



Mentor Program Guidelines

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Reasons for the mentorship programs:

- Build a more robust community of support among library staff in the PLLS area
- Provide a connection to someone in the field for new library directors and other specialized staff, offering a supported way to learn about resources and share experiences.
- Provide an additional point of contact for newer library directors and staff—someone who encourages them to reach out for assistance and recommends PLLS resources.

What are we looking for in a mentor?

- Familiar with PLLS staff and what PLLS provides, likely to recommend asking PLLS for help.
- Willingness to reach out to PLLS for assistance if the mentorship is not flowing smoothly.

- An intentional approach to library work and a desire to continue learning and growing.
- Confidence without arrogance.
- Excellent communication skills, particularly in listening.
- Reliable, relatable, and approachable.

Goals for mentorship programs:

- New directors, youth services librarians, and other key staff will feel more connected and less isolated.
- Increased referrals to PLLS resources and staff.
- Mentors will find that the monthly discussion prompts help them reflect on their own practice.
- Mentor pairs will provide meeting updates to PLLS at the two-month and six-month check-ins.
- PLLS staff leading the program will determine program efficacy through statistics and notes garnered through:
 - Two-and six-month check-ins with each participant by PLLS staff.
 - Collection of information and anecdotes through informal conversations between PLLS staff and mentor pairs.

Benefits for Mentors:

- Build connections with colleagues.
- Become a more integral part of the PLLS community.
- Reflect on your own practices through monthly prompts and conversations with your mentee.
- Gather fresh ideas and energy from people newer to the system or the industry.
- Develop a sense of satisfaction knowing you are helping another person grow, learn, build connections, and feel comfortable in their new role.

Benefits for Mentees:

- Build connections with colleagues.
- Become a more integral part of the PLLS community.
- Have someone in the field you can consult regarding questions/issues that arise, or who can help you consider alternate perspectives/ideas.
- Cultivate connections, relationships, and a feeling of belonging.

Suggestions for Mentees to Thank Mentors:

PLLS only expects an initial gesture:

- Respond to their monthly communications and thank them when they send resources your way—let them know you've received them and express your gratitude. This can be as simple as responding to an email promptly.
- A handwritten card can be a nice token of appreciation.
- You could offer to pick up the coffee tab next time you are together.
- Contact their supervisor to express your gratitude for their efforts and your appreciation of their expertise.