

**Idaho Commission for Libraries**  
**Continuing Education Action Plan**  
**2016-2018**



*How will you grow?*



**Summary:**

Sustaining Idaho library services in an atmosphere of innovation and change requires that library workers have the skills and knowledge necessary to keep their libraries vital and vibrant within their individual communities. This fact makes continuing education crucial to all activities supported by the Idaho Commission for Libraries (ICFL).

The ICFL Continuing Education (CE) Action Plan serves as a snapshot of the systematic training and continuing education activities provided for the Idaho library community which includes a wide-range of publicly-funded entities: public, academic, school and special.

To compile this document, ICFL reviewed the evaluations of continuing education events conducted during the previous CE Action Plan, posted surveys, and convened the Continuing Education Advisory Group to review the current professional development needs of the Idaho library community and trends in library services.

A key message for the 2016-2018 CE Action Plan is the importance of professional development for all library staff and trustees in the areas of leadership, community engagement and customer service. Continuing education is crucial for the sustainability of the Idaho library community. Technology and the changing socio-economic environment require library staff to remain abreast of new trends and technology in order to maintain high levels of service to meet the needs of the community.

ICFL will support these issues in the following manner:

- The continuing education action plan will support the agency strategic plan, the LSTA 5-Year Plan, and will be updated annually to provide flexibility.
- “Leading from any position” will be promoted to encourage individuals to view learning as an essential part of any library position.
- Equitable access to continuing education activities for all library staff throughout Idaho will remain a priority.

**Mission:**

Idaho Commission for Libraries assists libraries to build the capacity to better serve their clientele.

**Purpose:**

The Continuing Education Action Plan outlines the means by which ICfL's mission will be incorporated through ongoing educational support for members of the Idaho library community who are striving to sustain Idaho library services in an atmosphere of innovation and change.

The Continuing Education Action Plan supports the three Strategic Issues identified in the ICfL State Strategic Plan 2015-2018, as critical for library development toward the preferred future: Access, Literacy, Community Anchor.

**History:**

The history of ICfL's training and continuing education activities started in 1988 when the Idaho State Library contracted with Consulting Librarians Group to produce its first long-range plan for continuing education. The project was initiated and the first CE Consultant hired in 1989. Three years later the State Library hired the Library Development Solutions consulting firm to evaluate the first three years of planned continuing library education and to write a plan for the next three years (1992-1994).

Following an interim two-year plan (1995-1996), the Continuing Education Advisory Committee approved another three-year plan (1997-1999). In December of 1999, another strategic plan (2000-2002) with a much broader approach was developed.

In 2003, Sandra Nelson was contracted to review the existing continuing education program and develop recommendations. This statewide assessment was conducted through key informant interviews, surveys and focus groups. The resulting report, Recommendations for Statewide Continuing Education Plan 2003-2006, served as the basis for the Continuing Education Plan.

In 2006 the Idaho State Library became the Idaho Commission for Libraries (ICfL) to reflect the development focus of the agency. Also during this time, staffing changes made it difficult to provide consistency in implementation of the Continuing Education Plan.

In March 2008 work began on reviewing the ICfL Continuing Education Plan and developing a new three-year action plan for 2010-2012. A statewide advisory group comprised of individuals from academic, school, public, urban and rural libraries representing all areas of the state provided input in regard to the professional development needs and future issues facing the Idaho library community.

From 2012 through 2015 the Continuing Education Advisory Group met regularly to review the summary of activities and evaluations which resulted from the current CE Action Plan, as well as to provide input as to current trends in staffing, competencies, programming, and community needs.

### **Data Gathering and Documentation:**

As a means of preparing this continuing education action plan the following documents were reviewed:

- Idaho Commission for Libraries Strategic Plan 2015-2018 found on the ICfL website at <http://libraries.idaho.gov/doc/strategic-plan>
- Libraries Linking Idaho (LiLI) Work Plan for 2014-2016 at <http://libraries.idaho.gov/page/lili-steering-committee>

### **Format:**

The ICfL Continuing Education Action Plan uses the following building blocks:

**Action Issues:** Action Issues are the key questions to be addressed during the life span of this action plan. The goals, strategies, and activities provide the pathway to reach the desired end results to address these questions.

**Goals:** Goals represent the “end states” which will be the evaluative indicator that an action issue has been addressed. The goals in this plan are stated as declarative sentences to answer the specific action issue question.

**Strategy:** Strategies describe the pathways for reaching the desired goals to answer each action issue. Strategies are not bound by time and not likely to change much during the lifetime of the plan. In this plan they are listed as one word or short phrases.

### **Activity:**

- Activities are specific actions to change behavior in order to achieve the “end states” described in the goals.
- Similar activities may be found under several goals under multiple target audiences. This duplication shows how the activities and various target groups are inter-related throughout the Idaho library community.
- Staff with primary or ultimate responsibility is listed for each activity. Many activities indicate two or more staff members which demonstrates the collaborative approach ICfL uses in providing quality continuing education.

## Competencies

The following competencies were designated as high priority for the 2016-2018. Activities for the Action Issues and Goals will support the development of these competencies as defined below. The terms are listed in order of priority as selected by the Continuing Education Advisory Group.

**Leadership:** Foster a culture where strategic focus, effective communication, courage to take risks, understanding of others, and accountability are a natural course. Leadership traits are inclusive of character (understanding, hope, courage), competence (accountability, communication strategic focus), and context (culture).

**Community Collaboration:** Demonstrate cooperation within and outside of library networks to provide services that benefit the community.

**Instruction:** Create a culture of sharing and transferring knowledge in formal and informal settings which enhance the process of learning.

**Communication:** Listen actively, seek understanding, and share information effectively in oral, written and electronic environments.

**Assessment:** Identify instructional needs of library staff. Evaluate the effectiveness of programs, services and staff.

**Customer Service:** Meet the information needs of internal and external customers in a manner that respects the end-user, individually and culturally, while maintaining personal boundaries.

**Technology:** Acquire and transfer knowledge and skills to remain current in the use of evolving online services, software and hardware.

## The Plan

### Issue #1. What can ICfL do to help Idaho’s libraries continue to increase public access to information and library services?

*Goal A: High-quality continuing education events in relevant subject areas using appropriate delivery methods will be provided.*

#### Strategy 1.A.1. Scanning the Environment

Activity 1.A.1.1. Monitor library literature, attend conferences, and poll statewide advisory groups to maintain awareness of new trends and technologies in continuing education; **CE Consultant, annually.**

Competencies: Leadership, Community Collaboration, Instruction, Technology

Activity 1.A.1.2. Prepare, publish, and post a three-year continuing education action plan based on IcfL strategic plan, LSTA state plan, CE evaluations, IcfL staff survey, and CE Advisory Group input; **CE Consultant, December 2018**

Competencies: Leadership, Communication, Instruction

#### Strategy 1.A.2. Planning

Activity 1.A.2.1. Identify training priorities for each target audience: directors, managers, library staff, school librarians, trustees; **CE Consultant with CE Advisory Group and ICfL Development Staff, annually- Fall**

Competencies: Leadership, Instruction, Customer Service

Activity 1.A.2.3. Explore Open Educational Resources and identify the role that ICfL might play in the implementation of OER throughout the library community. **CE Consultant, 2016**

Competencies: Technology, Customer Service, Instruction

#### Strategy 1.A.3. Measuring

Activity 1.A.3.1. Review and adapt the assessment process to determine the long term effects of continuing education on the Idaho library community; **CE Consultant, ongoing**

Competencies: Assessment

Activity 1.A.3.2. Gather usage data, review and update content and format of e-courses; **CE Consultant & Contractors, ongoing**

Competencies: Assessment, Communication, Technology

Strategy 1.A.4. Informing

Activity 1.A.4.1. Publish and distribute an annual brochure focusing on ICFL sponsored continuing education activities; **CE Consultant, ongoing**

Competencies: Instruction, Communication

Activity 1.A.4.2. Advertise continuing education events in print and electronic formats clearly identifying topics and intended audiences; **CE Consultant with ICFL Development Staff, ongoing**

Competencies: Instruction, Communication

Activity 1.A.4.3. Promote e-courses and webinars to provide skills to library staff and trustees in identified professional development priorities; **CE Consultant with ICFL Development Staff, ongoing**

Competencies: Instruction, Communication

Strategy 1.A.5. Collaborating

Activity 1.A.5.1. Share and coordinate continuing education, training, and professional development opportunities with other state library agencies, professional organizations, and continuing education providers; **CE Consultant, ongoing**

Competencies: Instruction, Community Collaboration

Activity 1.A.5.2. Work with other Idaho state agencies and professional organizations in providing training opportunities for library staff; **CE Consultant and ICFL Development Staff, ongoing**

Competencies: Instruction, Community Collaboration

Strategy 1.A.6. Funding Grants

Activity 1.A.6.1. Coordinate and evaluate the use of LSTA continuing education grants to support the goals outlined in the continuing education action plan; **CE Consultant and Grants/Contracts Officer, (as funds allow) ongoing**

Competencies: Assessment

**Issue 2. How will libraries provide Idahoans with access to literacy and learning opportunities?**

*Goal 2.A. Idaho libraries are supportive of, or competent, to meet the learning goals of the members of their community.*

Strategy 2.A.1. Planning

Activity 2.A.1.1. Provide updated online resources regarding library law, districting and trustees for public and school libraries; **ICfL Development Staff, annually**

Competencies: Instruction, Community Collaboration, Assessment, Technology

Strategy 2.A.2. Teaching

Activity 2.A.2.1. Provide online and face to face training which focuses on identified professional development priorities for all library staff and trustees. **Field Consultants, Networking & CE Consultant, ongoing as needed**

Competencies: Instruction, Assessment, Technology, Communication

Activity 2.A.2.3. Provide continuing education elements in ICfL publications and workshop materials; **Read To Me Coordinators, annually, September**

Competencies: Instruction, Assessment, Leadership, Communication

Strategy 2.A.3. Facilitating

Activity 2.A.3.1. Coordinate the meeting and activities of the Library Leadership Advisory Committee (LiLAC) in the development of a culture of leadership within the Idaho library community; **Continuing Education Consultant, ICfL Development Staff, Idaho Library Community, ongoing**

Competencies: Leadership, Community Collaboration, Communication

Activity 2.A.3.2. Maintain relationship with Idaho Department of Labor and Adult Basic Education in the delivery of workforce development tools to the residents of Idaho through libraries; **CE Consultant, ongoing**

Competencies: Instruction, Assessment, Technology, Communication, Community Collaboration, Customer Service

**Issue 3. How can all Idaho libraries be recognized as valued anchor institutions within their unique environments?**

*Goal 3.A. Idaho libraries provide innovative and relevant services for their communities.*

Strategy 3.A.1. Scanning the Environment

Activity 3.A.1.1. Poll the Continuing Education Advisory Group and Special Projects Library Action Team (SPLAT) for trends in innovative library services; **CE Consultant, annually**

Competencies: Assessment

Strategy 3.A.2. Teaching

Activity 3.A.2.1. Offer continuing education events, e-courses, and webinars that provide the skills and tools to use in developing leadership and community building skills; **CE Consultant with ICfL Development Staff; ongoing**

Competencies: Instruction, Leadership, Community Collaboration

Strategy 3.A.3. Informing

Activity 3.A.3.1. Update and promote appropriate items of interest on the Library Survival libguide for public and school librarians; **CE Consultant with ICfL Development Staff, ongoing**

Competencies: Communication

Activity 3.A.3.2. Publish Envoy and Nexus newsletters; **Public Information Specialist and ICfL Development Staff, quarterly**

Competencies: Communication

### **Evaluation:**

Ongoing evaluation of the continuing education plan is conducted in order to maintain an effective and valuable plan. Three specific reasons are listed here:

- To decide whether to continue or discontinue specific training activities.
- To gain information on how to improve future training activities.
- To determine the contributions of Idaho Commission for Libraries' continuing education efforts to the agency's mission.

### **Criteria:**

The plan will be considered a success if the following criteria are met:

- Annual activities are either completed within the current or modified schedule.
- Grant funds for individual and group continuing education projects are used.
- Positive changes in behavior attributed to participation in the activities are reported.
- Increases in skills and knowledge attributed to participation in the activities are reported.
- Positive changes in library services attributed to participation in the activities are reported.
- Target audiences report the activities designed for them have met their expectations.

Additional criteria to measure success will include

1. An increased leadership role in shaping community development reported by local library directors/managers.
2. An increased use of the resources available through LiLI reported by library staff.
3. An increase in library staff reporting they have skills to provide high-quality services or programs.
4. Reported library use remains stable or continues to rise in communities.
5. Library trustees report increased community engagement activities. (Public Library Trustees)
6. An increased number of libraries implement new educational opportunities for their communities. (Directors/Managers)
7. An increased number of school library staff report positively impacting student success. (Library Staff)

### **Methods:**

Measuring the success of the plan is an integral part of each workshop and activity provided throughout the state. An annual summary of the evaluations will be compiled.