Partner and Service Provider Focus Groups Summary

Topic/Date	Participants	Key Themes/Input
Returning Citizens Service Providers October 9, 2015	• Neighborhood Legal Services • Thrive DC • DC Department of Corrections • Mayor's Office on Returning Citizens • Mission Launch, Inc. • Becoming Church, Inc, ReUnion • Contact Visits • DC Public Library	• Key point of access for information and referral about city services for returning citizens - DCPL could be the point at which navigation begins for these folks. • DCPL needs to communicate about all the great things the library already does. • Job Training and education at DCPL should be broad. Not all returning citizens need and want to work in construction, there are people looking for employment at every level and the library could assist with training in the arts and technology for people to gain access to higher-level employment. • The library as a place to build a community different than the one that returning citizens were living in before incarceration - That could be a community of other returning citizens, re-unification with family, or with the general public. • Convener of conversations about returning citizens- A place where service providers, returning citizens, and others can discuss what is working, what isn't working in the city for this population • Returning Citizens need assistance securing government IDs through the responsible DC agencies.
Homeless Population/People for Fairness Coalition (PFFC) October 20, 2015	Twelve members of the People for Fairness Coalition (PFFC), a homeless advocacy group; all current or formerly homeless individuals.	• Information on and access to health and human services • Access and assistance with computer technology • Inclusion with the larger community: Library sessions to break down barriers between the housed and un-housed community and a community meeting place where everyone can come together • Access to events: Most library events happen in the evening when people who are staying in shelters cannot attend - need more daytime events • Literacy: Digital and Reading
Friends Groups of the Library October 28, 2015	Seven participants representing Friends groups from the following neighborhood libraries: Petworth, Takoma, Shepherd Park, West End, Anacostia, and Rosedale	• The Library can play a greater role as a community resource, meeting place and convener. • Improved marketing and community engagement is a necessity. • The Library should ensure continuity of programs and services at neighborhood libraries. Staff turnover sometimes results in disruption or termination of valued programs. • There is a need for more bilingual staff at library locations. • Improved communication and coordination between friends groups, branch staff and central administration is desired.

Innovation and Digital Services October 30, 2015	• MapStory (Founder) • Office of the Chief Technology Officer • Capital Fringe • Digital Cultural Heritage DC • I Strategy Labs/DC Tech Meet Up • Office of the Deputy Mayor for Planning and Economic Development • DC Public Library	**Diversity in innovation:** Expand opportunities to those not typically considered or not well represented in the tech industry. Do this through programs and partnerships with strategic targeting of areas in DC. **Preserving DC culture:** The library can play a role in preserving and curating the culture of DC. Almost everything is born digital these days and the agency has an opportunity to become the archive of all things DC and become a catalyst in bringing all DC residents to share in this effort. **Great tech but no talk:** DCPL has great programming, facilities, and technology the general user or non-user knows little about. DCPL's marketing, social networking and online presence in promoting and notifying users should be improved. Take advantage of powerful tech tools and build an online ecosystem of the Library that is informative and is visible outside of just the library's website. **Outreach:** Target more institutions and businesses to fill gaps the library otherwise cannot fill. **Build a stable tech community:** Including all the points mentioned above, build a core group of tech enthusiasts who begin a new culture in the Library, drive how the Library programs and develops partnerships, and ultimately attracts a diverse young population who are not taking ownership of such a valuable local resource that is, and can offer them more by allowing them a platform to innovate.
Teen Service Providers November 4, 2015	• Freer | Sackler • DC Alliance of Youth Advocates • Young Playwrights' Theater • Reach Incorporated • National Museum of American History • Young Playwrights' Theater • National Portrait Gallery • ARTLAB+ (Community of Practice Contact) • Shout Mouse Press • Project Create • DC Public Library	**Input:** • Mental health services for teens is desperately needed. • Teens are much more comfortable going to a space like a library than the D.C. Department of Employment Services or other city agencies for assistance and help. • There's a large gap in services for youth in their late teens/early 20s. Perhaps changing our focus to "young adult" to include up to 24 year olds. • The District needs more teen programs on weekends. • Due to transportation costs, teens often can't go to activities far away from home. Need to work with transit on how to alleviate the issue. **Future considerations:** • Better marketing and communications to teens. • Designated teen spaces and dedicated, approachable teen staff are important. Teens feel more comfortable expressing themselves in these spaces with these

		staff, and they need mentorship and guidance. If space is an issue, get creative (i.e. mobile spaces that travel to where teens are). • Institutional buy-in is critical when serving teens. • Food and snacks are key to getting teens in the doors and participating. • Consistency is needed. That includes staff and programs (both content and time) for teens.
Teens November 9, 2015	Seven teen participants from the Library's Teens of Distinction (TOD) and the city's Summer Youth Employment (SYEP) Programs with experience at DC Public Libraries across the system.	**Input:** • They have no idea how to manage their money and really need to learn basic financial management. • They didn't know we had any social media presence at all. • Teens that aren't interested in college need a place to learn trade skills. • Even though promoting programs through social media/flyers is important, teens still rely on word of mouth from peers. • Free college and career prep is needed. **Future considerations:** • Better marketing and communications to teens. • Paid internships and more structured volunteer opportunities. • Food and snacks for kids and teens. • Partnering and promoting programs and opportunities with schools is key. • Teens need mentors. Any staff/volunteers that we have working with teens need to be trained on mentorship techniques and skills.

Children's' (Ages 5-12) Service Providers
 November 9, 2015
	• DC Public Charter School Board
	• Kimball Elementary School
	• Smithsonian
	• Office of the State Superintendent of Education
	• Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR)
	• DC Public Schools (DCPS)
	• DC Public Library
		Input:
		• There are access and transportation challenges for children.
		• Need for better communication (inter & outer) e.g. to public and government agencies.
		• Greater engagement of families (specifically parents) needed in programming.
		• Greater attention needed to after school/out of school programs.
		• Need to work on system-wide basis not through individuals – DCPL, DCPS and DPR - joint programs and initiatives e.g. DPR would be included in summer reading.
		Future Considerations:
		• More structured programs after and out of school, especially attention to tutoring.
		   o Also take advantage of break time – winter and spring vacations, PD days for teachers.
		• Continue to improve access.
		   o bring library to children – "meet people where they are"

		o direct delivery through shared technical services
		o library pop-up and library take-outs
		o book mobile at schools
		• Create programs that require parental/guardian participation.
		    o Joint reading programs (encourage parents to read)
		• Improve "getting the word out" of our resources and programs.
		    o Improve inter-agency access and using inter-agency distribution methods.
		    o Communication of resources to the public; need to do a better job to reach people who don't regularly ask about Library.
		• Take the lead for "triangle agency" collaboration – DCPL, DCPS and DPR.

Cultural and Creative Community November 12, 2015	• Pleasant Plains Workshop • DC Shorts Film Festival • visual artist • A Creative DC • KRPR PR firm (Our City Festival with DC Public Library Foundation) • Meridian Hill Pictures • DC Public Library	• Affordable work space is by far the most widely shared need for this community. • Flexibility is critical – kinds of space, availability of space (hours), how the space can/will be used. • The Library has a real opportunity to have impact in this area because it's not being done elsewhere as it used to be, i.e. in the schools. • It's important to find ways to bring what we're doing with and for the creative community outside the actual buildings. • The Library has a key role in creating community between artists, mentors, audiences (different than online videos or vlogs or learning annexes) – hyper-local and unique and specific to your neighborhood and city. • Marketing and awareness of all kinds (offline and social media) is key to engaging this community.

Notes:
- All focus groups were facilitated by staff of the DC Public Library.
- DC Public Library departments convened focus groups in the areas of Adult Literacy and Special Collections/Local History earlier in 2015; the input was incorporated into the strategic planning process: