

Makerspaces in Libraries Survey Results 2013

During October and November 2013, I conducted a web-based survey on makerspaces in libraries. The questions used in the survey are available [here](#). Respondents were solicited from [12 electronic discussion lists](#), some tweets, and one Facebook group: [Makerspaces and the Participatory Library](#). I greatly appreciate the time that participants took to complete the survey.

143 librarians responded to the survey. 41% of the respondents currently provide makerspaces in their libraries (or provide maker activities through their libraries). 36% of the respondents are planning to start makerspaces in the near future. 24% of respondents are not currently providing makerspaces nor are planning to do so. The following responses all come from the 109 librarians who currently provide makerspaces or who plan to soon start a makerspace.

Makerspaces appear in most types of libraries. 51% of respondents are in public libraries, 36% are in academic libraries, and 9% are in school libraries. The remaining 4% chose "other" for their type of library (0% selected special libraries) -- entering combined school and public libraries (2), a community college library, and an iSchool.

Librarians from 30 U.S. states, from Alabama to Wisconsin, responded to the survey along with librarians from seven other countries (Australia, Canada, China, Denmark, Japan, the Netherlands, and the United Kingdom).

Makerspaces tend to be a new addition to most respondents' libraries. 46% of respondents started their makerspace in the last year, 13% in the last 1-2 years, and 11% two or more years ago. The remaining responses came from libraries that had not yet started to offer a makerspace.

Funding for the makerspaces came from a variety of sources. Respondents chose one or more of the following ways that their makerspaces could be funded:

- 36% found funding in the library budgets
- 29% received grants
- 14% received donations
- 11% requested additional funding from their parent organizations
- 11% noted "other" ways to fund the makerspace, including "local investors"

52 librarians reported that their makerspaces charge (or will be charging) for the following items (respondents chose one or more of the following options):

- 40% for supplies used in making
- 38% responded with "other" responses, mainly noting that they had not decided whether to charge, or were definitely not going to charge
- 13% for classes for workshops
- 4% for equipment use
- 4% for membership fees

I asked respondents to choose the technologies or forms of making they included in their makerspaces from a list of 55 items. All but six of the items were selected by at least one makerspace (those six were

welding, stained glass, metal shop activities, letterpress, glass shop activities, and blacksmithing). The top 15 technologies or forms of making, each of which were chosen by 25% or more of the 109 respondents, were:

- Computer workstations 67%
- 3D printing 46%
- Photo editing 45%
- Video editing 43%
- Computer programming/software 39%
- Art and crafts 37%
- Scanning photos to digital 36%
- Creating a website or online portfolio 34%
- Digital music recording 33%
- 3D modeling 31%
- Arduino/Raspberry Pi 30%
- Other 30% (included knitting, Legos, etc.)
- Animation 28%
- High quality scanner 28%
- Tinkering 26%

Librarians reported that training sessions, workshops, or classes in their makerspaces were taught by library staff (49%), volunteers (27%), paid instructors from beyond the library (13%), or "other" (12%), which includes IT staff, maker group members, "Student Geek Force," and "center for teaching and learning."

Respondents also listed their most popular making activities and technologies, their go-to resources for keeping track of making developments, and what they expect to add to their makerspaces in the next year.

More details from the survey will be available in the forthcoming book *Makerspaces: A Practical Guide for Librarians* by John Burke (to be published by Rowman & Littlefield Publishers in 2014 -- more information is available on other titles in the [Practical Guide for Librarians](#) series). I hope these results are of interest and advance our collective understanding of makerspaces and how they are being implemented in libraries. I would be happy to answer any questions you might have on the survey.

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