

MetLib Learning Circle 2024 - Nominations by 15 February



Photo: Members of the 2023 Learning Circle before their session at the MetLib Conference in Buenos Aires, Argentina, in October 2023.

MetLib Learning Circle is a 12-month talent development program initiated by the [IFLA Metropolitan Libraries Section](#). The learning circle is designed for 15-20 library leaders from libraries serving urban areas with populations of more than 400,000. Participation in the program enables participants to build international networks, access cutting-edge library innovations worldwide, understand urban planning dynamics, and receive mentorship from experienced and innovative library leaders.

The 2024 cohort is the second learning circle. The first cohort was organized in 2023 with 18 participants from 17 cities. In a feedback survey, 100% of the respondents recommended the learning circle to their colleagues. The participants especially valued new insights gained through research, connections with colleagues around the world, and the in-person meeting.

The 2024 edition focuses on the role of libraries in urban transformation and civic engagement. Cities are places where the density of people and ideas fosters innovation, well-being, and diversity. At the same time, urban areas often exhibit stark contrasts between wealth and poverty. The program explores various strategies for how libraries can enable social mixing, sustainable growth, learning, and innovation.

Themes covered in the program include:

- Urban Creativity and Culture
- Public Safety
- Urban Mobility
- Equity and Inclusion
- Crisis Preparedness
- Urban Planning and Real Estate Development
- Public-Private Partnerships
- Health and Economic Impacts of Libraries
- Community Partnerships
- Civic Engagement

Library directors are encouraged to nominate a motivated member of their executive team, a librarian, or a leader. The applicant must be in charge of an urban transformation project (e.g., branch development, new main library, new major branch, strategic development, partnerships).

Participation is free of charge. However, participation in the learning circle requires that the participants can use working hours for participation, are committed to active participation throughout the year, and can engage in professional exchange in English. Nominating institutions are encouraged to seek ways to ensure that their participants can attend the MetLib conference. The organizing committee will seek ways to provide 1-3 travel stipends for participants from the Global South. Library leaders can indicate in their application if their participation is conditional on financial support.

The program runs from April 2024 to March 2025 and consists of:

- Monthly thematic online discussions of two hours, facilitated by [Tommi Laitio](#), focused on peer learning and sharing. The sessions may occur outside normal office hours due to global participation.
- Preparatory reading and other assignments of up to 2-3 hours a month.
- Participation in the MetLib Conference from October 6-10, 2024, in Barcelona, Spain.
- 3-4 group mentoring sessions with an experienced city librarian/CEO.

Participants will receive a certificate for their participation.

MetLib Conference

The MetLib conference is organized from October 6-10, 2024, in Barcelona, Spain. The MetLib Learning Circle will have a one-day workshop for its members and will organize a workshop for

all conference participants. During the workshop, participants will have the opportunity to showcase their work to international library leaders.

Advisory and Development Group

- Pablo Bruno D'Amico, Librarian, Asociación de Bibliotecarios Graduados de la República Argentina (ABGRA), Buenos Aires, Argentina
- Brian Bannon, Merryl and James Tisch Director, New York Public Library, USA
- Tommi Laitio, Public Space Expert, former Executive Director of Culture and Leisure, Helsinki, Finland
- Mathilde Servet, Head of Innovative Services, Paris Library, Paris, France
- Neeza Singh, Librarian, T.S. Central State Library, Chandigarh, India
- Marie Østergård, Library Director, Aarhus Public Library, Aarhus, Denmark

How to Nominate

Interested libraries are asked to nominate a candidate by 31 January 2024 by using an online form: <https://forms.gle/XS8scu4YsaSmanf38>.

The nomination form requires the library to describe the participant's motivation, the project they will bring to the circle, and whether the library can support the travel and accommodation costs for the conference in Spain.

The advisory and development group of the learning circle will select the participants and inform all applicants in the beginning of March 2024. When selecting participants, emphasis will be placed on geographic diversity and the range of projects.

The learning circle meetings will be held on the first Tuesday of each month at 9 AM/9:00 EST, starting Tuesday 9 April. The time may be adjusted based on the participating group.

Questions

Tommi Laitio
tommi@tommilaitio.com

Initial Timeline of the Learning Circle

(subject to possible changes)

January 2024

- 15/2: Deadline for applications

April 2024

- 9/4: Monthly meeting

May 2024

- 14/5: Monthly meeting

- Leadership Group Mentoring

June 2024

- 11/6: Monthly meeting

July 2024

- 9/7: Monthly meeting

August 2024

- Summer break

September 2024

- 10/9: Monthly meeting
- Leadership Group Mentoring

October 2024

- 6-10 October: MetLib Conference

November 2024

- 12/11: Monthly meeting

December 2024

- 10/12: Monthly meeting

January 2025

- 14/1: Monthly meeting
- Leadership Group Mentoring

February 2025

- 11/2: Monthly meeting

March 2025

- 4/3: Monthly meeting
- Evaluation