HOW WE’RE DIFFERENT

The Collective is a gathering like no other.

--We are an uncharacteristically low-cost professional gathering. We’ve designed the event (i.e. registration, hotel, etc.) so that those within driving distance of Knoxville (about 2/3 of the US population) should be able to cover all associated costs of attendance for under $500.

--We are 100% non-profit and staffed by volunteers. Most conferences, including ALA, ER&L, and Charleston, take in significant profits from their annual conferences and boast large ranks of paid staff.

--There is no vendor “expo” area at The Collective; we believe sessions should contain content, not sales pitches. Librarians come here to learn, create, and collaborate, not to be solicited. Instead, we program a “tinkerspace” where librarians can try out tools curated by their fellow librarians without any sales pressure. Instead, we program real conversations with vendors and invite sponsors to send user experience reps rather than sales staff.

--There is no divide between “presenters” and “attendees” at The Collective. Everyone who attends is an active participant and pays an equally low registration fee.

--Our gathering is full of practical, useful content aimed at practitioners, who work on the library front lines. We emphasize skill-building, tangible takeaways, and networking. No “CV filler” or “sage on a stage” presentations here!

--We offer an unparalleled public, transparent, and inclusive programming process with academic rigor. Ideas are first solicited through our public “Session Picker,” followed by a blind peer review. We are the only conference where all submitters receive feedback, regardless of whether or not their session is selected.

WHO

Geared towards librarians at academic libraries, The Collective brings together a cross-section of next-generation practitioners who wish to learn, create, and collaborate.

SIZE

We host around 300 librarians from North America and the globe.

In 2018, participants hailed from 40 states and 4 continents, representing more than 160 organizations.

WHY

Born out of frustration by the high cost and the lack of tangible skills and takeaways at many conferences, we created a professional development experience that is affordable, useful, and fantastically fun.

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GOALS
The goals of The Collective are learning, networking, and kickstarting new ideas among librarians in similar academic campus environments.

FOR MORE INFO:
For more information about unique sponsorship opportunities, please contact:
Corey Halaychik, Co-Director
(407) 388-8411
corey@thelibrarycollective.org

OUR FUNDING STEWARDSHIP
We keep our costs low by being excellent stewards of sponsorship funds and believe that we express our values with where we put our money.

Here are just a few of the ways we spend dollars wisely and ethically:

—We rigorously negotiate for beneficial contracts and off-season pricing that includes CONUS-approved hotel rates, free attendee parking, and fair hotel catering pricing.

—We keep our business as local as possible, hiring local small businesses for our design, swag, catering, and door prizes.

—We partner with our local tourism office, VisitKnoxville, to offer discounts and great local experiences for attendees.

—Rather than looking for one or two sponsors to foot the bill of the conference, we ask for small amounts of money from many different organizations. This not only makes sponsorship easier for other libraries, non-profits, and smaller library-related businesses but it also helps insure that our programming is not compromised by large sums of money changing hands.

—When possible, we borrow material from other institutions and accept in-kind donations of goods to help keep costs low.

—We use digital programs and schedules to save costs and the environment. We forgo soft drinks (which are marked up significantly) and bottled water; instead, we provide endless coffee and supply each attendee with a beautiful commemorative bottle for water, which has the added eco-friendly benefit.
WHY CHOOSE INSTITUTIONAL SPONSORSHIP?

As an institution, why should you sponsor The Collective? We think your sponsorship can do great things to help us transform the library professional development landscape, including our efforts to:

— **HELP STOP THE INFINITE MONEY LOOP.** Because we are a true not-for-profit, we don’t take more sponsorships than we need and we only accept small sponsorships compared to our conference competitors. *When vendors are asked to pay large sponsorship fees for library conferences, those costs are eventually recouped through more expensive product licenses sold back to the libraries.* Ultimately, large expensive conferences cost libraries money and offer little in the way of genuine skill-building and professional development.

— **PUT QUALITY & LEARNING BACK INTO CONFERENCES AT THE LOWEST POSSIBLE COST.** Often conferences can feel like tithing—for a line on one’s CV, for a chance to talk to colleagues and build a professional reputation, or to take part in bait-and-switch sessions that don’t deliver real takeaways. We’re trying to change all of that through our rigorous programming, interactive format, and hands-on workshops that are without additional (“pre-conference” type) fees. Sponsorship of The Collective is a vote for this kind of cost-effective and valuable professional development.

— **SUPPORT RESPONSIBLE FUND STEWARDSHIP.** You won’t see celebrity keynotes or photo opportunities at The Collective. In fact, we charge the same, low registration rate to all attendees, even our own organizers! That’s because we believe celebrity culture is for tabloids, not conferences. We strive to make ethical, cost-effective, and eco-friendly spending decisions. And whenever possible, we also use small, local businesses.

— **START A CONFERENCE REVOLUTION.** We believe our ideas and model can be adapted throughout the profession so that professional development moves away from tired, expensive models into new modes of scholarly communication and learning. That’s why we have documented and shared our conference creation ideas in an open access article and are developing year-round opportunities to mentor and educate librarians.

*How will you help us take back our conferences?*