

Small Libraries Create Smart Spaces

Making Space for Active Learning in Your Library

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- **What is Active Learning?**
- **Connecting with the Community**
- **Thinking Expansively**
- **Design – Reimagine and Prototype**

When you hear “*ACTIVE LEARNING,*”
what comes to mind?

**Active
learning
in
libraries
is...**

*participatory, informal,
interest-driven
and relevant to real life*

- Learning happens by doing.
- Everyone can participate.
- Challenge is constant.
- Everything is interconnected.

Learning happens by doing.



Learning is social. DIY becomes DIT (do it together)



Learning is interconnected.



Challenge is constant.

CONNECT, THINK, EXPLORE

The Smart Spaces Process

CONNECT

Connecting with the Community

THE
COMMUNITY
IS THE
EXPERT



It all begins
...and
continues
with
community

It's a two-way connection

“I've made a lot of connections and explored our community in a different way than I have before, so I feel more able to get feedback now that I'm a known entity.

It was hard to get out at first but once you start reaping the benefits, it's rewarding to **put yourself out there.**“

—Smart Spaces 2017 participant

The Honey Grove Library and Learning Center

Honey Grove, TX

“We began to ask questions.”

What do we (your library) do really well?



What would you do to build a better library?

Community Discovery



- Town Halls
- Surveys
- School Events
- County Fairs

Spoiler alert!

This is the crucial moment when the real transformation happened.

Community Speaks; Board Listens



The Hall-Voyer Foundation Board turned community input into a wall of ideas.

The Board decided to:

- Change the name to Honey Grove Library and Learning Center
- Write a new mission statement
- Create a new logo and new website
- Start a capital campaign, with an initial goal of \$300K

\$649,000 raised
by Dec 31!!!

“Involving my board in these discussions gave them a whole new insight into what I had been trying to convey to them - hearing it from the people directly made a huge difference!”

Pattie Mayfield, Director of Honey Grove Library and Learning Center

Fresh Strategies and Tools for Discovery

The bigger basket of discovery tools

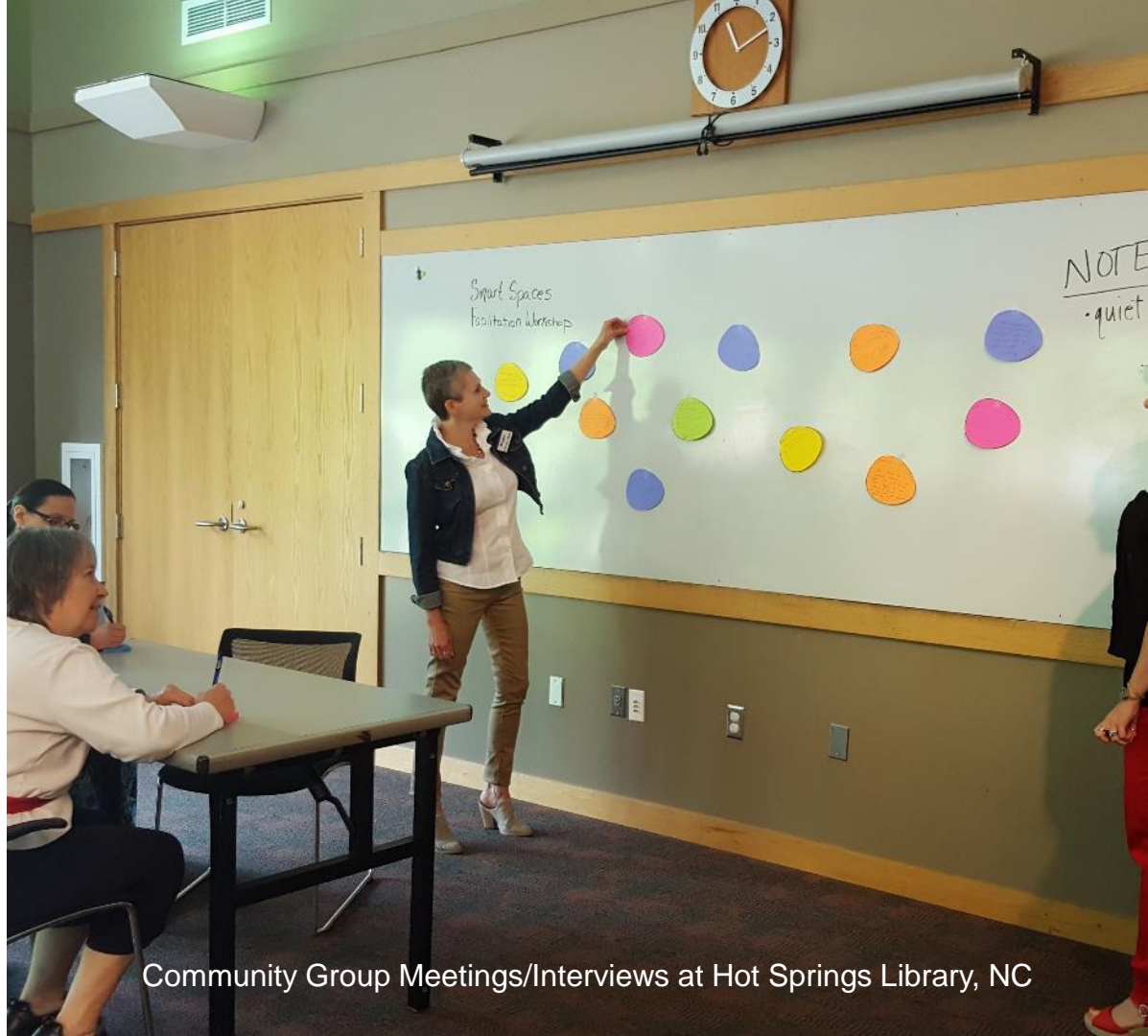
1. Interviews and focus groups
2. Visual tools
3. Interactive workshop tools

oc.lc/discovery-tools



1. Interviews and focus groups

- Stakeholder meetings/ group interviews
- Topical focus groups
- Intercept surveys
- Happy Hour brainstorming



Community Group Meetings/Interviews at Hot Springs Library, NC

2. Visual tools

- Pop-up spaces
- Wish Trees
- Dot boards
- Observation



Left: Wish Tree from Madison Public Library, SD; Right: Dot Board from James Kennedy Public Library, IA



3. Interactive workshop tools

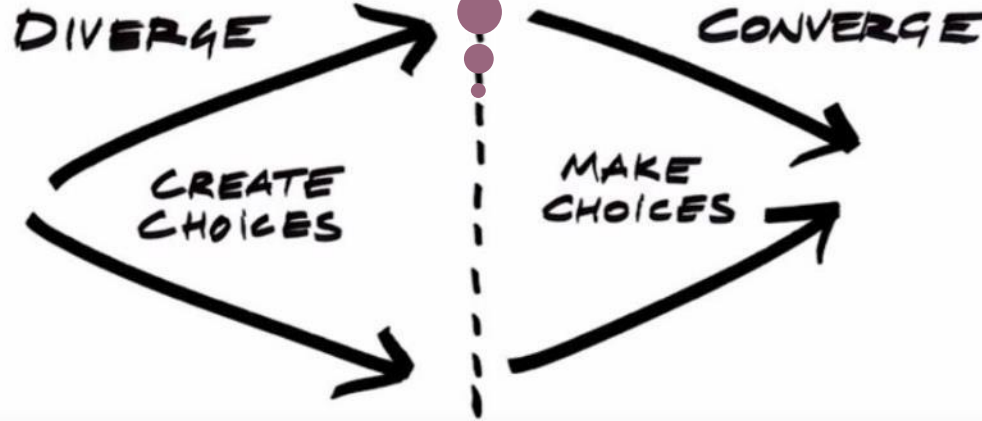
- Visioning workshops
- Participatory design workshops
- Photo essays

THINKING EXPANSIVELY

*The power of suspending judgment
and opening the floodgate of ideas*

Ideation

Community input



Ready to prototype

Select 3-4 items from community input to explore further

Expand the possibilities of those items through brainstorming

Narrow choices (dot voting) to top 2-3 ideas

Evaluate these ideas and pick one to prototype

Brainstorm rules

Defer judgement

Encourage wild ideas

Build on the ideas of others

Stay focused on topic

One conversation at a time

Be visual

Go for quantity





Ideation Activity

Community feedback:
We love the Appalachian Trail and
our beautiful natural setting

How might your library create *active learning*
opportunities around this value?

Hint:

- Think beyond the obvious
- Dissect the wish
 - What are people's feelings about it?
 - What is the essential experience behind it?
 - What activities are related to it?



Ideation Activity

The community's main wish:
we want a Wal-Mart

How might your library create *active learning* opportunities around this “wish”?

Hint:

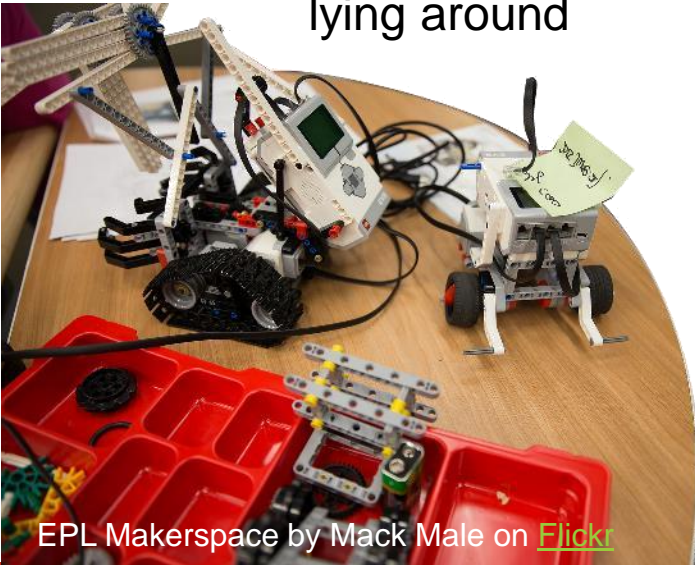
- Think beyond the obvious
- Dissect the wish
 - What are people's feelings about it?
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DESIGN

Reimagining and Prototyping

Active learning space is... *open and inviting*

Projects-in-progress are left lying around



EPL Makerspace by Mack Male on [Flickr](#)

Tools are visible & accessible



STEM Cart:
Demco.com

Messy is okay

Active learning space is... *flexible*

The
caster is
your
friend



Movable shelving



Mobile Library Shelving
by Group3 Planners on Flickr

Modular tables



Mobile
reference
pod



Tables, chairs, pod: Demco.com

THE LAMB WESTON INNOVATION CENTER – RICHLAND, WASHINGTON



What would you change in these spaces?



What would you change in these spaces?



The Humble Prototype



Transfer key ideas from post-it notes to tangible objects for users to test



Prototypes from Smart Spaces participants



Makerspace mock-up



Mobile, flexible computer lab

Action Prototyping: Teens Stage a Harry Potter Party

Secret entry to 9³/₄
through a brick wall



Teens fabricated Little
Snitches as
prizes for the games.



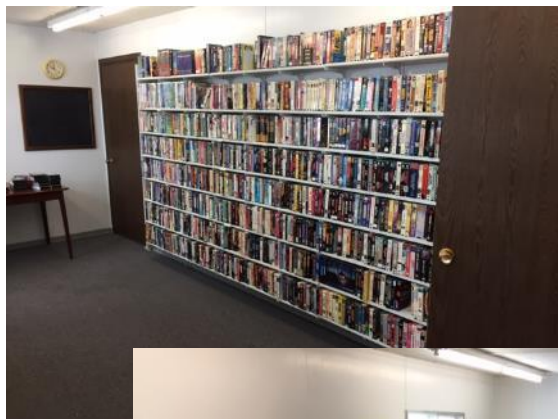
Party participants
avidly pursue the
Hunt for Horcruxes
scavenger hunt.



Teens are designing
and delivering most of
the programming

Most Dramatic Physical Space Transformations

Before: A bland space for DVD's and VHS tapes...



After: ...is transformed into a bright, inviting space for STEM/STEAM focused active learning.



Before: A dark, wood-paneled room and an underused storage closet...



After: ...becomes a flexible learning space for all ages that incorporates the natural wonders of the Appalachian Trail.



COMMUNITY COLLABORATION

A local designer plans the layout and chooses colors and furnishings



A carpet layer made a 3-hour round-trip commute on a Sunday to install the carpet because "... libraries have been good to me in my life."



An electrician installed the lights, hung and wired the monitor, and ran data and electrical hook-ups to the "plug-in" seating



Two talented sisters were inspired to paint a mural on the walls

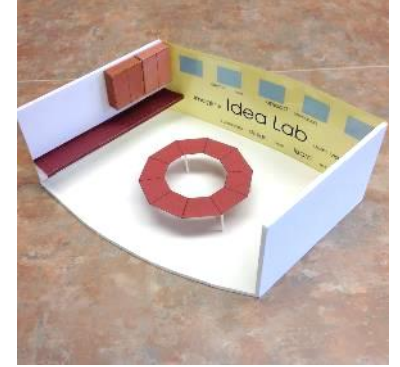
The finished community-built space enlivened by the community teen group



The multi-purpose room was bare, uninspired, no storage, inflexible and cramped – despite its modern architecture



A tangible prototype shows the community what's coming



A simple coat of yellow paint brightens the room considerably.



The community aids in the transformation.

ICL IdeaLab supports active learning for all ages



**HOW WILL YOU ENCOURAGE *ACTIVE LEARNING*
IN *YOUR* LIBRARY?**

To find out more about
Small Libraries Create Smart Spaces,
please visit **oc.lc/SmartSpaces**

- Smart Space Videos
- Transformation Stories
- Making Space for Active Learning Course

Email: gutscheb@oclc.org, hoffmanb@oclc.org

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