# 2023 INNOVATIONS

URBAN
LIBRARIES
COUNCIL

**SUBMISSION CATEGORIES**

SUBMISSIONS OPEN 2/16/23
**AT URBANLIBRARIES.ORG**

# 2023 INNOVATIONS

URBAN LIBRARIES COUNCIL

The annual Innovations Initiative celebrates and showcases the transformational leadership of ULC libraries in addressing race and social equity in our communities, furthering education for people of all ages, building digital equity for tomorrow's workforce and enhancing civic engagement for a strong democracy.

Entries will be accepted from February 16-March 17. Approved submissions will be posted live to the ULC website within a week of their submission.

This document provides an overview of the 2023 Innovations submission categories. An independent panel of judges will select Top Innovator and Honorable Mention award winners in each category, and winners will be announced during a virtual event this spring.

## [CLICK HERE TO REVIEW INNOVATIONS FAQ'S AND SUBMISSION TIPS](#)

# Contents

# Advocacy & Awareness

Share your library's innovations that increase the awareness and perceived value of the library's programs, resources and community role, including:

- "Welcome Back" reopening campaigns.
- Partnerships to enhance the library's reach to under-resourced audiences.
- Strategic brand extensions and rebranding initiatives.
- "Fine Free" policy change messaging.

**3**

# Anti-Racism, Digital Equity and Inclusion

Share your library's innovations that directly address structural racism, systemic inequity and social justice within the library and across the community, including:

- Anti-racism, equity, diversity and inclusion embedded in strategic planning.
- Organizing for anti-racism, equity, diversity and inclusion outcomes.
- Anti-racist audits of library operations.
- Community engagement initiatives, partnerships and conversations regarding systemic racism and social justice.
- Partnerships to bring high-speed broadband directly to all households and ensuring community-wide digital literacy.

4

# Data & Performance Management

Share your library's innovations that advance data-driven decision making, performance management and reporting, impact assessment and all-around process improvements, including:

- Improving user experience through evaluation of key performance metrics.
- Strategic planning informed by products of data collection systems.
- Data driven evaluation and impact assessment systems.
- Storytelling and communication of the community impact of library services and programs.

**5**

# Democracy

Share your library's innovations that empower and motivate community members to address public concerns and exercise their civil rights and liberties, including:

- Initiatives that build policies and actions that preserve and protect democracy in our communities.
- Civic engagement and voter education and services.
- Programming to support civility, kindness and communities working together.
- Social activism forums.

**6**

# Education: Children & Adults

Share your library's innovations that increase access to high-quality learning opportunities for all children and adults, advance personal and family learning goals and develop literacies of all kinds, including:

- Education and community engagement partnerships with K-12 school leaders and community organizations.
- Summer Learning and youth mentorship, internship and leadership initiatives.
- Trauma-informed programming, caregiver workshops and learning circles.
- Adult education for reading, media, digital, financial and other literacies.

7

# Health & Wellness

Share your library's innovations that help library staff and customers better understand and make informed decisions about personal and public health issues, as well as environmental concerns, including:

- Staff programming and community engagement partnerships to support well-being.
- Mental health resources and and staff support for dealing with trauma in the library.
- Programs and partnerships to address public health and public safety.
- Facility changes to reduce carbon emissions and enhance energy efficiencies.

**8**

# Operations & Management

Share your library's innovations that shift internal culture and rethink positions, processes and team structures to drive greater equity, productivity and leadership at all staff levels, including:

- Administration of business practices to create the highest level of efficiency possible within an organization.
- Leadership and organization benchmarking and strategic planning.
- Staff programming for well-being and professional development.
- Internal/crisis communications systems and tools.

**9**

# Workforce and Economic Development

Share your library's innovations that promote equitable economic mobility and opportunity for all local workers, jobseekers, entrepreneurs and business owners, including:

- Entrepreneurship and advanced digital skill-building.
- STEM as a career path.
- Professional coaching and certification programs.
- Business challenges and fellowships.

**10**