

Workshop #1: Accessibility and Inclusion for Patrons with Disabilities: The Basic



Take-Away #1

Designing your Library

These are a few things to keep in mind when designing a space regarding furniture, fixtures, and equipment. ACRL and LLAMA have listed a series of pointers to help you begin to plan for the remodeling of your library space.

<https://acrl.libguides.com/buildingresources/librarybuildingdesign>

Planning/Strategy

- Extensive consultation with all library staff
- Input from constituents/users, i.e. focus groups, charrettes, or other patron input
- Consideration is given to bringing in a professional interior designer/architect
- Learn from your spaces that are successful, understand why some of your spaces are not successful. Start with asking the question what are students trying to do?

Project Goals

- Conformance with the library program and goals: How well does the FF&E support or enhance the desired project outcomes? Use interior furnishings to create a more inviting space and accessible services.
- User needs and characteristics: Is the space designed to encourage extended usage, or transitory for in-and-out? Size of work surfaces, seating type, creature comforts such as lockers, and furniture cubbies will influence the length of stay.
- The delineation between “collaborative” versus “individual” user activities
- Efficacy of design: Will the actual use reflect the intended use? Example: A small 4-person table may really only be used by two.
- Security issues juxtaposed with privacy interests. In some institutions security based need calls for more visibility and will influence the height of partitioning, design, and degree of private study space, and remoteness of location and layout
- Sustainability considerations – energy efficiency; Meeting “Design for Environment” guidelines.
- Staff areas mix of offices and collaborative open work areas, diversity of tasks and activities that staff is doing, focus on the workflow and function. Consider self-check-out

stations, smaller more accessible service points, think about staff on the floor instead of behind the desk, bring staff to users, may have more locations in response to evolving programs (i.e. maker space technical support).

- Campus/Academic Partners, potentially shared spaces in the library, may have different hours.

Project Considerations

- Flexibility (balance between order and chaos), mobility (user control), and adaptability (recognition of the constant change in the 21st-century library)
- Reusability (value consideration), consideration of incorporating existing FF&E. Potential for refurbishment
- Understand the investment timeframe for the furnishings, 10-15 years on institutional quality furniture, 3-year investment on task chair, need to think about trendy colors and durability, investment vs. buying and consideration of replacement and repair budget
- Durability for 24/7 use in public areas. Check express warranties on products being considered
- Ergonomic and ADA considerations, the importance of the “sit test” for seating. Provision of a variety of postures/heights suggestive of different seating types (lounged, seated, café height, standing height)

Space Considerations

- Acoustics, Space, and Furniture will impact user comfort and use
- Appropriate lighting for all spaces including task lighting. Balance of natural and artificial lighting
- Technology management: wire management, adequacy to support desired hosting hardware. Powered vs. nonpowered workstations. Availability of power for patron use. Ability to support user devices brought into space. The flexibility of power provision (floor grid; raised floor).
- Low tech solutions, i.e. whiteboards,
- Branding, wayfinding, and signage should be thoughtful, consistent, and intentional, leverage library marketing resources
- Leverage relationship/use of indoor and outdoor spaces.