



Small Library Strategic Planning Cohort

Contact: Laura Damon-Moore | laura@wils.org | 608-205-8737

When?

- Cohort is offered yearly, as long as at least five libraries commit to participating.
- Cohort activities run October through July.
- To confirm your participation in the cohort, send an email by or before September 30th to Laura at laura@wils.org.

Who?

- Public libraries with a municipal population of around 5,000 or less.

What?

- This cohort uses a model of education, training and expert coaching and support with the result being a strategic plan for the library, along with the opportunity for all participants to learn about community-driven strategic planning.
- WiLS plans to include public library systems to support member libraries participating in the cohort. In the past, partnering systems provided support and resources to help with the planning process, provided CE contact hours for participating directors, and some systems provided funding to assist with the cost of participating in the cohort.

How much?

- Cost to participate in the cohort is \$1,995 per library. For an additional \$945, WiLS can administer a community survey for any participating library. The survey WiLS provides is a standard, base strategic planning survey. Surveys will be invoiced separately and need to be confirmed by mid-December.

Library participation information

- A participating library will form a team of 4-5 people, with the director as the project leader and point person for the team. Each team should have a known backup point person in the event of a director's departure during the cohort.
- Directors will receive professional development with the following learning outcomes:
 - Strategic plan development
 - Data gathering and assessment
 - Community mapping and engagement
 - Project management
- At this time, participation does not require travel. All cohort meetings will be held virtually, or libraries may host a hybrid meeting (in-person, dialed in to the meeting via Zoom).
- A meeting schedule will be shared prior to the cohort kickoff. Virtual meetings of the full

cohort are typically held on Thursdays between 1:00 and 3:00 pm. Library directors are asked to attend each of the full cohort meetings to help keep their team's progress on track.

Planning team roles and commitment

- 4-5 people, library director plus a combination of: library staff, library board, volunteers/Friends, and/or community members
- Role: varies, but generally:
 - library director typically serves as point person/team coordinator
 - attend meetings when possible
 - help share and communicate about surveys, community conversations, and other aspects of strategic planning
 - contribute their thoughts/ideas about the community and library from their perspective
 - assist with drafting the strategic plan framework
- Approximate hours, over the course of the cohort (October - July):
 - 5-6 hours of asynchronous/independent work
 - ~8 hours of full cohort meetings
 - 3-6 hours of team meetings

General timeline and process

- September: Libraries confirm participation, return paperwork and share planning team contact information with WiLS
- October: Virtual director meet and greets with WiLS
- November: Cohort-wide virtual strategic planning kickoff meeting
- November – December: Recorded data training followed by a virtual meeting to share ideas about data gathering, answer questions, and determine data plans
- December: Libraries confirm WiLS-administered community surveys
- December – March: Libraries (and WiLS) work on data and information gathering
- March: Virtual meeting to discuss data themes
- April/May: Virtual meeting to discuss plan development and writing process, and to start drafting strategic goals
- May – July: Plan writing
- July: Capstone virtual event, libraries present their plan framework (strategic goals and measurable objectives) and we discuss the plan implementation process