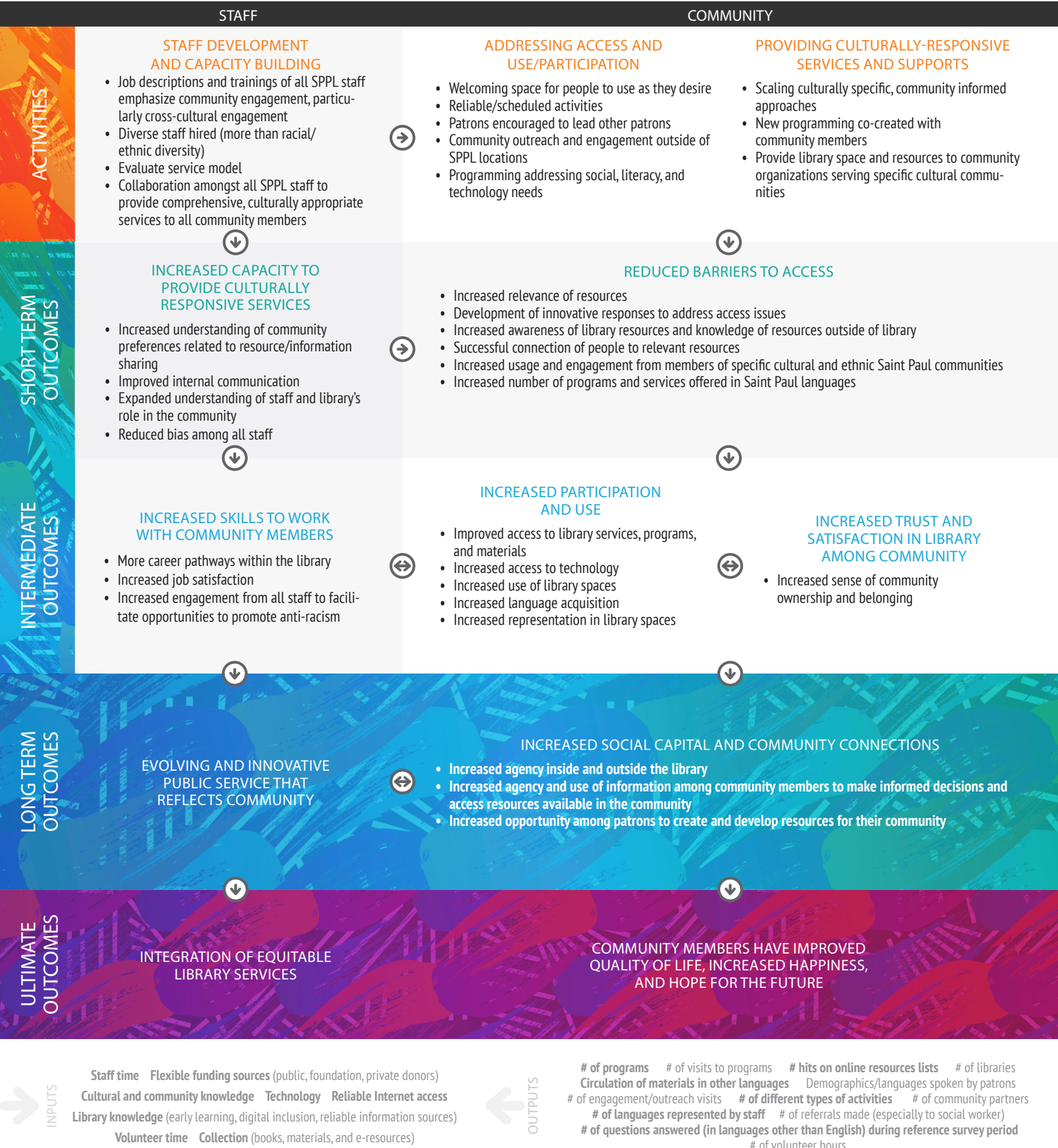


MISSION:
Saint Paul Public Library welcomes
all people to connect, learn,
discover, and grow.

VISION: We imagine a Saint Paul where
all people feel seen, safe, and welcome.
We imagine a city where libraries bring
people together to experience hope, joy,
and creativity through learning.

VALUES
We believe that learning is a human right.
We believe in curiosity.
We believe in connection.
We believe in the power of belonging.

CONTEXT: Saint Paul Public Library recognizes that there are communities
that have been marginalized due to structures and systems of power that
create barriers to equal access, participation, and utilization of library
services. It is with this understanding that we are intentional about
expanding and integrating our community services to support all those
who may benefit.



BACKGROUND AND EVIDENCE IN THE LITERATURE

In an effort to expand community services to diverse populations and cultural communities of Saint Paul, Minnesota, Saint Paul Public Library (SPPL) takes an innovative approach to partner with and serve such populations within its service area.

Libraries throughout the United States are increasingly including new strategies to engage diverse populations. However, there is limited evidence that they are measuring the associated outcomes. SPPL's efforts to document its service model and evaluate the results of its efforts is critical to the field.

By identifying effective strategies and service models, SPPL can provide more equitable and improved access, participation, and utilization of library services for all communities.

"Have staff that look like the people who come in here. Be more welcoming. Engagement will lead to increase[d] connections to community. Let people know we're here for you, and can connect you to resources. Safe spaces that you can use weekly." – SOMALI LIBRARY STAFF MEMBER

"There's a library culture shift in [SPPL's] approach [to expanding community services]." – FRIENDS OF SAINT PAUL PUBLIC LIBRARY STAFF

"Thanks to the library, [my] daughter received homework help. When she didn't have a computer, she would come to the library to use one. Use the internet with her iPad from school. I get excited to get books and read to my kids."

– SPANISH-SPEAKING LATINX LIBRARY PATRON

Community Specialists

Community specialists are key to SPPL's approach. They are members of a specific cultural community and, if relevant, speak the language of origin of that community as their first language. They serve as a bridge between the library and their communities, connecting people to library services, programs, and resources.

National Movement

Libraries across the nation seek to engage with and expand services to diverse populations. Examples include:

- Provision of English Language Learning (ELL) opportunities¹
- Cultural Navigator Programs (CNP) that pair newly arrived immigrants with community members to facilitate relationships and build social capital and community connections among immigrant populations²

American Library Association Study

In 2018 the American Library Association's (ALA) Office of Public Programs convened a study to explore public library programs and services that serve new American populations.³ The team reviewed existing literature on the topic and conducted site visits to better understand the experiences of new American library patrons.

ALA then developed a comprehensive list of actionable recommendations for libraries to better support diverse populations. **The key takeaway: The most successful and creative programs meet library patrons where they are and stress that public libraries are safe and welcoming places for all.**

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¹ Flinner, K., Norlander, R., Nock, K., Laursen Brucker, J., & Welch, M. (2019). Library Programs & New Americans: A White Paper. Retrieved from New Americans Library Project: <https://newamericans.ala.org/white-paper/>

² Thomas et al. (2016). Building relationships and facilitating immigrant community integration: An evaluation of a Cultural Navigator Program. *Evaluation and Program Planning*, 77-84.

³ (Flinner, Norlander, Nock, Laursen Brucker, & Welch, 2019)