



WESTERN NEW YORK LIBRARY RESOURCES COUNCIL

Questioning existing practices.
Testing new ideas.
WNYLRC: a leader in library innovation.

Open Data and Digital Equity

This initiative is part of the ongoing work of the Western New York Library Resources Council (WNYLRC) to help build the capacity of libraries and librarians to continue to respond to the information needs of their communities. Information resources critical in addressing needs of individuals and groups in our communities are increasingly only available as online, digital data. Access to critical resources for education, health, employment, and many other personal and professional facts of life require people to have:

- Access to the internet for online information
- Access to devices to adequately use online information
- Access to acquiring the skills needed to navigate and use online information

To continue to provide our communities with access to the information they need, library staff themselves require more training and guidance in how to assist in locating, applying and using online information, including open civic data, to meet the specific needs of their patrons.

Our goal for this initiative is to develop and implement strategies and models for training librarians as “Digital Navigators,” taking place in the immediate context of the information needs in the communities where they work. WNYLRC’s recent Digital Health Literacy project, with funding from NNLM, is just one example. Our efforts related to training librarians to assist patrons in completing the 2020 Census is another example.

These projects are just one facet of WNYLRC’s ongoing efforts to ensure the skills and resources of the library community are recognized, valued, and utilized by stakeholders who share our goals of addressing gaps in digital literacy specifically, and digital inclusion more broadly, ultimately helping foster a more equitable community.

The [Open Civic Data Guide](#) presents an overview of the strategy and approaches to building a stronger open data support community, with librarians as recognized data intermediaries in the open data ecosystem of Western New York. You are encouraged to complete and submit [the assessment form](#) as we build a base of information about the ecosystem.

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