



## Project Planning, Implementation, and Budget

By defining your project goals and intended outcomes, you laid the foundation for creating a project plan. This project management phase may be quite familiar to you from implementations you've done before at your library. This guide is not intended as a prescription. It may work best for you to use other processes and tools that have worked in the past for organizing, managing and evaluating projects.

Remember to keep the focus on **active learning**.

### Project Management

[Note: this content is adapted from the [Transforming Library Spaces for Community Engagement Guide](#), Appendix 1]

Library staff and organizations are skilled at anticipating and adapting to changing community needs. In many ways, embarking on a space transformation is similar to any new library endeavor, in that library staff skills, effective use of resources, strategic decision-making and communication are all integrated to manage diverse stakeholder expectations. Effective project planning and management skills strongly contribute to the success of any library in realizing its visions of community space.

The [WebJunction Competency Index for the Library Field 2014](#) notes on pg. 33 that, *“Effective project management involves managing people, resources and time. Leaders recognize that communication is essential throughout the project life cycle.”*

### Your Project Timeline

Some people prefer to anticipate timing from start to finish, and others choose to build their timeline as they go. The approach for setting the timeline is not nearly as critical as simply maintaining a focus on timing objectives and dependencies. Consider and experiment with these timeline parameters during your space transformation.

It's good to set some target milestones for making progress toward the end goal. For example, set dates for:

- having the space cleared and ready for construction or new furnishings
- stages of construction
- securing funds for stages of the project
- installing furnishings and program materials and structures
- planning programming
- and more...

The **Project Planning Worksheet** on the next page may help to fill in the details and dependencies for these stages.

## Project Planning Worksheet

This worksheet may serve as a template for monitoring and sharing key activities and next steps throughout your space transformation process. You may prefer to use the [Excel version](#) or your own preferred method.

What	Who		Dependencies	When	
	Lead	Support		Target	Actual

**What:** What is the activity or task that needs to be completed?

**Who:** Who is responsible for leading/moving this activity forward and communicating with the appropriate stakeholders? Who else is available to support it (staff, vendors, subject matter experts, volunteers)

**Dependencies:** What other project activities or outcomes depend on this activity? What needs to happen before this activity can take place?

**When:** By when does this activity need to be completed? This is your target date. However, sometimes things change, so keeping track of the actual date of completion is useful for understanding timeline realities for future efforts.

## Physical Space Inventory

After clearing and opening space in anticipation of transformation into active learning space, you now have many choices as to how you will fill that space. Prototyping, both small scale and full scale, has given you good insights into what will fit, how activities will flow and what your users respond to. It's time to make it real.

Use this [Inventory Worksheet](#) to verify understanding of what is already available in your space, and consider how it may be modified, replaced or removed to realize your community's vision for the space. You will then be able to make informed decisions about budgeting for purchases and improvements.

Square footage of space (approximate) \_\_\_\_\_

Space Element	Current Status	Desired Status	Modify/Replace/Remove
Lighting (example)	Too dim	Good lighting for project work	Either upgrade bulbs or add additional lighting
Lighting			
Flooring			
Power/Data Outlets			
Broadband/Wifi			
Tables			
Chairs			
Shelving			
Technology			
Program Materials			
Other			



## Finding Funding for Smart Spaces

How to finance library improvements or new projects is often the first thing that comes to mind, and it is often seen as an insurmountable barrier. It doesn't have to be.

- ◆ Take inspiration from the can-do spirit of Jennifer Trail, Glens Ferry Public Library, ID, participant in Round 1 of *Small Libraries Create Smart Spaces*. Keep in mind that this is from the perspective of a library serving a community of 1,200 with an annual operating budget of \$26,000.

*"I've quickly learned two things have been key to my success of supplementing my budget. Networking and no fear."*

- Networking: *"By putting myself out there and attending meetings all alone and braving it outside of the library world, I've made some amazing contacts who are a wealth of knowledge of opportunities and tips. After taking the first step of learning what's out there and meeting people to guide me, I now feel like I am one of the people who could maybe help others."*
- *"Have no fear!! Before taking this job, I had never written a grant or applied for anything. You can do it!!! Try try again if you don't get accepted. The only thing you're out is a few hours of your time applying, which I found to be a valuable reflection time on my library and my goals. Many of us are in similar situations with little to no funding. There's money out there, you've got to aggressively look for it. Show your city councils and communities that you understand money is tight but that won't discourage you from advocating for the library and moving forward in the future."*
- ◆ Read [Shoestring Digital Media Lab](#) for more inspiration on pushing past the perceived barrier of too little money. It's a motivational story about the youth services director of small Laurel (DE) Public Library who defied her limitations, started a digital media lab on a shoestring budget and then watched it blossom; includes the [starter equipment list](#).

### ◆ Grant writing tips

- You need "a hook!" Provide the "hook" right up front:
  - What will this grant do for your community? Demonstrate your need.
  - Be enthusiastic!
  - Include *tangible* outcomes.
- Do your research. Provide *specific examples*, not just ideas.
- Have your commitments lined up *before* applying for the grant.
  - Who will your partners be? Specify their commitments in the proposal.
- Articulate your timeline.