

# The Library Context for Digital Media Labs

## Abstract

*Chapter 1 of Library Technology Reports (vol. 50, no. 6) “Digital Media Labs in Libraries” makes the case that digital media labs fit squarely into the library’s role in education and in providing public spaces. The chapter lists funding sources and defines scope by describing the setup in libraries of various sizes and resource levels.*

The Great Recession of the 2000s was hard. Each week across the United States, the news was full of stories of library funding being cut and libraries shutting down. Yet it was during this onset of bad news that a revolution was called for within libraries. This movement would change library patrons from consumers of information to creators. Phil Shapiro of *PC World* wrote in 2010, “You start using the library space as a collaborative space to make things: books, music CDs, instructional videotapes, screencasts, art, inventions, software, and so on.”<sup>1</sup> Some libraries were ahead of the curve and had added creation spaces many years prior to the Great Recession. One version of this drive for content-creation space in a library is called a digital media lab (DML). This report explores what goes into building a digital creation center.

## What Is a Digital Media Lab?

A DML is a gathering of equipment that allows original digital content to be created or analog content to

be converted to digital formats. Sometimes a DML is a separate room in a library; other times it’s a cart bearing the equipment. Oftentimes, there is a staff and time investment in teaching patrons how to use the equipment. A DML is found not only in libraries, but also in museums and in academic departments for new media students and future journalists.<sup>2</sup>

## Criteria of a DML

In this report, the DMLs selected may not all be considered DMLs by the libraries that house them, but each was chosen by the author because it fits several of the following criteria:

- It provides equipment to the community for the creation of video, audio, or other digital content.
- It offers members of the community the ability to transform analog media (e.g., cassette tapes, records, etc.) to digital formats.
- It offers digital literacy programs on how to create digital content.
- Content is being created in some form rather than just consumed.

A library that offers only a scanner would not be considered as having a DML, but a library that provides audiovisual equipment and a space to use that equipment would be.

Not every DML in this report may be part of a

library, but it may provide you with ideas about where to look for funding or how much a DML may cost or other creative ideas to borrow.

### A Rose by Any Other Name

DMLs go by many names. Tracking down a wide variety of labs for this report was hindered somewhat because so many name variations exist. The most common terms include creative, creation, and digital. All libraries mentioned in this report are in the United States but this does not mean that other countries lack outstanding examples of DMLs.

### What Is a Makerspace?

A makerspace can include elements of a DML. However, makerspaces focus on the production of physical objects. Makerspaces had their origins in the hacker-space movements, but for libraries, the term makerspace tends to be more patron-friendly because it does not have the negative connotations of the word hacker. Makerspaces may also involve health hazards, such as the use of power tools, while it is unlikely that someone would get hurt taking photos or digitizing audio.

### Hybrid DMLs

Not all content created in a DML is necessarily digital. Sometimes digital creations are printed out either as 2-D objects such as photos or as 3-D prints. The inclusion of 3-D printers, which create physical objects, causes some overlap between a DML and a makerspace. However, because such 3-D objects start out as digital files, I am including in this report DMLs that offer 3-D printers. These DMLs may be considered hybrids because they straddle the line between digital and physical creation. One example of this type of creative space is Chattanooga Public Library's 4th Floor.<sup>3</sup> While the library does not call the 4th Floor a makerspace or DML, it has elements of both—as well as its own flavor because the space is open and constantly changing.

### Not Included: Community Media Labs

One type of service similar to a DML allows members of the community to come together to report on local happenings. These spots, frequently run by journalists and sponsored by the media, are often called community media labs, but they are not included in this report. Such labs appear across the county from Connecticut to Southeast Michigan.<sup>4</sup> Other local news outlets may provide just a space for bloggers to report on their communities, such as the Santa Cruz Sentinel's Community Media Lab.<sup>5</sup> While these locations provide a place to create digital content for the community, they do not meet the DML criteria for this report as

they are not sponsored in some way by a library. However, a library with a DML may consider also hosting a community media lab, which would rock!

## Why Communities Need DMLs

Oftentimes people ask why a library needs a DML. Librarians can point to the Edge Initiative, a national coalition of leading library and local government organizations that provides benchmarks to help libraries manage their technology growth.<sup>6</sup> While Benchmarks 1 through 3 deal with libraries providing community value through access to technology, it is Benchmark 2 that is most relevant to DMLs. This benchmark states, "Libraries provide access to relevant digital content and enable community members to create their own digital content."<sup>7</sup> A DML neatly fits those requirements.

While any community center may provide equipment, a library can add value by providing knowledge and expertise in using the software. Therefore, the library is providing opportunities for the community to learn digital literacy—a skill all will need as digital technology becomes more pervasive. The library's role in education and providing a public space is an important reason why a DML should be located at the library.

However, some DMLs in this report go beyond the library's walls and out into the community—on carts or by means of pop-up workshops in various locations. Laura Damon-Moore of the Library as Incubator Project keeps track of these creative ventures.<sup>8</sup> In an interview, she said, "There is also a greater sense that a library is a place where you take part in a hands-on activity and come away having developed a new skill."<sup>9</sup> DMLs (and makerspaces) can accommodate the new expectations of our communities. Wherever a library sets up a creation station, the community will find it and move from consumers to creators.

## DMLs as Whole-Library Efforts

I was in charge of planning, purchasing, implementing, training, and managing Darien Library's DML in 2011. I contacted many other libraries to learn firsthand about their experiences in setting up a DML. A variety of outside experts gave advice on lighting, soundproofing, and audio equipment. However, the creation of the DML affected all staff in the library. Each department contributed in some way:

- User Experience: performing research, technical expertise, ordering, setup, creation of policies, publicity, and big picture planning
- Building Maintenance: providing advice on

furniture, performing installation, and painting the room

- Circulation and Technical Services: receiving and cataloging items
- Computer Lab, workers: providing feedback, dealing with patrons, helping with setup, and providing the first line of instructors
- Computer Lab, supervisor: managing the new workflow
- Reference: helping to define metadata for internal projects
- Adult Programming: helping with publicity and scheduling technology classes
- Fundraising: holding a reverse auction to raise money to fund the DML<sup>10</sup>

I provide more information about Darien's single-user DML later in this chapter.

## Funding

Before you begin dreaming of building a DML, you will need some ideas about how to fund it. You will need not only to purchase items at the beginning of the project but also to pay for the ongoing maintenance. In addition, consider staffing models and how employees or teachers will be paid. While this report focuses on Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) and community or corporate grants, there are many other ways to raise money for a DML.

### LSTA Grants

The LSTA Grants to States program provides federal funding to states to fund library projects and ongoing needs. How much money a state is given is based upon the population.<sup>11</sup> Each state library administrative agency (SLAA) chooses how to spend the money it is allotted among all types of libraries within its state. The purpose and priorities of the LSTA grants can be found online, but in summary, it is to promote lifelong learning, expand the reach of library services to diverse groups, and preserve access to library resources. The LSTA grants are not only for states but also for other territories of the United States.<sup>12</sup> Each state or territory writes a five-year plan, which it submits to the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) to ask for LSTA funding.

The LSTA grants chart (table 1.1) includes information about twelve libraries that received federal funding from their local SLAA.

#### SUCCESSFUL SAMPLE APPLICATIONS

Thanks to the transparency policies of several libraries, you can read some successful LSTA grant applications online. See the following URLs.

## Successful LSTA Grant Applications

### *Prescott Valley Public Library*

[http://pvaz.granicus.com/MetaViewer.php?view\\_id=5&clip\\_id=1052&meta\\_id=48211](http://pvaz.granicus.com/MetaViewer.php?view_id=5&clip_id=1052&meta_id=48211)

### *Urbandale Public Library*

[www.statelibraryofiaowa.org/ld/f-h/funding-info/lib-tech-grant/ltg-application%20files/2014-ltg-80.pdf](http://www.statelibraryofiaowa.org/ld/f-h/funding-info/lib-tech-grant/ltg-application%20files/2014-ltg-80.pdf)

### *Worcester Public Library*

[http://lgdata.s3-website-us-east-1.amazonaws.com/docs/3847/949053/Worcester\\_Tweens\\_and\\_Teens.pdf](http://lgdata.s3-website-us-east-1.amazonaws.com/docs/3847/949053/Worcester_Tweens_and_Teens.pdf)

## Corporate and Community Grants

The corporate and community grants listed in table 1.2 were awarded by organizations that support digital literacy, education, and technology efforts in local communities. The suggestions in the gray box of where to apply for grants are based upon the sources of non-LSTA grants that were awarded to various libraries and educational institutions for DMLs.

### Creative Sources of Fundraising

Aside from traditional fundraising attempts through grants or local bonds, libraries and other educational institutions can pursue more innovative sources.

#### ASK A CELEBRITY

The Adams Memorial Library in Rhode Island received some star power from Alec Baldwin when he showed up at a fundraiser to fund their DML. Baldwin has been a supporter of the library for several years. The purpose of the DML is “to enhance digital and media literacy for students of Central Falls and neighboring communities.”<sup>13</sup>

#### CROWDFUNDING

Sometimes in order to raise funding for a project, you can turn to the denizens of the Internet. What you do is pick a crowdfunding site, such as Kickstarter, and post your project on the site along with how much money you want to raise. Individuals then donate money toward your project. On Kickstarter, donors pay only if the project is fully funded.<sup>14</sup> Other sites act like a donation box.

The Northlake Library attempted to “get a 9 foot tall Hulk statue, digital media creation station and many more graphic novels.” It used the crowdfunding website Indiegogo.<sup>15</sup> While it fell short of its \$30,000 goal, it was able to buy the Hulk statue and new equipment for its DML.<sup>16</sup>

Library	State	Amount	Year	Purpose
Frankfort Community Public Library <sup>a</sup>	IN	N/A	2009	Digi-Dock, a portable DML, for fostering creativity in the community.
Urbandale Public Library <sup>b</sup>	IA	\$1,500	2014	currently applying—see application (URL provided under Successful Sample Applications in this chapter) for more info
Logan Library's Digital Media Lab <sup>c</sup>	UT	\$4,951	2013	"to purchase a digital scanner, a desktop personal computer, an iMac, VHS-to-DVD adapter, cassette-to-CD adapter and video software"
Escondido Public Library's LibraryYOU <sup>d</sup>	CA	\$5,000	2012	"a project . . . to collect and share local knowledge through videos and podcasts"
Fulton County Public Library's Mobile Digital Media Lab <sup>e</sup>	IN	\$9,993	2012	laptops, video and audio recording equipment
Plano Public Library System's Digital Media Lab <sup>f</sup>	TX	\$12,843	2014	"to serve as an interactive digital learning center to promote transliteracy for those 13 years and older"
Worcester Public Library <sup>g</sup>	MA	\$15,000	2013	for tweens and teens between ages 11 and 17
Park City Library's YouCreate Lab <sup>h</sup>	UT	\$15,942	2012	"This new space encourages the development of 21st Century Skills, such as information, media, communications, and technology literacies, which are essential for today's global economy."
Appleton Public Library's Digital Creation Lab <sup>i</sup>	WI	\$16,104	2013	more for students than the general public
Middletown Free Library's CreateSpace@MFL <sup>j</sup>	PA	\$29,964	2013	see the section Portable: CreateSpace@MFL later in this chapter.
Prescott Valley Public Library's Digital Media Lab <sup>k</sup>	AZ	\$30,000	2013	to enable patrons access to tools for 21st century learning and literacy.
Carson City Library's @Two Digital Learning Center <sup>l</sup>	NV	N/A	2013	

- a. "Show Your Creativity with Digi-Dock™!!," *fcpltech's blog*, May 18, 2010, <http://fcpltech.wordpress.com/2010/05/18/show-your-creativity-with-digi-docktm/>.
- b. Urbandale Public Library. *Iowa Library Technology Grant Application, Urbandale Public Library Digital Media Lab*. <http://www.state.libraryofia.org/ld/f-h/funding-info/lib-tech-grant/lgt-application%20files/2014-ltg-80.pdf>.
- c. "Logan Library Gets Grant for Digital Media Lab," *Herald Journal* (Logan, UT), Oct. 12, 2013, [http://news.hjnews.com/news/article\\_ab529646-32d6-11e3-9c9d-001a4bcf887a.html](http://news.hjnews.com/news/article_ab529646-32d6-11e3-9c9d-001a4bcf887a.html).
- d. "2012/13 LSTA—Grants: By Grantee," California State Library, July 15, 2013, [www.library.ca.gov/grants/lsta/docs/1213AwardsByGrantee.pdf](http://www.library.ca.gov/grants/lsta/docs/1213AwardsByGrantee.pdf).
- e. "2012 LSTA Sub-Grants: Awards Summary," Indiana State Library, April 13, 2012, [www.in.gov/library/files/2012\\_LSTA\\_Grants\\_Summary.pdf](http://www.in.gov/library/files/2012_LSTA_Grants_Summary.pdf).
- f. "Grant Recipients for Fiscal Year 2014," Texas State Library and Archives Commission, last modified Aug. 16, 2013, <https://www.tsl.texas.gov/ld/funding/lsta/recipients14.html>.
- g. "MBLC Awards LSTA Grants," Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners, last updated Nov. 26, 2013, <https://mblc.state.ma.us/newsroom/content/articles/76/mblc-awards-lsta-grants>.
- h. "Library Board Minutes," Park City Library, Oct. 10, 2012, <http://parkcitylibrary.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/12/Library-Board-Minutes-for-October-10-2-lt.pdf>.
- i. "Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) Grant Awards 2013," Wisconsin Division for Libraries and Technology, Dec. 4, 2013, <http://pld.dpi.wi.gov/files/pld/pdf/13grants.pdf>.
- j. PR Newswire Association, "Pennsylvania Governor Corbett Announces \$345,000 in Grants to 34 Libraries to Enhance Services and Improve Access for Local Communities," Free Library website, June 5, 2013, [www.thefreelibrary.com/Pennsylvania+Governor+Corbett+Announces+\\$345,000+in+Grants+to+34...-a0332673229](http://www.thefreelibrary.com/Pennsylvania+Governor+Corbett+Announces+$345,000+in+Grants+to+34...-a0332673229).
- k. "2013 LSTA Snapshot," Arizona State Library, Archives and Public Records, June 13, 2013, [www.azlibrary.gov/sites/azlibrary.gov/files/libdev-2013\\_lsta\\_grant\\_award\\_recipients.pdf](http://www.azlibrary.gov/sites/azlibrary.gov/files/libdev-2013_lsta_grant_award_recipients.pdf).
- l. "Job Bulletin, Technology Trainer—Library," Consolidated Municipality of Carson City, Nov. 4, 2013, [http://agency.governmentjobs.com/carsoncity/job\\_bulletin.cfm?jobID=756577&sharedWindow=0](http://agency.governmentjobs.com/carsoncity/job_bulletin.cfm?jobID=756577&sharedWindow=0) and "Technology Trainer Named," *During the Interim* (Carson City Library), no. 17, Jan./Feb. 2014, [www.carsoncitylibrary.org/docs/newsletter%20201402.pdf](http://www.carsoncitylibrary.org/docs/newsletter%20201402.pdf).

**Table 1.1**  
Some LSTA grants supporting digital media labs

### MINI-GOLF FUNDRAISER

The New Lenox Public Library held its First Annual Library Mini-Golf Fundraiser to help fund the building of a DML. The library raised over \$4,200.<sup>17</sup> Local groups also helped to support the event, with Eagle, Birdie, and Par Sponsors. In the near future, the DML will open and include a green screen, analog-to-digital converters, and a Mac Pro.<sup>18</sup>

### SOCIAL MEDIA COMPANY

Funding may also come from unexpected places, such as Facebook. The social media behemoth donated \$96,000 to Menlo-Atherton High School in California.<sup>19</sup> Facebook's funding helped build The Digital Media Arts Center, which includes two DMLs along with various other content-creation spaces.

## DMLs of Different Sizes

Not all DMLs support the same kinds of activities or number of patrons. For the purposes of this report, here's a breakdown of how DML sizes are categorized:

- **Portable.** Portable DMLs often consist of a cart or a carrying case that holds the equipment. The basic tools are laptops, mics, and headphones. Since these DMLs are mobile, they do not take up space when they are not in use and can therefore pop up anywhere in the library or in the community.
- **Small—1 person.** A small DML usually comes from converting a preexisting room in the building. At Darien Library, the one-branch public library in Connecticut where I work, a study room was converted. Since these rooms are set up in pre-existing locations, the environment may not be ideal for sensitive audio work since the room is probably not soundproofed.
- **Medium—2 to 4 people.** While a medium-sized or larger DML may be set up in a preexisting space, it can also be in an addition built onto the library. A medium-sized DML in one room is perfect for group work. It is also appropriate for several patrons working individually on separate computers (as long as they use headphones).
- **Large—4 or more people.** A large DML usually consists of multiple rooms or studio spaces. The rooms may not all be identical; the DML may offer specific locations for audio, visual, and other creative pursuits. The Digital Media Commons at the University of Michigan offers three studios: Digital Media Tools Lab, UM3D Lab (for 3-D printing), and USE Lab (teaching with technology).<sup>20</sup> The University of Virginia Library offers eleven workstations and one audio booth.<sup>21</sup>

The following are quick looks at what can be accomplished with DMLs of different sizes. Statements were taken from e-mail exchanges with staff who knew they would be quoted in print.

## Where to Apply for Corporate and Community Grants

### AT&T

<http://about.att.com/content/csr/home/people/aspire.html>

### Battelle Memorial Institute

[www.battelle.org](http://www.battelle.org)

### Best Buy Community Grants

<https://www.bby.com/community-grants>

### Comcast Foundation

<http://corporate.comcast.com/our-values/community-investment/philanthropy-partnerships>

### Knight Foundation

[www.knightfoundation.org/apply](http://www.knightfoundation.org/apply)

### MEDB Ke Alahele Education Fund (Hawaii)

<http://medb.org/KeAlahele/overview.cfm>

### Otto Bremer Foundation

[www.ottobremer.org/grantmaking/how-apply](http://www.ottobremer.org/grantmaking/how-apply)

### Paul G. Allen Family Foundation (Pacific Northwest only)

[www.pgafamilyfoundation.org/Foundation-Contact-Form](http://www.pgafamilyfoundation.org/Foundation-Contact-Form)

### Procter and Gamble

[www.pg.com/en\\_US/sustainability/social\\_responsibility/grant\\_application.shtml](http://www.pg.com/en_US/sustainability/social_responsibility/grant_application.shtml)

## Portable: CreateSpace@MFL

The CreateSpace@MFL is located at the Middletown Free Library in Lima, Pennsylvania. It is a portable DML situated on wheeled desks, which allows space to be freed up as needed. The DML is situated in a large creative area that also houses a makerspace. The DML was funded by an LSTA grant of nearly \$30,000 in 2013.

A partial list of hardware:

- 2 Mac Minis
- 1 Windows workstation



Library	State	Amount	Sponsor	Year	Purpose
Addison Public Library's Creative Studio <sup>a</sup>	IL	N/A	The Best Buy Children's Foundation	2012	to build a space primarily for teens to learn technology to support the TNT: Teens 'n Technology for Tomorrow program
Chapel Hill Public Library <sup>b</sup>	NC	N/A	Chapel Hill Public Library Foundation	2013	to provide a space for digital content creation
Claxton Elementary's Digital Arts and Media Lab <sup>c</sup>	NC	\$4,124	Asheville City Schools Foundation	2013	to upgrade newsroom and creative space for digital media
Baldwin High School <sup>d</sup>	HI	\$5,000	MEDB Ke Alahele Education Fund	2010	for computers and software to give students hands-on opportunities in digital media with a focus on TV production
Auburn Public Library's The Create! Media Lab <sup>e</sup>	ME	\$8,000	The Best Buy Children's Foundation	2013	to provide "a hands-on learning experience utilizing the latest technological tools available"
		\$10,000	Procter and Gamble Fund of the Greater Cincinnati Foundation	2013	
Fergus Falls Public Library <sup>f</sup>	MN	\$10,895	Otto Bremer Foundation Grant	2013	to allow patrons to become content creators
ARTLAB+ <sup>g</sup>	DC	\$20,000	Knight Foundation	2012	for a free after-school program for teens where they can explore digital media and technical tools. Workshops are also available.
Barrington Area Library <sup>h</sup>	IL	\$20,000	Ferry Family Trust	2010	to allow patrons to "create and communicate using various platforms and tools"

- a. John Kokoris, "Addison Public Library Resources Using Latest Technology," *Suburban Life Media*, Dec. 11, 2012, [www.mysuburbanlife.com/2012/12/11/john-kokoris-addison-public-library-resources-using-latest-technology/as0amj0](http://www.mysuburbanlife.com/2012/12/11/john-kokoris-addison-public-library-resources-using-latest-technology/as0amj0).
- b. "Digital Media Lab," Town of Chapel Hill Public Library, last updated April 1, 2013, <http://chapelhillpubliclibrary.org/txp/?s=services&c=05-digital-media-lab>.
- c. "Innovation Grant Abstracts 2013–2014," Asheville City Schools Foundation, Aug. 9, 2013, <http://acsf.org/media/Innovation%20Grant%20Abstracts%202013-2014.pdf>.
- d. "MEDB KE Alahele Education Fund Grant Awards 2010–2011," Maui Economic Development Board, accessed May 30, 2014, <http://medb.org/KeAlahele/grantawards1011.cfm>.
- e. "Auburn Public Library Opens Digital Media Lab; First to Be Located within a Public Library in New England," news release, Jan. 9, 2013, Androscoggin County Chamber of Commerce website, [www.androscoggincounty.com/CWT/EXTERNAL/WCPAGES/WCNEWS/NEWSARTICLEDISPLAY.ASPX?ArticleID=19](http://www.androscoggincounty.com/CWT/EXTERNAL/WCPAGES/WCNEWS/NEWSARTICLEDISPLAY.ASPX?ArticleID=19).
- f. "Otto Bremer Foundation Awards 86 Grants Totaling \$5.3 Million," news release, Otto Bremer Foundation, June 12, 2013, [www.ottobremer.org/sites/default/files/news-releases/OBF\\_NR\\_20130612.pdf](http://www.ottobremer.org/sites/default/files/news-releases/OBF_NR_20130612.pdf).
- g. "ARTLAB + : Smithsonian Institution," Knight Foundation, accessed May 30, 2014, [www.knightfoundation.org/grants/20115307](http://www.knightfoundation.org/grants/20115307) and "ARTLAB + , the Hishhorn's YOUmedia Space, Ushers in a New Conception of the Museum for Teens," *Art Works Blog Blog*, accessed July 17, 2014, <http://arts.gov/art-works/2012/artlab-hirshhorn%E2%80%99s-youmedia-space-ushers-new-conception-museum-teens>.
- h. Ryann Uden, "Making Space for Creativity," *The Digital Shift, Library Journal*, Nov. 8, 2011, [www.thedigitalshift.com/2011/11/media/making-space-for-creativity](http://www.thedigitalshift.com/2011/11/media/making-space-for-creativity).

**Table 1.2**  
Corporate and community grants supporting digital media labs

- 4 iPads
- 1 Surface Pro tablet
- 2 Wacom graphics tablets
- 1 green screen
- 1 lighting kit

One of the Mac Minis is reserved for audio production while the other is for image creation and editing. Each computer is configured for a range of uses.

The library uses the DML for a variety of workshops. These programs, both for training staff and for educating patrons, are one important use of the DML. Mary Glendening, the library's director, writes, "We are

currently running a series of workshops on digital drawing for creating animation and comics. We have nine teens in the class so they are working together, three people to a computer."<sup>22</sup> A Lynda.com subscription also allows patrons to train themselves on a wide variety of technology, productivity, and work-related skills.

To learn more about CreateSpace@MFL, visit its website.

CreateSpace@MFL  
[www.createspacemfl.com](http://www.createspacemfl.com)

Library	State	Amount	Sponsor	Year	Purpose
Skokie Public Library <sup>i</sup>	IL	\$35,000	Member Initiative Grant	2008	to provide a place to allow the public to create digital content
Palm Beach County's CreationStation <sup>j</sup>	FL	\$35,689	Knight Foundation Fund of the Community Foundation for Palm Beach and Martin Counties	2014	to provide residents with space to learn new technology for audio and video production
Soulsville Charter School <sup>k</sup>	TN	\$42,500	Comcast Foundation	2013	to help close the digital divide gap
Kennesaw State University <sup>l</sup>	GA	\$47,500	AT&T	2008	for a DML for journalism students
Kansas City Public Library <sup>m</sup>	KS	\$94,800	Kansas City Digital Inclusion Fund	2014	for a van for "the lab [that] will promote computer and Internet accessibility and literacy to 8- to 18-year-olds"
Menlo-Atherton High School's Digital Media Arts Center <sup>n</sup>	CA	\$96,000	Facebook	2012	to give students in the local area access to technology
Tacoma Public Library <sup>o</sup>	WA	\$150,000	Paul G. Allen Family Foundation with matching funds from the library	2011	for a "program geared towards teaching digital media to Tacoma's youth"
Surge Columbus Consortium <sup>p</sup>	OH	\$300,000	Battelle Memorial Institute	2013	A "collaborative of museums, libraries, and media organizations will be able to empower teens to discover and pursue their learning interests outside of school by connecting them with mentors, digital and cultural resources, and each other."

- i. Mikael Jacobsen and Carolyn Anthony, "Build Your Own Digital Media Lab," *The Digital Shift*, *Library Journal*, Nov. 8, 2011, [www.thedigitalshift.com/2011/11/media/build-your-own-digital-media-lab](http://www.thedigitalshift.com/2011/11/media/build-your-own-digital-media-lab).
- j. "Friends of the Library System Receives Grant for CreationStation at Main Library," Palm Beach County website, Aug. 20, 2013, [www.pbcgov.com/newsroom/0813/08-20-13-creationstation.htm](http://www.pbcgov.com/newsroom/0813/08-20-13-creationstation.htm).
- k. "Comcast Foundation Grant Will Help Memphis' Soulsville Charter School Students Bridge Digital Divide with Computer Lab," Soulsville Charter School, Nov. 10, 2013, [www.soulsvillecharterschool.org/2011/11/comcast-foundation-grant-will-help-memphis%E2%80%99-soulsville-charter-school-students-bridge-digital-divide-with-computer-lab.html](http://www.soulsvillecharterschool.org/2011/11/comcast-foundation-grant-will-help-memphis%E2%80%99-soulsville-charter-school-students-bridge-digital-divide-with-computer-lab.html).
- l. "KSU Receives \$47,500 Grant from AT&T for Digital Media Lab," news release, Kennesaw State University, Dec. 17, 2008, <http://web.kennesaw.edu/news/stories/ksu-receives-47500-grant-att-digital-media-lab>.
- m. Jordan Pascale, "Grant Creates Outlet for KC Youth to Learn Computer Skills at Library," *Silicone Prairie News*, March 26, 2014, [www.siliconprairienews.com/2014/03/grant-creates-outlet-for-kc-youth-to-learn-computer-skills-at-library](http://www.siliconprairienews.com/2014/03/grant-creates-outlet-for-kc-youth-to-learn-computer-skills-at-library).
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**Table 1.2 (continued)**  
Corporate and community grants supporting digital media labs

### Portable: Mobile Digital Media Lab @ FCPL

The Mobile Digital Media Lab (MDML) at Fulton County Public Library (FCPL) in Indiana is located in a rural community. The DML, stored in a tote and cooler, travels weekly among the library's three branches. Jonathan Gaskill, the library director, says that the MDML "was created to be able to bring the technology to the people no matter their location (imagine the possibilities) and share the equipment (and instruction) with library users and people in the communities we serve."<sup>23</sup> The MDML was funded by a LSTA grant of \$9,993 in 2012.

A partial list of hardware:

- 6 Hewlett-Packard laptops
- 2 MacBook Pros
- 4 iPads
- 1 Canon DSLR camera
- 15 Nexus 7 tablets

A special focus of the FCPL is to bring the MDML to businesses as the library "works on becoming a small business incubator in Fulton County." This includes teaching social media skills, Internet safety, and Microsoft Word classes.

To learn more about the MDML, see an online presentation posted by Gaskill at the following URL.

*Gaskill's presentation*

[www.slideshare.net/jonnygskills/fcpl-ilf-presentation](http://www.slideshare.net/jonnygskills/fcpl-ilf-presentation)

### Small: DML at Barrington Area Library

The Digital Media Lab at Barrington Area Library (BAL) is located northwest of Chicago, Illinois. Since 2010, the DML has been a one-person room for stop-motion animation, video editing, using Mindstorms NTX, etc. However, in 2014, the DML will be rebranded as the Digital Studio (DS) as it expands to a second room. DS will add Studio Kids, a DML geared specifically for grades 8 and below. Mike Campagna, the Digital Services Manager, writes, "We will focus on digital creation & software rather than tangible projects & hardware" for Studio Kids.<sup>24</sup> The expansion cost approximately \$9,000 and was funded by a donation from the Ferry Family Trust.

A partial list of hardware:

- 1 MacPro computer
- 2 twenty-four-inch monitors
- 1 M-Audio Oxygen 61 USB keyboard
- 1 M-Audio Fast Track USB audio interface

The older DML was focused on "the transliteracy needs of our community," Ryann Uden told Bobbi Newman in 2010.<sup>25</sup> BAL worked closely with its local high school to learn how the library could help in learning. Meanwhile, the Youth Services Department hosts a "wide range of popular technology programs" writes Campagna.<sup>26</sup> This local demand and a renovation project presented an opportunity to expand the DML to include Studio Kids. The new DML's notable new activities include a green screen with wall-mounted lighting, "a Kinect sensor with Skanect software to create 3 dimensional scans, for 3D modeling"<sup>27</sup> and for use with AS Digital Studio, and software appropriate to beginners, such as Sketchbook Pro.

To learn more about BAL's forthcoming Digital Studio, visit its website at the following URL.

*BAL website*

[www.barringtonarealibrary.org](http://www.barringtonarealibrary.org)

### Small: Darien Library's DML

Darien Library's DML is located in a single-branch public library in southern Connecticut. The room was converted from a former study room on the lower level. The DML is surrounded by a teen lounge, a computer lab, and a study room. The budget for the DML project was \$14,000. The project was largely funded from a reverse auction at the annual gala fundraiser.

This DML is the one I planned and implemented over the course of a year.

A partial list of hardware:

- 1 MakerBot Replicator 3-D printer
- 1 MakerBot Digitizer scanner
- 1 Mac Pro Computer
- 1 3-D mouse
- 1 turntable
- 3 lighting kits

The workspace supports one person at a time, though four people may be in the room to work together on a project (see figure 1.1). Children under the age of 13 need to be accompanied by a caregiver. The most popular activities include converting analog media to digital formats, using the 3-D printer, and taking photos. The general usage population are teens and retirees. Usage of the room has doubled each year since its inception in 2012. Due to the limited size of the room, there is no programming, though one-on-one technology appointments are held in the room using the advanced equipment that is not offered elsewhere in the library.

To learn more about this DML, visit its website at the following URL.

*Darien Library DML website*

[www.darienlibrary.org/dml](http://www.darienlibrary.org/dml)

### Medium: Skokie Public Library's High School and Youth DMLs

In 2013, Skokie Public Library in Illinois opened its newest DML, the High School Media Lab. This lab was a complement to the much older adult DML and the Youth Media Lab, which opened in January 2012. As the names suggest, the youth lab is for students up to eighth grade. After that, the teen moves up to using the High School Media Lab. Both are medium-sized DMLs: the high school lab supports up to three students while the younger grades enjoy four computers. Together the two DMLs cost less than \$10,000.

A partial list of hardware:

- 1 Blue Nessie microphone
- 1 Midi keyboard
- 1 Bamboo drawing tablet
- 7 iMacs

Mick Jacobsen, a Learning Experiences Manager, explains the purpose behind the three DMLs the library operates: "The Adult Digital Media Lab is for geeking out (and a little messing around), the high school DML is for hanging out, and the youth DML is for messing around."<sup>28</sup> While three separate rooms is



a luxury for many, Skokie may be onto a successful model of allowing patrons to experiment with technology in a comfortable way. Kids can work interactively together, while adults may be more interested in solo projects. As for the most popular usage of the project, Jacobsen says, “The children love to record audio and green screen videos.”<sup>29</sup>

To learn more about Skokie’s DMLs, visit the following sites.

### Skokie Library

<http://skokielibrary.info>

### Skokie Library blog post

<http://blogs.skokielibrary.info/medialab/2013/12/26/the-new-high-school-media-lab-is-open>

## Medium: Urbandale Public Library

The DML at Urbandale Public Library in Iowa is not open at the time of this writing. A full launch to the public will be in July 2014 after a soft launch in June. While small at 170 square feet, this DML will house three workstations. The DML was funded by an LSTA grant of \$1,500. According to the grant application, the technology will “support our mission ‘to provide diverse resources for life-long learning and enjoyment.’”<sup>30</sup>

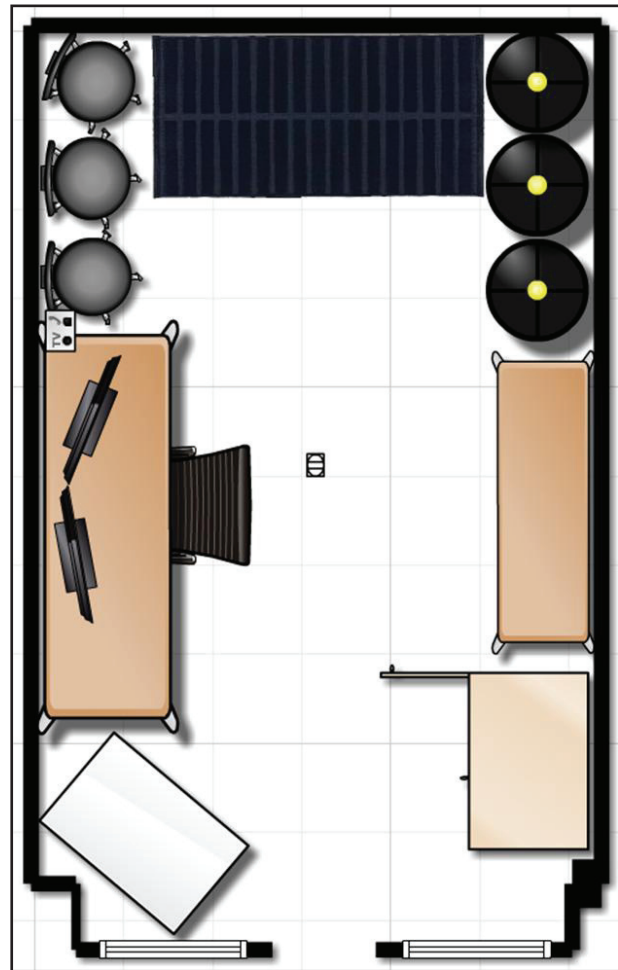
A partial list of hardware:

- 3 computers
- 1 video capture device
- 1 high-quality scanner
- 1 TV and VHS-to-DVD recorder
- 1 CD/DVD buffer
- 1 microfiche reader

Janine Bauer, Public Relations and Adult Program Coordinator, writes that each computer will have a specific purpose.<sup>31</sup> One will handle photo and video editing. Another will be for capturing video from camcorders and burning DVDs. The last computer will be a scanning workstation with high-quality hardware. Although the room is built for three individuals, up to eight can work on projects together. Urbandale’s grant application lists the specific software and hardware it purchased.

## Large: The Studio at Arlington Heights Memorial Library

The Studio at Arlington Heights Memorial Library (AHML) is located in a suburb of Chicago. There are three rooms, a studio audio production space, and a workstation in the entryway to the Studio. Each desk



**Figure 1.1**

Floor plan of Darien Library’s DML. Image credit: Darien Library.

can seat at least two people. The Studio was initially founded in 2012 and funded by the Friends of the Library. The following year, the entire library was renovated and the Studio was expanded. Alex Hoffman, the Digital Media Supervisor, writes, “About \$40,000 has been invested in equipment.”<sup>32</sup>

A partial list of hardware:

- 5 Mac computers
- monitors between 24 inches and 27 inches
- 1 Yamaha DTX500K electronic drumset
- 1 4 foot by 6 foot Isolation VocalBooth

The Studio is unlike many DMLs, which take a do-it-yourself approach or offer only short training sessions. Hoffman’s full-time job is to support patrons and teach them how to use the Studio. Libraries often cannot support this level of dedicated service but still wish to provide a creative space. The other priority of the library is to offer as wide a range of services as possible to serve the many needs and interests of the

community. For example, one patron completed a very large English as a second language DVD series using a wide array of equipment. Her project included use of the cameras to film, the computers to edit, and graphic design software to make the DVD package. Other popular activities are audio production, video editing, scanning, and digitizing video or audio.

You can take a panoramic tour and learn more about the Studio by visiting the following website.

*AHML's Studio*  
www.ahml.info/studio

### Large: DML at University of Massachusetts at Amherst

At the University of Massachusetts Amherst, the W. E. B. Du Bois Library hosts a multiple-room DML that opened in 2013. Since this is an academic library, the space is built “to support students working on course-related multimedia presentations, projects and portfolios.”<sup>33</sup> In accordance with that goal, the DML includes a green screen room, two sound booths, a presentation/collaboration space, and rolling desk workstations. A unique feature of this DML is that it is open twenty-four hours a day. Staff are in the DML from 12 noon to midnight Sunday through Thursday, and 12 noon to 6 p.m. on Friday and Saturday, writes Jeanne Antill, the director of the lab.<sup>34</sup>

A partial list of hardware:

- 8 iMacs
- 2 PCs
- 1 portable sound booth
- 1 studio light kit
- 1 Shure wireless mic

Audio production is a highly supported activity in this DML with a wide variety of audio equipment available for check out. The equipment policy allows students flexibility to work on their projects in the locations they prefer. Students are also invited to share their work at a Student Showcase.

To learn more about the UMass Amherst DML, visit the following website.

*UMass Amherst DML*  
www.library.umass.edu/dml

### A DML Dismantled and Transformed

The earliest DML that I found was located at the Round Lake Area Public Library in Round Lake,

Illinois. The digital lab was founded with a \$9,500 grant and matching funding from the library in the early 2000s. *American Libraries* published an article on the Digital Publishing Lab in 2002, which stated “Larra Clark [now of Office for Technology and Information Policy] noted that few public libraries offer a lab like this.”<sup>35</sup> The DML offered access to high-end graphic editing software, computers, a printer, cameras, and Microsoft Office. Staff members taught lecture-style classes in how to use the equipment. Over time, though, the library learned that the community was more interested in basic digital work like scanning photos with simple image editing. Jim DiDonato, the library’s executive director, writes, “We just found that people were looking for basic computer and Office skills. From that point of view—a place for people to learn a new skill set—a technology skill set—the lab was a HUGE success.”<sup>36</sup> After learning firsthand about the desires of its community, the library ended its focus on high-end digital technology.

Since then, the DML’s room has become a computer classroom with fifteen laptops. Classes in general computing and English as a second language (ESL) and GED programs have filled the space that the DML left behind. However, DiDonato notes that for the library, “Individual training is much superior than classroom style teaching.”<sup>37</sup> The library offers private tutoring sessions. To keep the space active, the library markets the computer lab to local community organizations as a training center—which is well received.

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