Learning from the Pandemic: Mechanics of Post-Pandemic Programming

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Problem Statement

As libraries across the nation are reopening in a post-COVID-19 environment, they must reenvision both library services and community needs through programming. Our group looked at the planning, policies, partnerships, and barriers involved in post-pandemic library programming, using a survey we sent to libraries across California. As we evaluated the data, we identified three aspects of post-pandemic programming that are urgent and time-sensitive. These aspects are the mechanics of virtual, hybrid, and in-person programming. We decided to tackle this time-sensitive problem with our solution.

Solution

To address the programming mechanics problem, we created a flexible, adaptable toolkit that 1) offers a range of updated library service options for community users, while 2) also providing training resources for library staff. This toolkit addresses the three areas of programming and functionality in this post-pandemic environment: virtual, hybrid and in-person.

In addition to our toolkit, as part of our solution we're requesting that the California State Library create and fund a grant that enables libraries with more limited resources to acquire the basic equipment and support needed to be functional and have the ability to provide virtual, hybrid, and in-person programming.

Value

With this toolkit, accompanied by the grant if possible, we aim to provide California libraries with the tools needed to implement new library services in a post-COVID environment, as well as the tools to be able to continue to adapt their services in an ongoing manner.

Final thought and next steps

The post-COVID library world will look different. Our libraries will need to be equipped to generate future library service models. As such, we propose to continue to work on and evolve this project in its digital format. We also request the support of the California State Library in hosting the toolkit information on its website.