

# How to enhance the value of public libraries in society:

## An example in the province of Barcelona



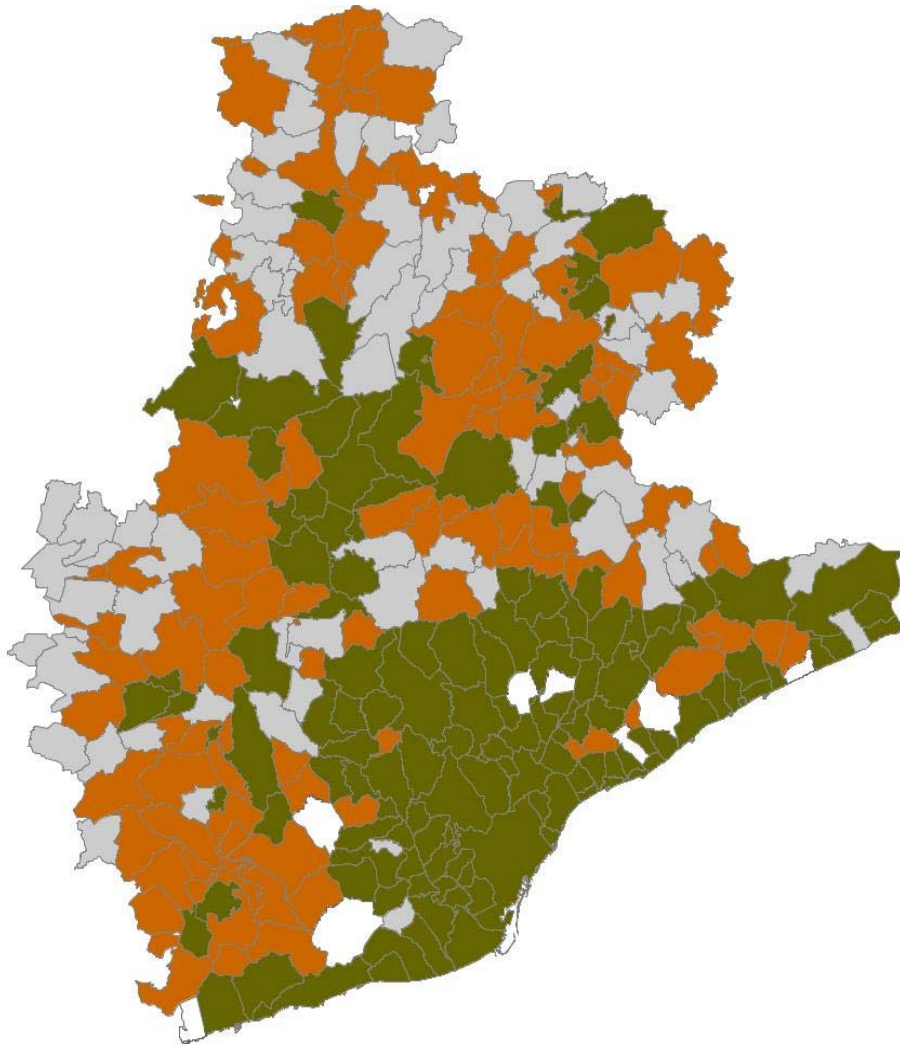
Library Services Management Office

# In the next few minutes...

1. **Barcelona province and network libraries**
2. **Economic and social value strategy**
3. **Cooperation: where we are and challenges facing libraries**
4. **Challenges to boost social value of public libraries**

# Barcelona Province and the Municipal Libraries Network

## Municipalities in the province with a public library service



Library

Mobile library

- ✓ **5,520,277** inhabitants (Barcelona: 1,600,000)
  - ✓ **311** municipalities
  - ✓ **137** municipalities with library
  - ✓ **102** municipalities with mobile library
- 98%** of the population in the province has a library service available in their town



## What's available to citizens



- ✓ **216** libraries
- ✓ **9** mobile libraries
- ✓ **247,970** m<sup>2</sup> of library area
- ✓ **9.3** million documents
- ✓ **1,342** staff
- ✓ **265** average days of service
- ✓ **26,500** activities
- ✓ **3,750** computers for public use



## Main results for 2013

- ✓ **2,571,421** users with library card
- ✓ **46%** of the population of the province are members
- ✓ **863,104** active users
- ✓ **19,254,200** visits
- ✓ **13,200,848** virtual visits
- ✓ **12,714,189** loans
- ✓ **2,277,455** uses of the Internet service
- ✓ **1,592,258** uses of the Wi-Fi service

## A day in the Municipal Libraries Network (MLN)

**73,000** people go into a library

**600** people join and get a library card

**45,000** loans

**37,000** visits to library network websites

**3,000** people attend one of **140** activities

**15,000** people connect to the Internet



# Library Model

## Video

<http://bibliotecavirtual.diba.cat>



Barcelona Provincial Council's **Library Services Management Office (LSMO)** advises and supports town councils in the creation and development of library services, and heads the Barcelona Province Municipal Libraries Network in order to guarantee territorial balance and quality library services, as well as equal access to information, knowledge and culture for all citizens.

The LSMO provides services for the municipalities and works with them to define their library policies, providing support so that they can create and maintain quality libraries and setting up **library network** infrastructure to enable cooperation between the province's libraries.

The LSMO's **clients** are town councils, libraries and citizens, especially since the Virtual Library came into service. The **aim** of the LSMO is for municipalities in the province to create and maintain their libraries effectively, through networking. Along with economic resources and material, it provides the experience of a team specialised in library facilities and services.

**SHARED MANAGEMENT**  
**TOWN COUNCILS/BARCELONA PROVINCIAL**  
**COUNCIL**

# WHAT SERVICES DOES THE LSMO OFFER?



Library creation and improvement services



Library operation services



Mobile libraries



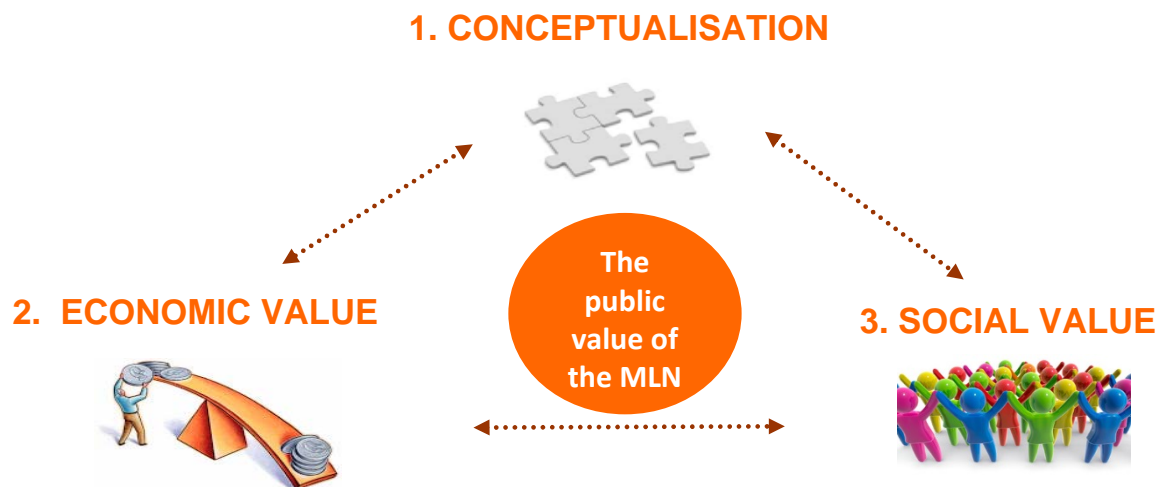
Virtual Library

# Economic and social value strategy

# Economic and social value strategy

The general aim is to *know the public value of MLN libraries from a comprehensive viewpoint, incorporating the economic and social vision.*

Based on three areas that feed each other:



# Economic and social value strategy



***Return on investment:*** Calculate the ROI of the main MLN library services

## Project results

✓ The **ROI**: for every euro public administrations invest in the main MLN services, **€2.25** are generated in direct benefits equivalent to **€4.25** (with indirect benefits).

# Economic and social value strategy



*Estimate MLN libraries' capacity for generating social benefits in the surrounding area, for both individuals and the community in general*

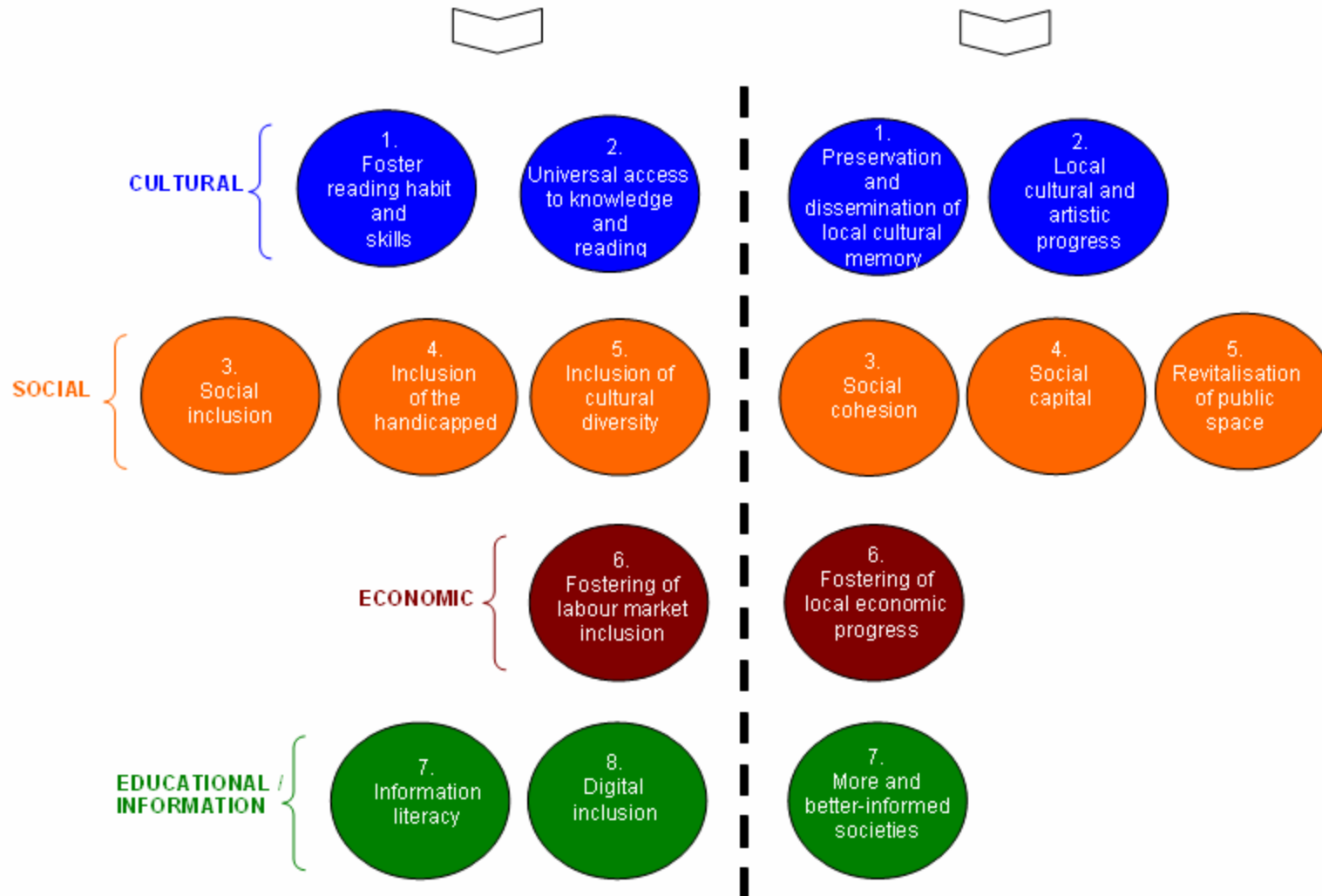
## Project results

- ✓ **15 potential social benefits** are identified that public libraries can generate for the surrounding area, in accordance with their situation and action.
- ✓ For the first time a basic **conceptual framework** is established with useful guidelines for any public library interested in generating social value in the area it serves.
- ✓ Estimate of the **social value of the MLN**: despite the lack of statistics, there is evidence that MLN libraries contribute, to a greater or lesser extent, to generating the social benefits identified.

# Economic and social value strategy

Individual perspective

Community perspective





# Economic and social value strategy

## Conclusions:

- ✓ Libraries add social value and, furthermore, value for citizens.
- ✓ Libraries should not work in every area, but should prioritise according to users and citizens and strategy.
- ✓ There is room for improvement in increasing social value.

# Economic and social value strategy

How can we increase value for citizens?

- ✓ Prioritise/find the 'nucleus' of our service aimed more at cooperation and cross-cutting effects.
- ✓ Find resources, do things in different ways.

# Cooperation

# Cooperation: where we are and challenges facing libraries

***Guidelines on cooperation and fundraising.*** The Library Services Management Office works on cooperation seeking alliances and associations to strengthen libraries by offering new or better services.

## Outline:

- ✓ Diagnosis
- ✓ Strategic importance of partnerships for network libraries
- ✓ How collaborations fit into the action plan
- ✓ Why collaborate?
- ✓ What a partnership is and the development cycle
- ✓ The case for support: the social role of libraries
- ✓ Road map for establishing collaborations:  
Setting objectives (objectives vs. actions, activities)

# Cooperation: where we are and challenges facing libraries

- ✓ How to identify potential collaborators
- ✓ How to design a collaboration of mutual interest
- ✓ Benefits for the collaborator according to degree of collaboration (services matrix)
- ✓ How to approach a potential collaborator
- ✓ How to go about requesting collaboration
- ✓ Following up on the contact
- ✓ The agreement
- ✓ Assessment and monitoring
- ✓ Strengthening collaborator loyalty

# Cooperation: where we are and challenges facing libraries

## Examples of cooperation/sponsorship

- ✓ Crowdfunding for an electronic and programming workshop in the library in Sant Pere de Riudebitlles, to purchase two open-code tools for teaching computer electronics and programming to children and young adults (on StartJOIN, a crowdfunding platform that operates in the open-source code community sector).
- ✓ Joan Triadú Library, Vic, receive sponsorship to finance activities.  
<http://bibliotecadevic.com/patrocinis>



*Patrocinador d'un  
**NASCUTS PER LLEGIR:***

*Carnisseria Cansaladeria*

*EL CAMP*

*c/ Morgades, núm. 29*

*08500 VIC*

# Cooperation: where we are and challenges facing libraries

## Examples of cooperation/sponsorship

- ✓ Terrassa – Special holdings – local company
- ✓ Furthermore, as in the case of the Castelldefels Central Library, we can collaborate with well-established local firms that collaborate with the library given their involvement in the community, regardless of the sector they operate in.



# Cooperation: where we are and challenges facing libraries

## Challenges

- ✓ To explain the value of libraries

Example of the ALA: Libraries Change Lives aims to draw attention to the efforts made by libraries to adapt to the new situation and, thus, obtain support from professionals and the public through the signing of a *Declaration for the Right to Libraries*.

- ✓ If we can explain ourselves, we can cooperate better... Take action based on working in cooperation and collaboration with the immediate environment. Working alone is not enough if we are to attain our objectives.



# Challenges to increase the value of public libraries

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- ✓ **Proximity and involvement: Proximity as a strategic value.**  
*'Llegim junts' Reading aloud service.* Thanks to a team of volunteers, Can Casacuberta library in Badalona has set up a service to read aloud to people in old folks' homes and institutions for the physically handicapped.
- ✓ **Accessibility and equality: A library for everyone.**  
*Centre d'Interès de la Discapacitat (CID).* Thanks to the *Programa Municipal Transversal per a Persones amb Discapacitat*, in support of the disabled, Sant Boi de Llobregat libraries have sections for dissemination which makes specialised holdings on disability and providing services available to users.

# Challenges to increase the value of public libraries

- ✓ **Belonging: Identity, dialogue and social cohesion.**  
***Project for intercultural dialogue. District 2 library, Terrassa.*** The District 2 library has a mission to foster intercultural dialogue and favour cultural diversity, making it easier for foreign immigrants in the Ca n'Anglada district to take part in library activities. The aim of the project is to promote cultural exchange based on collaboration between facilities, associations and so on, by emphasising variety and not differences, so it is not seen as a problem.
- ✓ **Evolution, adaptation and innovation: new needs, new forms of action.**  
**Can Mulà library, Mollet del Vallès. Collaboration with Empresa Municipal per a la Formació ocupacional i l'Ocupació (EMFO) of Mollet.** In addition to having a centre of interest in the world of work and entrepreneurship, Can Mulà library in Mollet del Vallès organises information sessions in conjunction with the EMFO, under the title *Vols crear una empresa?* (Do you want to set up a business?), aimed at people who have decided to set up a business and have doubts, who can get advice from experts (three monthly sessions). It also offers other business training courses.

# Challenges to increase the value of public libraries

- ✓ **Cooperation: together we do it better.**

**Support for upper secondary students doing research projects.** Igualada **Central Library** offers an introductory workshop on research for first-year upper secondary students, with the Anoia Regional Archive and the Igualada Regional Study Centre. The proposal, titled Aprenent a investigar (Learning to Research), aims to familiarise students with sources of information, work methods and the resources libraries can offer them when preparing research projects.

- ✓ **Participation: let's get the public involved**

**Castelldefels Central Library. A collaboration with local businesses and residents** to incorporate the town's cultural, economic and social fabric in the library's programme, turning it into a showcase for local life, to promote culture and boost the activities organised by local actors.

<http://www.bibliotecacentral.org/la-biblioteca-guanyadora-del-premi-teresa-rovira/>

# Challenges to increase the value of public libraries

- ✓ **The team: the key to success**

*‘Implementing the MLN professional exchange programme aimed at small library managers’.* The professional mobility programme is based on learning among equals and enables professionals to learn from a different viewpoint, have a learning-mentoring experience and go from action to success, with a road map to change.

- ✓ **Planning and assessment**

*Barcelona Libraries, 10 Years Plus. New challenges, new opportunities.*

This is not merely a review and update of the Barcelona Libraries Plan 1998–2010. Although it assesses the deployment of the plan in this period—positively for the most part—its basic objective is to consider how library services, staff and facilities have responded to a new social reality, in a context with new challenges and new opportunities.

[http://www.bcn.cat/biblioteques/docs/bib10anys\\_cat.pdf](http://www.bcn.cat/biblioteques/docs/bib10anys_cat.pdf)

# Challenges to increase the value of public libraries

## ✓ **Communication: reaching people**

**Bibarnabloc.** This is a collaborative space for recommendations and promotion of Barcelona library holdings and activities. Library staff recommend a document a day. <http://bibarnabloc.cat>

## ✓ **Consolidation of libraries 2.0: action and interaction**

**Biblioteca Virtual.** The virtual library provides continuous online service with access to information on specialist topics, such as tourism, cinema, health, comics, cooking and wine; recommendations by network librarians; user participation areas, in which they can give an opinion on books and share content in the social media; access library procedures online, and a personal area where users can organise and personalise the site contents that interest them most.

Barcelona Provincial Council's Municipal Libraries Network websites

<http://bibliotecavirtual.diba.cat>

<http://genius.diba.cat>

# Challenges to increase the value of public libraries

## ✓ *Efficiency, quality and sustainability*

The Library Services Management Office works to foster the sustainability of buildings and energy saving. Approximately 25% of all current expenditure by the administration on the public library service goes on maintaining library spaces. This percentage varies greatly—in some cases it can account for as much as 45% of current expenditure!—and it is this imbalance that provides the justification for this work. The aim is to provide MLN managers with more data, as greater knowledge brings greater awareness, and more results if energy-saving measures are applied and, secondly, to provide tools for self-assessment.





**Thank you very much!**

**Library Services Management  
Office**

**Ester Omella**

**[omellace@diba.cat](mailto:omellace@diba.cat)**





















Ramon Josep fotografia









