



# P2PU Teams:

## A learning circle membership program for libraries



# Teams Around the World



See full list: [p2pu.org/teams/](http://p2pu.org/teams/)

# Learn Better, Together

Born out of the 2008 Cape Town Open Education Declaration, P2PU is a US-based non-profit organization that cultivates peer-learning communities in public spaces around the world.

## Our vision:

- Knowledge should be freely shared
- Learning is best done with others
- Education is a social good

Since 2015, we have worked with libraries worldwide to realize our mission and vision through a methodology called **learning circles**.

# What are Learning Circles?

**Learning circles** are free, facilitated study groups for people who want to learn something together.

Learning circles don't require an expert or a teacher to create an effective learning environment. Instead, the **facilitator** draws on peer learning principles and open educational resources to help learners reach their goals.

P2PU coordinates a global network of facilitators alongside a community of practice, software tools, specialized open courses, and resources for the methodology. We offer it all to the public **for free**.



# 1,000 Learning Circles Later...

When our methodology, tools, courses, and community combine, amazing things happen:

- **Equitable adult education:** Participating libraries have grown program participation and retention (~80% / 6 weeks) and brought online learning to new audiences: nearly 50% of participants are first-time online learners.
- **Diverse public programming:** No experts required means no topic is off limits. From job skills to civic action to passion projects, partners choose from 125+ community-curated courses (or add their own!) to support community needs without specialized staff training.
- **Staff development:** Empower staff to connect with the community through their personal interests. ~95% of facilitators express interest in facilitating again.
- **Participants:** 90% of learners report meeting their learning goals as well as feeling more comfortable using their library, working with others, and navigating online learning resources.

# Learning Circle Testimonial

“The very act of making education accessible, free, and learner-driven, where students become each other's mentors, is the heart of democracy and taps into the very best of society's possibilities. At least here in Chicago, I've seen learning circles be agents of social justice in that they have brought people of all races, ages, and social classes together in a city that is normally incredibly segregated, and helped them form bonds with one another that would otherwise never have happened. [...]”

I think the very act of facilitating a learning circle is in itself radical, no matter the subject matter. Just as the public library as an institution is revolutionary, maybe this is our next step in creating a more engaged, empowered populace.”

**Shelley Hughes**  
Chicago Public Library

# Why Start a Team?

After working with dozens of libraries worldwide, we've found that building a thriving learning circle program uniquely suited to your community often requires extra support beyond P2PU's free tools and resources.

Team membership is designed to provide comprehensive guidance via:

- Staff Professional Development
- 1:1 Support
- Community-Powered OER Library
- Software for Teams
- Community of Practice
- Additional Discounted Services

# Staff Professional Development

Collaborate with the P2PU staff to deliver professional development tailored to your content and community needs:

- Staff training focused on effective strategies for facilitating peer learning
- Quarterly consultations to set and pursue your organization's program goals
- Ongoing professional development through regular P2PU-facilitated virtual learning circles on popular topics decided by member libraries

## Do/Make/Say/Think

*Suggested timing: 30 minutes*

### Create a P2PU account

In order to best utilize the resources in this course, please create a free P2PU account. Your P2PU account will allow you to perform a number of tasks including:

- Create learning circles
- Publicize learning circles
- Manage learning circle event details
- Communicate with learners via email and SMS
- Collect feedback from learners
- Add online courses to our database

Each of these tools is embedded within P2PU's global community of practice. For instance, when you share feedback about an online course you used or a learning circle, you aren't just sharing that with P2PU staff; it will be useful for other facilitators who are considering using the same course. To help enable these connections, P2PU accounts also provide access to:

- A group of mentors who can help answer questions when you start your learning circle
- A global community forum
- A mailing list where news happens in the P2PU community
- A weekly newsletter that highlights professional development opportunities.

When you're ready to join a learning circle, learners can sign up with their email address and we'll send them an invitation to add them to your learning circle.



# 1:1 Support

Receive comprehensive guidance from the P2PU team to ensure staff feel supported and learning circles run smoothly and effectively:

- Dedicated P2PU staff liaison (that's us! 👉) and regular support hours for facilitators
- Guidance for facilitators developing learning circles in new topics
- Promotion and publicity for learning circles
- Community platform for sharing practices from your library with the wider P2PU network





**Rebecca Ryan**

Organizer, Saint Paul Public Library

**What is the most compelling thing about working with P2PU as an ongoing service at your library?**

“For SPPL, the [facilitator] training plus ongoing practical support is unique—I am sure we aren't the only library stretching staff and materials budgets very thinly, so support at the right moments really matters for us.”

# Community-Powered OER Library

Work with the P2PU staff to develop Open Educational Resources (OER), guided by your local community's needs and shared with a global commons of learning circle facilitators:

- 6+ P2PU facilitation guides each year (topics nominated by members)
- Curated list of ready-to-use courses that align with your team's and patrons' preferences (2022)
- Early access to new courses designed for learning circles

The screenshot displays a grid of six course cards, each with a title, a star rating, a brief description, and two buttons: 'MORE DETAILS' and 'USE THIS COURSE'. The courses are:

- How to be an LGBTQ+ Ally**: 3 ratings | USED IN 1 LEARNING CIRCLE. This course covers foundational information related to serving LGBTQ youth and families. Topics include key terminology and concepts, an overview of the barriers faced by LGBTQ youth and families in child welfare, and the steps all service providers can take to overcome these barriers in order to create a welcoming environment.
- Learning about Learning Circles**: 13 ratings | USED IN 13 LEARNING CIRCLES. This is an openly-licensed online course about learning circles, created by Peer 2 Peer University. The course is divided into six modules, which can be explored in between 20-80 minutes each.
- Martin Luther King's Letter from Birmingham Jail**: 2 ratings | USED IN 4 LEARNING CIRCLES. A conversation about justice, extremism and activism.
- How to Cook Healthy Meals**: 2 ratings | USED IN 19 LEARNING CIRCLES. Learn how to eat healthy, save money and cook easy, tasty recipes with the EatFresh.org Mini Course. Available in English and Spanish. Use referral code P2PU when you create an account.
- Learn To Write Fiction**: 34 ratings | USED IN 13 LEARNING CIRCLES. In this course you will learn about writing the genres, character development, setting & basic world building, plot & structure, description, dialogue & action, and
- Fundamentals of Public Speaking**: 5 ratings | USED IN 5 LEARNING CIRCLES. Learn basic 3D modeling skills using the free tool Tinkercad. We will create a simple 3D object from scratch.

# Software for Teams

Access a suite of tools to help you promote, manage, and evaluate your learning circle program:

- Dedicated P2PU team page (right) with active/archived learning circles, facilitator profiles, and info about your organization
- Customizable participant surveys (2022)
- Aggregated signup and exit survey data
- Weekly insights on program activity
- Collaborate with P2PU staff to shape the features and priorities for the Teams platform

The screenshot displays the Saint Paul Public Library's Learning Circles software interface, featuring several key components:

- Left Panel (Reports):** A vertical sidebar with sections for "This week at Saint Paul Public Lib", "2 learning circles wrapped up", "1 learning circle met, reaching 3 learners", "1 learning circle will begin in the ne", and "2 learners signed up for a learn". Each section includes details like facilitators' names, topics, and descriptions.
- Middle Column (Facilitator Profiles):** A list of facilitators with their names, photos, and titles. One profile for "Rebecca" is shown in more detail, including her photo and the text "Rebecca ORGANIZER".
- Right Column (About and Search):** An "About Us" section with a photo of a group of people and text about the history of learning circles. Below it is a "Find a learning circle near you" search bar with fields for "SEARCH", "FILTER", and "OPEN (1)".
- Bottom Row (Learning Circles):** A row of cards for different learning circles, each with a title, start date, duration, and a "VIEW DETAILS" button. Examples include "Getting started with Scratch", "Crafting Your Cover Letter", and "2D Design with Inkscape".



**Nicole James**  
Organizer, Stadtbibliothek Köln

## How does P2PU advance your organization's strategic plan and/or departmental goals?

“ [Our] goals include being future-oriented and flexible, as well as welcoming change and new ideas. P2PU helps support this with a very flexible and adaptable model [that] promotes our online databases, supports efforts to promote lifelong learning, increases program variety for adults, and increases the participation factor for patrons.”

# Community of Practice

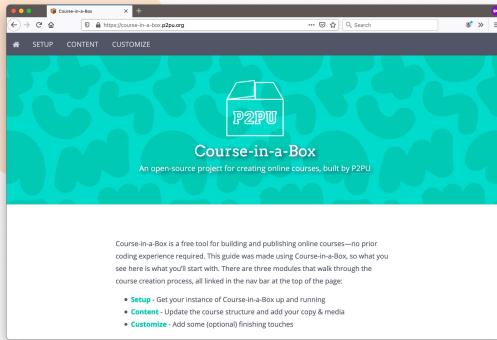
Join a global community of educators committed to P2PU's innovative peer learning practices:

- Two free tickets to our yearly community Gatherings (in-person, pandemic willing!)
- Co-host a public community call to share your program with the global learning circle community
- Collaborate and connect with other P2PU Teams on projects of mutual interest, grant opportunities, and governance of the membership program.



# Discounted Additional Services

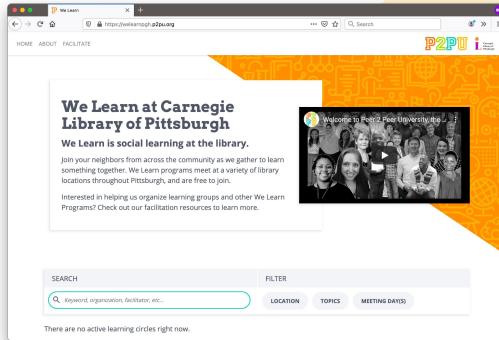
**Course Creation:** Develop and launch online courses about topics you care about, specifically designed for learning circles



**Workshops:** Co-host in-person and virtual events for your community with P2PU (karaoke optional)



**Software Solutions:** Redesign your team site or integrate P2PU's software in your org's website with our API





**Sara Dixon**  
Organizer, Wichita Public Library

**What is the most compelling thing about working with P2PU as an ongoing service at your library?**

“ Simply being part of an international community to spread easy access to knowledge is very rewarding. P2PU brought us all together and helps to facilitate our learning with each other.”

## We asked our library partners what values and practices they feel they are endorsing when they participate in P2PU:

"Endorsing freedom of information, fostering community support/engagement, and valuing education and curiosity." – Marsha, San Jose

"Noncommercial, collaborative, interest-based social learning that is rooted in social justice and equity." – Dan, Pittsburgh

"Open source content, access to education through an alternative learning format, and building community over the course of each learning circle." - Wendy, Kansas City

"Open access and high quality learning; better persistence with online and distance learning; inclusion." - Sherry, Providence

"Community building, continuing adult education, community dialogue, free programming for underfunded library branches." - Randall, Los Angeles

"Learning opportunities are for everyone, and making free online learning accessible makes it more equitable for the communities that we serve." - Gwendolyn, Spokane

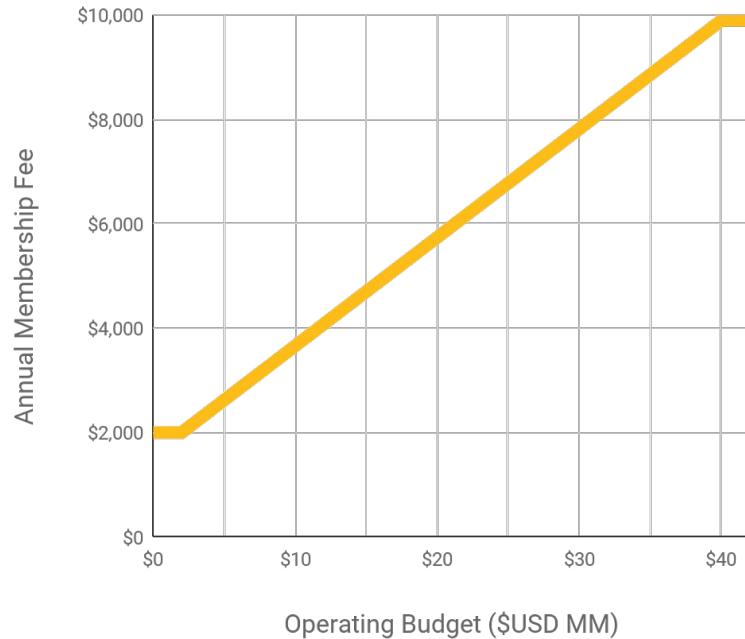
# Teams Pricing

Team membership is offered on a sliding scale between \$2,000 - \$10,000 per year. We calculate this fee based on your organization's annual operating budget.

- $\leq \$2\text{MM} = \$2\text{k/year}$
- $\geq \$40\text{MM} = \$10\text{k/year}$

Ready to discuss membership at your institution?

Reach out to [thepeople@p2pu.org](mailto:thepeople@p2pu.org)



# Who were those people I just saw?



Athanasia (Miami), Sharon (Toronto),  
Alexis (Kansas City), and Kalela  
(Philadelphia) at P2PU's 2018  
Gathering in Kansas City, USA.



Jordan (front-center) with their  
fiction writing learning circle at  
Boston Public Library (Boston, USA).



Juliana (Nairobi), Kaltuma  
(Nairobi), and Purity (Nakuru)  
at a P2PU 2016 facilitator training  
workshop in Nakuru, Kenya.



Andrea (Chicago), Purity (Nakuru), Grif  
(Boston), and Chris (Seattle) running a  
workshop at the Next Library conference in  
Aarhus, Denmark in 2017.



A learning circle at Chicago Public Library  
with Cristiane (front right), who wrote her  
PhD dissertation about learning circles.



A group of Kenyan facilitators:  
Ether, Raymond, Bethsheba,  
Kaltuma, Yusef, and Mary.