ALA AmericanLibraryAssociation

Preparing My Library *for the* 2020 Census

LIBRARIES ARE essential partners in achieving an accurate and complete count in the 2020 Census. As trusted, welcoming institutions with a far-reaching geographic presence, libraries have important opportunities to inform and engage their communities.

With Census preparations ongoing and the questionnaire coming in March 2020, libraries should plan for potential impacts. The 2020 Census will:

- conduct its count primarily online for the first time,
- place an emphasis on reaching hard-to-count populations,
- hire more than 500,000 temporary workers through an online application process, and
- partner extensively with community and civic groups, agencies, and organizations.

HOW MIGHT THE 2020 CENSUS AFFECT LIBRARIES?

In late 2019 and early 2020, the Census Bureau, government leaders, or community groups may approach the library to host or participate in meetings, programs, or outreach activities. In addition, jobseekers may use library computers and internet access to apply for Census jobs.

In March and April 2020, community members may use library computers and internet access to complete the Census questionnaire online. Civic leaders may ask the library to publicize accurate information about the Census.

HOW CAN LIBRARIES PREPARE FOR THE 2020 CENSUS?

- Encourage staff to review training materials such as ALA's Libraries' Guide to the 2020 Census,
- Assess your public access computers and internet to prepare for a potential spike in usage by people competing the Census questionnaire online,
- Reach out to your local Census Bureau Partnership Specialist and Complete Count Committee, and
- Consider offering programs or disseminating information about the 2020 Census.

FOR ADDITIONAL RESOURCES ABOUT LIBRARIES AND THE 2020 CENSUS, VISIT ala.org/census

Share your library's Census story with the hashtag **#CountOnLibraries**

IS FUNDING AVAILABLE TO SUPPORT LIBRARY CENSUS ACTIVITIES?

If your library will offer programs, expand technology resources, train staff, or extend hours, you might consider seeking funding to support these activities—either from dedicated Census-related funds or the library's usual sources of support.

Foundations: Many community and family foundations (or funder collaboratives) are providing funding to local nonprofits to support complete count efforts in the 2020 Census. Check with existing library funders to see if they are involved or if other funds might be available to support the library's work.

State and local government: Some state and local governments have dedicated funds to support 2020 Census preparations. Reach out to officials or your local Complete Count Committee to see if they have ideas for supporting the library.

Businesses: Local businesses may welcome the opportunity to support library programs and services. For instance, a grocery store might donate snacks for an event, or a technology retailer might donate tablet computers for Census respondents to use.

THE GAIL BORDEN PUBLIC LIBRARY FOUNDATION in Elgin, IL received funding from a statewide complete count funder collaborative.

NEW YORK CITY invested more than $1.4 million in the city's three public library systems to promote a complete count in the 2020 Census.

Community organizations: Contact local civic clubs and service organizations, such as the League of Women Voters, about opportunities to partner with the library by sharing costs or providing volunteers.

Library Friends and Foundations: The library's most devoted supporters might be a source of funding or volunteers.

Census Bureau: While the Census Bureau does not provide direct funding to local agencies, they may be able to provide needed resources at no cost. Contact the Partnership Specialists in your Regional Census Office to request 2020 Census promotional materials, speakers for programs, messaging, and other resources.

FOR IDEAS ABOUT HOW TO TALK WITH COMMUNITY LEADERS about the library's role in the 2020 Census, see "How Community Leaders Can Partner with Libraries to Achieve a Complete Count."

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