During conversations with our new director, I was one of several staff who advocated for the creation of a DEI coordinator role, which we now have.*
- *I used to believe in the old saying "if you feed them they will come" but now I know if they see themselves they show up. Instead of having middle-aged white librarians lead programs we have teens from the community that obviously represent the community teaching each other. The teen taught programs are the most popular programs we offer.*
- *It was not easy find EDI student participants which surprised me. It made me look more closely at social justice across recruitment and hiring practices.*
- *It was such a timely program, it fit in with conversations that were taking place at work and in the community. It was exciting to have an actionable plan that would help us put our values to work. We've been able to offer it again outside of the official PLA program which is even better.*

Mentors described that **interns influenced library practices and programming** through their project work and through sharing their perspective with mentors.

- *I am much more open to trying new things and advocating for programs that highlight and celebrate the diversity in our city. I try to think critically and carefully about every decision I make in the library to ensure that it offers our city's teens equitable opportunities. My intern also gave our library excellent feedback on the ways we are not offering equitable experiences and we have since then formed task forces to work on these great insights.*
- *I thought that our space was welcoming (smiles, conversations, welcomes, diverse material and displays...). My intern mentioned that she didn't feel comfortable as a library patron because she didn't see anyone like her in our staff. That was eye opening for me.*
- *Our III intern made me aware of how some of our most earnest efforts were falling short, being misunderstood, or simply not getting to the audience we were trying to reach. We have actively used that information to make changes and become more bold and intentional in our social justice and EDI efforts.*

- *Our Intern did a Human Library project. Her passion in hearing diverse viewpoints helped to further stimulate my desire to develop my own lens, assessing how library services meet the needs of my community.*

Mentors also **valued the opportunity to learn about race, equity, diversity, and social justice with mentors and librarians from around the country.**

- *I have become much more committed to learning about equity diversity and inclusion and to find effective ways to support marginalized community members. I have begun following BIPOC Activists, LGBTQIA Activists and Disability Activists on Twitter to learn what the current issues are and to find ways to help. I continue to serve on the Inclusion Committee for my Library District. Finally, I have helped to form a cohort of Project Ready and am working my way through the curriculum.*
- *Being from a mostly white, rural community, it was important for my mentee and I to be able to interact with people from other backgrounds. I have never been in a more diverse space in librarianship; it was a great experience.*
- *It enabled me to have a direct and tangible connection to someone who shared none of my own demographics and I learned how young people view social justice and their struggles going forward.*
- *While each of us are unique in our own way, we all should have the opportunity to be part of something, whether this is a library program or a conference. I saw this diversity reflected in the interns at the conference, along with their programs and the different libraries they represented.*

Some mentors shared that participating in III **reinforced or expanded their views race, equity, diversity, and social justice.**

- *I have always felt strongly about EDISJ work. Before I wasn't as comfortable talking about it, but now I feel that it is an important conversation to have surrounding all areas of the library.*
- *It helped me to see that there are small changes that we can make at library that will have a huge impact on the community.*
- *The program highlighted the fact that libraries are for everyone.*
- *The whole experience, and especially hearing about all the intern projects at the wrap-up, definitely made me more aware of just how important it is to work with diverse stakeholders - whether staff or community members - in developing our services.*
- *Seeing the community respond to intern programs vs traditional library programs made me recognize how much distrust there is between libraries and the communities we claim/hope to serve*
- *As a public librarian in an already diverse community in the state of Hawaii, it made me realize the struggles that other libraries are experiencing across the nation. It has opened my eyes on issues that other communities are experiencing.*
- *Confirmed the importance of a staff that reflects the community.*

### III Participation Summary and Survey Response Rates

III had participating libraries, interns, and mentors from 2017-2019 and in 2021. There was no program in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

	# of Participating III Libraries	Urban/Town	Suburban	Rural/Tribal
<b>2017</b>	33	56%	28%	19%
<b>2018</b>	49	46%	46%	8%
<b>2019</b>	50	29%	51%	20%
<b>2021</b>	41	55%	38%	8%
<b>Total</b>	<b>173</b>			

Some libraries and mentors participated in multiple years. The total number of unique libraries that participated across the four years of the program is 140.

Interns and mentors that participated in III from 2017-2019 were included in this 2022 survey. Interns who participated in 2021 were not included in the survey because their participation was very recent and it was unlikely they would have new insights that vary from responses they gave in the survey they participated in right after their internships concluded. The survey was not sent to mentors who mentored for the first time in 2021. To participate mentors must have mentored sometime in the 2017-2019 window.

The overall response rate for the intern alumni survey was 44%, and for the mentor survey 60%. For interns, the survey response rate is higher for the most recent program year (2019). For the first program year (2017), PLA did not have contact information for interns. Multiple methods were used to contact 2017 interns, including through mentors and fellow interns, and via email, text, phone, and social media. In spite of these efforts, there were 30 (56%) of 2017 III interns for whom contact information was unavailable.

	Number of Survey Responses	Total Number of Interns	Response Rate
<b>2017</b>	16	54	30%
<b>2018</b>	22	54	41%
<b>2019</b>	31	49	63%
<b>Total</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>157</b>	<b>44%</b>

	Number of Survey Responses	Total Number of Mentors	Response Rate
2017	19	35	54%
2018	26	47	55%
2019	26	42	62%
Multiple Years*	13	16	81%
<b>Total</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>140</b>	<b>60%</b>

\*Notes mentors who participated several times/multiple libraries.

### **Mentor Survey Respondent Race/Ethnicity**

How do you describe your race/ethnicity?		
African American/Black	12	14%
American Indian/Alaskan Native	2	2%
Asian	2	2%
Hispanic or Latino of any race	8	10%
White/Caucasian	56	67%
Two or more of these groups	2	2%
Prefer to self-describe	2	2%
	<b>84</b>	

The two self-describe responses were *American*, and *Caucasian and Asian*.

### **Mentor Survey Respondent Gender Identity**

How do you describe your gender identity?		
Man	11	13%
Non-binary	2	2%
Woman	69	82%
Prefer to self-describe	1	1%
Prefer not to respond	1	1%
	<b>84</b>	

The self-describe response was *Non-binary and woman*.

### **Intern Survey Respondent Race/Ethnicity**

How do you describe your race/ethnicity?		
African American/Black	17	25%
American Indian/Alaskan Native	1	1%
Asian	10	14%
Hispanic or Latino of any race	19	28%
White/Caucasian	15	22%
Two or more of these groups	3	4%
Prefer to self-describe	2	3%
Prefer not to respond	2	3%
	<b>69</b>	

The two self-describe responses were *Middle Eastern & Indigenous* and *Hispanic and Latina*.

### **Intern Survey Respondent Gender Identity**

How do you describe your gender identity?		
Man	15	22%
Non-binary	8	12%
Woman	45	65%
Prefer not to respond	1	1%
	<b>69</b>	



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The **Public Library Association** (PLA) is the largest association dedicated to supporting the unique and evolving needs of public library professionals. Founded in 1944, PLA serves nearly 10,000 members in public libraries large and small in communities across the United States and Canada, with a growing presence around the world. PLA offers continuing education opportunities, unique public library initiatives, and a conference that welcomes public library staff into meaningful partnership. In collaboration with its parent organization, the American Library Association, PLA strives to help its members shape the essential institution of public libraries by serving as an indispensable ally for public library leaders.



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