

# Just Put It in the Budget

South Central Library  
System 2022

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EveryLibrary



## EveryLibrary | Pro Bono 501(c)4 Political Action Committee

- Election Days and Negotiations
- Support for Legislative Agendas
- Outreach and Activism to the Public



## EveryLibrary Institute - 501(c)3 Research and Policy Think Tank

- Research Agenda
- Training Programs
- Programmatic Partnerships and Coalitions



Questions & Comments  
in the Chat please



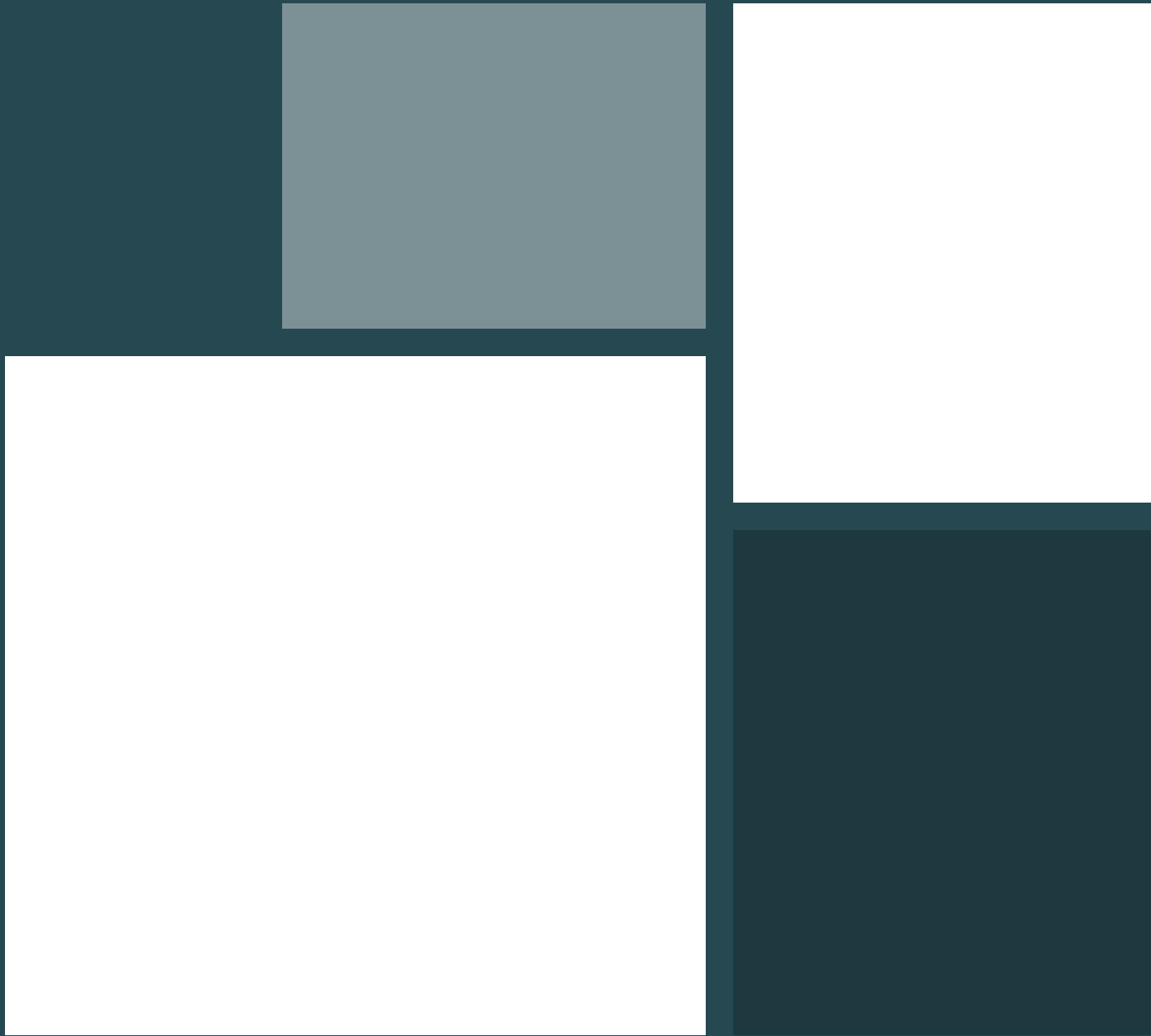
*Funder  
Partners*

## *Funder Profile*

- Coming through COVID, policymakers, elected officials, voters, and philanthropic funders want to support programs and projects that can be measured and justified through data as well as stories.
- They are looking for the right way to apply funding and resources - whether taxes or philanthropy or grants - to solve problems.

# *Traditional Narratives Need to Be Adjusted or Rewritten*

- “Third-Place” narratives are very difficult during COVID.
- Traditional services that went unused during COVID are being questioned.
- Virtual, Digital, and Online measures of impact are needed.



*Donor*  
*Frames*

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# *How Donors are Aligned*

- Compassionately Engaged\*
  - Populations and people
- Pride of Place\*
  - Interesting, thriving, and prosperous
- The Data Shows It
  - Data about outcomes as lens
- Concerned or Fearful
  - Focused on filling gaps



# *What do they care about?*

Only one of these is a reason to fund your program

- Stories of Success demonstrate your competency
  - Scale or replicate
- Stories of Failure demonstrate your integrity
  - Avert or fix

# *Who validates your ask*

External but not spontaneous

## Social Proofs are Heuristic Cues

- Experts
- Users
- Celebrities
- Crowds
- Peers



# *Beyond Special Interest Group Status*

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Coalitions are at the heart of successful sustainable funding.

- Marketing *tomorrow* to encourage use and uptake.
- Marketing *yesterday* to tell the story of your impact.
- Spend a few dollars and a few minutes every day to do it.

## *Marketing Your Value System*

- “Marketing Tomorrow” builds use
- “Marketing Yesterday” builds support
- Programmatic Partners are unactivated allies
- You are the only expert on libraries and librarianship and you must define the negative
- No one will solve your budget or policy issue for you

## *Advocate's Principles*

There are only two kinds of coalitions and neither are about the library:

- Common Concern for a Population
- Common Cause about a Place

“Coalitions allow you to advance your agenda by making it part of other agendas.”

## *Theory of Coalitions*

Coalitions are focused on funding or policy, not programs and services.  
Co-creation is true ownership of the idea and outcomes.

- Shared Values
- Common Mission
- Aligned Vision

## *Theory of Coalitions*

Policies get changed because of a Coalition

Programs get done by Committees

You are very easily dismissed as a special interest group or a cranky person if you do not have outside validators.

Coalitions are among equals. Libraries tend to 'serve' and not see themselves as equals.

## *Theory of Coalitions*



- New to Town
- Homebound
- Job Seekers
- Homeless or At-risk
- Veterans and military families
- New moms

*Example:  
Common  
Concern for a  
Population*

- Housing or food security
- Redevelopment
- Business growth
- Main Street beautification
- Workforce readiness
- Livability

*Example:  
Common Cause  
about a Place*

What are “features” you need to fulfill your mission, realize your vision, or operationalize your values?

- People
- Funding
- Buildings
- Collections

## *Understanding Alignments*

Defining the expected and hoped-for outcomes is as important as defining what happens if we cannot do the work:

Plan A: "So that we can..."

Plan B: "It means we won't..."

## *Two Coalition Frames*

Is the library a 'core' part of community life or is it a 'complement' to parts of community life and community success?

Do you need to shift that perception?

## *Understanding Your Position in Town*

Your “Book” Carries Your Values,  
Vision, Mission:

- Strategic Plan
- Building Plan
- Technology Plan
- Budget
- Annual Report

## *Coalition 101: Boards*

## Empowering Staff to Carry the Message:

- Your own values about libraries?
- Your own vision for your community?
- Why you do this work?
- What happens if you don't?

*Coalition 101:  
Staff*

- Where do your biggest partners already hang out?
- What groups do your biggest donors already belong to?
- What groups have you previously turned down because you didn't have time?

## *Finding an Existing Coalition*

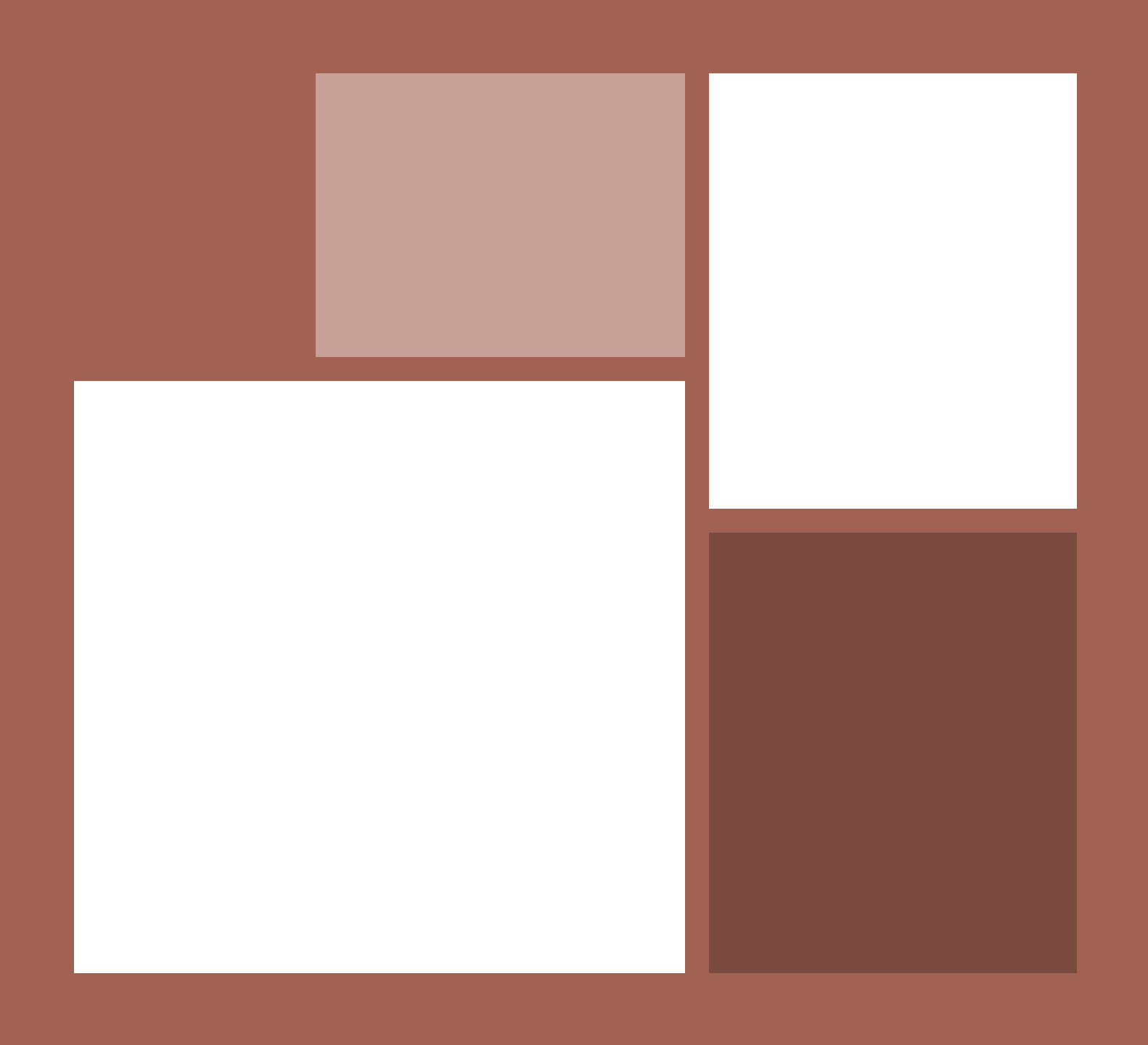


1. Reach out in the way they want to be contacted. Be personal and not just personalized.
2. “May I share with you what is happening at our library right now?”
3. Open with the story of “Why we are doing what we’re doing”.
4. “Our work continues to evolve.”

## *How to Connect Quickly*



Questions & Comments  
etc in the Chat please



*Political  
Frames*

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Funding for libraries is a often political decision:

- Shared Values drives Politics
- Aligned Vision drives Programs
- Common Mission drives Donors

## *A Theory of Library Funding*

Directly or indirectly, how we choose to tax ourselves and what values are expressed in our budgets, policies, and programs are fundamentally political in nature.

## *Political Decisions*

## Three Political Narratives

- Progressives
- Conservatives
- Libertarians

"Three Languages of Politics" by Arnold Kling

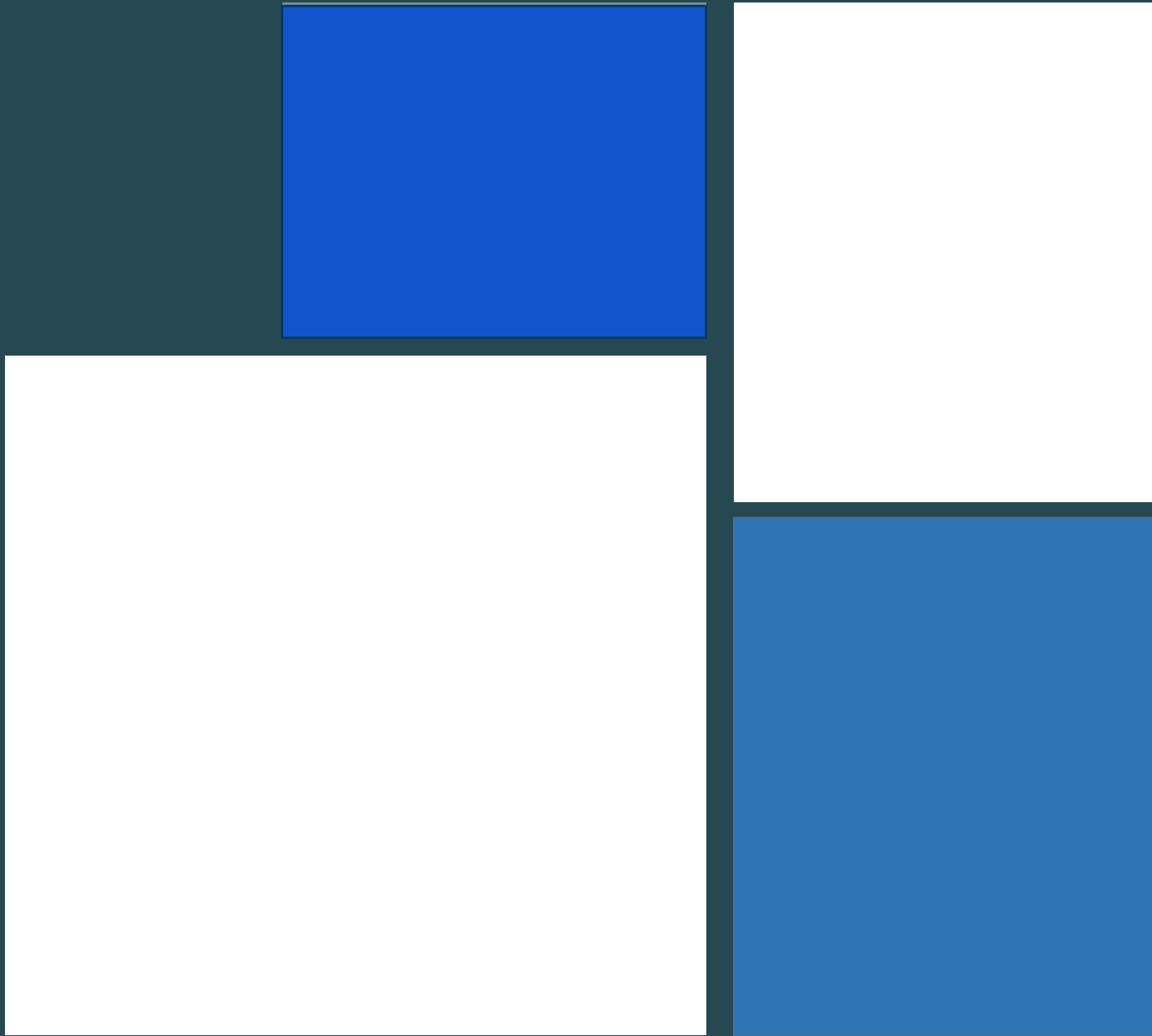
*The stories we  
like to tell  
ourselves*

What happens when you are variant from or at odds with your audience, your political funding partners and decision-maker?

*You and your team*

*vs.*

*you and your audience*



*How  
Electeds  
are Wired*

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# *ARPA Funding for Municipalities Will Sunset*

- Austerity mindsets lag economic growth.
- Highly volatile budget situations lead to conservative spending plans.
- 'Nice to Have' features or services vs. 'Must Haves' will be at the core of post-ARPA and post-COVID discussions.
- New long-term stable revenue is needed.

# *Unique Wisconsin Considerations*

- The funding formula for most libraries in Wisconsin is not properly equipped to handle rapid growth in property tax revenue.
- [Section 43.64](#) of state library law provides a mechanism where the County Library Systems reimburses municipal libraries within the county (or in some cases even neighboring counties for services used by residents of unserved portions of the County).

# *Unique Wisconsin Considerations*

[Section 43.64](#) of state library law

(b) Except as provided in sub. (2m), any city, town, village or school district in a county levying a tax for public library service under sub. (1) shall, upon written application to the county board of the county, be exempted from the tax levy, if the city, town, village or school district making the application levies a tax for public library service and appropriates and expends for a library fund during the year for which the county tax levy is made a sum at least equal to an amount calculated as follows:

1. Divide the amount of tax levied by the county for public library service under sub. (1) in the prior year, less the amount levied for public library capital expenditures, by the equalized valuation of property in that area of the county that was subject to the county property tax levy for public library services in the prior year.
2. Multiply the amount determined under subd. 1. by the equalized valuation of property in the city, village, town or school district for the current year

# *How Humans Listen*

Understanding your audience's primary start point

- Compassionately Engaged
  - Populations and people
- Pride of Place
  - Interesting, thriving, and prosperous
- Data-Driven\*
  - Data as lens into impacts
- Concerned or Fearful
  - Focused on filling gaps

# *Understanding Your Boss's Agenda*

What are the agendas of your elected officials - and how does your work to those agendas?

- Interesting Places
- Thriving Places
- Prosperous Places
- Avoid Duplicative Services
- Deliver Efficient and Effective Service

# *Budgets Express Our Values*

Is your library's budget in line with your values? And with the values of your community, your funding partners, and your elected officials?

If it is not, perhaps it's time to rewrite the budget.

# *Rewrite the Budget*

“New” Money only comes from four places:

- Cuts from another department
- Reallocations within an existing tax framework.
- Outside aid or grants.
- Additional taxes.

# *Pre-Meeting Triage with Any Electeds*

- What is the problem you are trying to solve?
- What population or part of the community are affected by this problem?
- How will they be impacted by a positive change?
- What is your “ask” that will solve the problem?
- Do they already identify your problem as a real problem?
- Why would they want to see your problem solved?
- What are you asking them to do?
- How and when can they do that?



# *How Do We Engage with Electeds?*

- Reach out in the way they want to be contacted. Be personal and not just personalized.
- Always say: “May I share with you what is happening at our library right now?”
- Open with the story of “why we are doing what we’re doing”. Not a laundry list of activities.
- Partners want to know what's going on and they want to know how they can participate.

# *Core Assumptions for Success*

- Electeds are your neighbors. And they have the checkbook.
- Present yourself as if you are there to help them accomplish their goals (not the other way around). This is an opportunity to start a relationship (not one off deal).
- You are the best expert on 21st century libraries in your community.
- You have on-the-ground, actionable intelligence about the neighborhood your elected is representing.

# *Making a New Ask*

- Where does this revenue come from?
- What are the priorities of my elected officials?
- What is “regular order” for the lawmaking or rulemaking body?
- How can I make this easy for them?

# *Pro-Tips for Elected Officials*

- It is a discussion, not a debate.
- Unless you know the elected official is actually opposed or is on the record as true friend to libraries, assume they are neutral, interested, and unaware.

*Two Key  
Question for  
Elected  
Officials*

How do you see libraries fitting into this project / budget / legislation?

How do you see librarians putting this idea to work in the community?

We have developed “model  
language” that would address an  
issue we are concerned about....

Would you like to see it?

*Making a “New  
Ask” Easier*



Time for Questions &  
Comments in the Chat



*Unsolicited  
Advice and  
Observations*

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- Community Block Grant Development Programs
- 21st Century Learning Centers
- Broadband and Digital Equity Act
- Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act - Title II literacy grants

## *Federal and State Grant Programs*

- BEAD
  - Middle Mile connectivity for library buildings
- Digital Equity Act
  - Staff - Digital Navigators
  - Hardware and equipment
  - Training programs and programmatic partnerships

## *Broadband Funding in the IIJA*

Public Services Commission is making the plans and administering the funding

<https://psc.wi.gov/Pages/ServiceType/Broadband/InternetForAll.aspx>

- Provide opportunities for academic enrichment, including providing tutoring services to help students meet performance standards in core academic subjects such as reading and mathematics;
- Offer students youth development activities, recreation programs, and technology education programs that are designed to reinforce and complement the regular academic program of participating students..

## *Before School, After School, and Out of School*

21st Century Learning Centers  
grant programs from the US  
Department of Education

The single largest funder of adult literacy services is WIOA Title II

WIOA Title II (Section 203), an “eligible provider” is an organization that has demonstrated effectiveness in providing adult education and literacy activities. Libraries are an eligible provider (along with consortium / systems that includes libraries). Content domains include reading, writing, mathematics, English language acquisition, and other subject areas relevant to the services

## *WIOA Literacy Grant Programs*

US Department of Labor  
<https://wioaplans.ed.gov/>

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