



The Impact of Libraries as Creative Spaces Research Report: Key Findings

Evolving nature of libraries

Australia's galleries, libraries, archives, and museums (GLAM sector) and other cultural institutions continuously evolve to meet the needs of their communities and provide fresh experiences for users. Public libraries do this by placing themselves at the heart of their communities, providing a diverse range of services by responding to community trends and changes in technology, demography, and social, economic and cultural developments.

Value of creative spaces and activities in libraries

By positioning themselves as vital learning and social hubs in their communities, public libraries contribute to local economic and cultural development and play a key role in supporting Councils' visions for their community.

Through SLQ, QUT developed a [Creative Spaces Impact Framework](#) to assess and articulate the diverse benefits of libraries. The framework includes the following outcomes that benefit communities from the creative activity in libraries:

- 1 Accessing Resources
- 2 Idea Building
- 3 Civic Engagement
- 4 Community Development
- 5 Cultural Participation
- 6 Health and Wellbeing
- 7 Educational Attainment
- 8 Economic Productivity

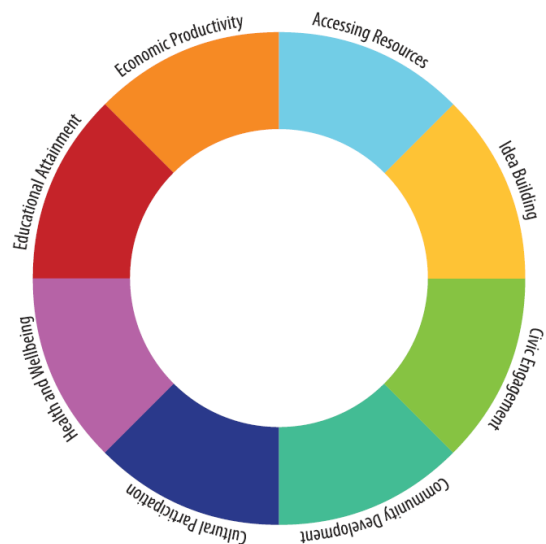


Figure: The Creative Spaces Impact Framework for Public Libraries

The full research report, [The Impact of Libraries as Creative Spaces \(PDF 1.1 MB\)](#) provides a toolkit to create spaces and develop programs which meet the needs of local communities across these eight outcomes, and sets key performance indicators to evaluate their success. Useful tools available for use across the GLAM sector include:

- A [User Guide \(PDF 350.7 KB\)](#) to assist implementation and evaluation of creative activities and spaces (Appendix A of the full report); and
- An [Activity Assessment Form template \(PDF 55.8 KB\)](#) to evaluate the impact achieved through delivery of creative activities.

Applying the framework to creative activities

Libraries actively seek to understand local community needs and trends in learning and skill development, and then develop programs that fit.

The report featured a series of case studies which were developed to showcase creative activity across Queensland public libraries and illustrate the [use of the framework](#).

Case study 1: [Ayr Library](#)

Case study 2: [Helensvale Library](#)

Case study 3: [Roma Library](#)

Case study 4: [Cleveland and Victoria Point Libraries](#)

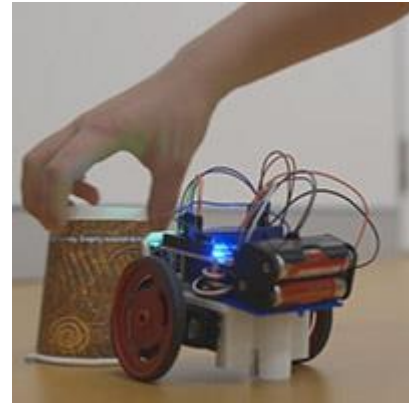


Image: Robot Bootcamp, Redlands Council 2015

Using the framework

The [Creative Spaces Impact Framework](#) can be applied at any cycle of a creative activity or when evaluating the use of space. The impact measures this framework articulates provide data that can be used to provide clear evidence of the diversity of benefits of library activities in building strong communities and to further embed creative spaces in public libraries or community spaces.

The quantitative and qualitative data and language provided by this framework can be utilised in reports to Council or funding bodies, and good news stories shared with the wider community.

Summary of recommendations for libraries

The report includes recommendations for SLQ and public libraries to better communicate and maximise the impact and benefits of library services to communities:

1. Refine performance indicators associated with the collection of statistics to include creative activity.
2. Develop resource-friendly and sustainable mechanisms to collect and collate data regarding the impact of libraries as creative spaces.
3. Use the framework to explicitly link community needs with appropriate forms of creative activity that are formally and informally supported by libraries.
4. Investigate further how space is configured and used in libraries to support creative activity.
5. Explore how existing data on publicly-accessible space in libraries could be used as a creative activity performance indicator.
6. Develop staff training to provide the skills and experiences needed to help them to support creative activity and its evaluation.
7. Develop creative activity roadshows to showcase existing practice across the state.

More information

State Library of Queensland commissioned [Queensland University of Technology \(QUT\)](#) to explore the impact of libraries as creative spaces. The full report and toolkit are available at:

<http://plconnect.slq.qld.gov.au/manage/research/libraries-as-creative-spaces> .

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