Founded in 2015, The Library Collective is all about learning, networking, and kickstarting new ideas among next-generation librarians and library stakeholders.

We started by hosting an annual gathering, called The Collective, that continues each year and have grown to offer other year-round programming and resources to serve curious librarians from around the globe.

We are an independent, 501(c)(3) organization dedicated to education and innovation for better librarianship.

2018 marked our 4th annual Collective gathering and there we announced our intention to offer year-round events, including regional meet-ups/workshops in the same spirit and style as The Collective as well as fostering a new virtual community with regular online gatherings.

To find out more about what makes us unique in the professional development landscape, check out our website, redesigned for 2018:

http://www.thelibrarycollective.org
WHO CAME IN 2018

In 2018, we grew to our maximum capacity with 307 attendees, an increase of 137% from our first gathering in 2015. We convened in beautiful, if rainy, Knoxville, Tennessee, from February 28-March 2, 2018.
WHERE THEY CAME FROM

Participants hailed from 4 continents, 5 countries (US, Canada, UK, Australia, and Nigeria) and 40 US states, representing more than 160 organizations.
For the past few years, Harvard University has offered a supported Design Seminar that engages students in designing and building future library machines called _Library Test Kitchen_.

But where are the rest of the librarians who are incubating what the future of our profession, our buildings, our skillsets, and our job descriptions? Why, at _The Collective_, of course!

So, for 2018, our theme was _The Library as Test Kitchen_ and we asked librarians to propose sessions that push the edge of librarianship and to create a test kitchen environment within our gathering where we tried out “recipes” for next-generation librarianship. We invited proposals for hands-on experiments and workshops featuring, among other possibilities, idea generation, prototyping, and creation of new paradigms for the things we make and do as part of our everyday.

From how to reinvent and reimagine the library catalog to a reimagining of what libraries should be checking out (things? people? expertise? viz spaces?) to how we curate and create collections, the only limit to how to approach this theme was the participants’ imagination.
In lieu of a traditional keynote lecture, we kicked off *The Collective 2018* with a new kind of four-step goal-setting exercise, called *Desire Over Discipline*, where participants distilled their goal for the new year into one single word.

### INFORMATION SHARING

As with previous years, volunteer notetakers took notes during sessions, which were open for editing and additions from all participants.

We shared documents, handouts, and takeaways during the conference on Sched and through Google Docs post-conference.

ALTERNATIVE CONFERENCE SPACES

To encourage informal networking and collaboration, our meeting space featured pop-up “unconference” spaces, the ideaLibrary, TinkerLab, Shhh…room, and, new this year, the Library Hand shop.

The ideaLibrary was a space for impromptu brainstorming, networking, and discussion. We provided inspirational books on creativity, notepads, and other supplies to help participants kickstart conversations.

The TinkerLab was a mobile makerspace with some simple tools and kits for hands-on exploration and demonstrations of virtual reality headsets, DIY electronics, audio-recording, and making. Available tinkering equipment included a pop-up podcasting booth, virtual reality space, vinyl printing, audio-activated lightshows, and much more!

The quiet room was a space free of cell phones and computers and dedicated to quiet reflection. The space was equipped with yoga mats and meditative coloring books.

The Library Hand shop, named for the handwriting style that librarians used to be required to learn, sold bespoke paper products to help support our non-profit year-round.
SOCIAL ACTIVITIES & NETWORKING

The night before the conference, over 110 participants chose to partake in “dine arounds,” an easy way to dine well in Knoxville and get to know attendees. Local hosts arranged reservations at nearby restaurants on and around Market Square and guided the groups to and from dinner.

Opening night, all attendees were invited to a complimentary reception at The Standard event venue in downtown Knoxville. The 15-piece Streamliners Big Band Orchestra performed while participants had photos taken in our photobooth, and enjoyed cocktails, a catered dinner from Rickard Ridge Barbeque and MagPies cakes.

Finally, closing night, attendees were invited to an optional “Library Libations” pub crawl, organized in partnership with VisitKnoxville. Seven local establishments offered literary-themed cocktails to entice attendees to come out and socialize and the party wrapped up with an attendee-only event at the Oliver Royale restaurant and bar.
We polled participants through a formal survey and also kept an eye on Twitter, which was abuzz with our hashtag (#libcol18) during the conference.

**Jenessa @bibliojenessa · Mar 2**
First year at The Collective was the bee’s (lemur’s?) knees! I’ll see you in Knoxville. #libcol18

**Ashley @Librarian88 · Mar 2**
Sad that #libcol18 has come to a close. Amazing conference!

**Shawn Livingston @bunheadky · Mar 3**
Librarians catching up after a successful Collective. This conference is a keeper! #libcol18 @… Instagram.com/p/Bf4PMvahxUn/

**April Kelley @april19 · Mar 3**
Never had as much fun at a library conference than I did at the Collective! Hope I can make it next year!! #libcol18

**Patricia Anne Sanders @Psander9Anne · Mar 3**
First Collective-Awesome Experience!!! Look forward to coming back next year! #libcol18

**Kevin Y @KJYano · Mar 5**
Replying to @ayanowski
I am so glad you enjoyed hearing about the amazing @lib_collective conference! It was unlike anything I have been to before. #libcol18

**Wendy Jo Girven @WendyJoGirven · Mar 2**
learned so much at #libcol18 for sure, including how much i now love fried chicken.

**Leonalee Brown @leonaleebrown · Mar 4**
This was such a great session! I had an awesome time at my first #libcol18

**Sheeji Kathuria @sheejik**
Tracking actionable items (using post its!) in an incident response matrix. #libcol18 #librariansrespondtocrisis

**Trenia Napier @trenianapier · Mar 2**
Blessed to convene with smart, empathetic, and socially conscious #libcol18 colleagues @lib_collective
OVER 95% OF PARTICIPANTS WOULD ATTEND AGAIN & HERE’S WHAT THEIR 2018 SURVEYS HAD TO SAY:

“Utterly blown away.”

“I finally feel like I found some people who could be ‘my people’ professionally. It has only taken 10 years!!”

“Fantastic, real life, hands-on sessions. Great swag. AND AFFORDABLE!”

“Unbelievable opportunities for deep, meaningful, collaborative learning.”

“Without a doubt the most interesting and interactive conference.”


“This is the most interactive, warm, and intelligent group of librarians I can find in one place.”

“This was the most amazing experience!!”

“This is the BEST conference I have ever been to...ever. Nothing boring here.”

“No other conference offers the same mix of informal, interactive, hands-on learning combined with amazing parties and social activities!”

“It's helluva fun time. And I learned a lot!”

“I've been a librarian for over 20 years now, and it's too easy to forget why I got into librarianship in the first place...going to The Collective reminds me of all those reasons, and why librarianship is such a great career.”
PROGRAMMING
Charlie Bennett
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Dani Wellemeyer
Jess Williams

LOGISTICS & TECH
Corey S. Halaychik - Co-Director

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