

P2PU

Impact Report
2018– 2023



Contents

Introduction	p. 03
Themes	p. 04
Peer Learning	p. 05
Open (Sharing, Learning)	p. 10
Community	p. 15
Further Afield	p. 26

Since 2015, P2PU has worked with libraries and community-based organizations worldwide to realize our mission and vision through the learning circle methodology. While we have remained dedicated to this work, we haven't properly taken the time to share the impact of the work. As our small team transitions into the next phase of P2PU we want to take the time to share the impact that P2PU has made over the last five years.



We believe that education should be a universally accessible path to empowerment and personal growth.

Our impact report is a testament to this commitment, a story of how our values shape the learning experiences we help foster. Here, we will explore how our dedication to peer learning, community, openness, and equity has allowed us to uphold our mission: to help individuals "learn anything," guided by their passions, fostering self-agency, and supporting each learner in reaching their unique goals. From promoting self-agency to encouraging learners to explore their passions, we aim to provide a holistic understanding of how Peer 2 Peer has been instrumental in helping individuals reach their goals and fostering a more equitable learning landscape.

Guiding Themes



Peer Learning

Underlying our work is the conviction that people develop expertise through their own life experiences, that learning happens whenever people share and connect with others, and that feedback is necessary in order to improve.



Open

Our commitment to open is predicated on the belief that we create value not by gatekeeping but by working together, sharing resources, and lowering barriers to entry. P2PU is built on open source technology, and everything we create is free to share, remix, and redistribute.



Community

P2PU is a community-centered project, reflected in both what we do and how we do it. We believe that sustained learning communities are best created through grassroots collaboration, not hierarchical mandates.

Peer Learning



P2PU helps learners play an active and engaged role in their learning journey. Each individual brings unique perspectives, knowledge, and enthusiasm to the table.

Facilitators and learners are each students and teachers, continuously exchanging insights and experiences with one another. They challenge preconceived notions, remain open to new experiences, and gain a deeper understanding of the subject matter through dialogue and interaction with their peers. The exchange of ideas and experiences within the group fosters an atmosphere of mutual respect, collaboration, and trust. Through this process, both facilitators and learners become co-creators of knowledge, in a way that allows each individual to achieve their own goals.

5 years of
our reach

475
Facilitators

10K
Learners

Highlighting 2 of 475

Facilitators

Peer Learning



Stacey & Gwendolyn
Spokane County Library District

Stacey and **Gwendolyn** from the Spokane County Library District co-facilitated a virtual learning circle using Coursera's Science of Well-Being course, and the responses from facilitators was overwhelmingly positive:

“ It’s been a rough couple of years, and facilitating this topic with this group really filled my (emotional) bucket! I was surprised by how willing participants were to be vulnerable and share their experiences with the group. Some of the shared stories got a bit heavy, but no matter what the rest of the group was engaged, non-judgmental, and ready to cheer on their fellow learners. This was such a great experience, and it was so great to see the group interactions every week! ”

May 2022

Highlighting 1 of 475

Facilitators

Peer Learning



Anna

Abington, Pennsylvania

Anna in Abington, Pennsylvania created her own learning circle course entitled Abington Free Library's Digital Branch Series as a way to introduce digital media offerings like hoopla Digital for streaming books, audiobooks, comics, movies, TV shows as well as other eResources offered at Abington Free library.

“I met up with one participant at a Senior Fair, and digital skills classes came up as an area of next interest for her. Another participant came to our in-person Poetry event. She is beginning a habit of 30 minutes/ per week of tech learning weekly, after our Linked in session. She is encouraging us to do outreach to senior centers like where her Dad resides and could benefit from digital access to audiobooks. Doing the learning circle inspired me to encourage our Director to apply for a Google/AARP grant that will bring digital skills training to our community as well. So the work continues. **”**

March 2022

Highlighting 1 of 475

Facilitators

Peer Learning



Axel

Hamburg, Germany

Axel in Hamburg, Germany wanted to run a learning circle about Artificial Intelligence but had a hard time finding German learning materials. And so Axel created a learning circle with a topic and no primary learning resource. The learning circle was a collaborative working group where learners shared questions and topics they wanted to explore. Over the course of 6 weeks learners met on zoom and researched their topic and collectively documented the process using a tool called [Hedgedoc](#) to create an [open access publication in German](#) for future learners.

April 2021

Highlighting a handful of 10K Learners

Peer Learning

Learners can declare their own learning goals when signing up for a learning circle. This practice helps promote self agency and acts as a north star for learners as they progress through their learning circles.

80%

of learners met their learning goals

"Professional development for my LMS K-12 certification and to help with my current job."

Learning to (Re)Use Open Educational Resources

Manchester, UK | 2019

"I have been working for the same organization for more than ten years. And now I want to try something new. I want to take advantage of this course to learn and master the basics of drafting a good resume in order to increase my chances of getting a better job."

Beginner Resume Workshop

Greensboro, NC, USA | 2021

"I hope to learn how to talk about race, become more aware of my institutionalized privilege and interact with my patrons, friends and loved ones of color in a compassionate, respectful way."

How to Talk About Race

Warwick, RI, USA | 2021

"I hope to become reasonably proficient in using these digital platforms, both for my own use and to be able to introduce them to older relatives who have trouble learning digital options."

Abington Free Library's Digital Branch Series

Abington, PA, USA | 2022

"I have wanted to be a writer for a long time, and have had the issue of being able to stay motivated. I feel that a class that doesn't have the pressure of grades could help me greatly"

Learn to write fiction

Wichita, KS, USA | 2022

"I'm interested in learning about other languages and cultures...since I recently relocated to Pittsburgh, I see this course as an opportunity to engage with the local community and establish connections."

CLP Korean Class - Beginner Level

Pittsburgh, PA, USA | 2023

Open



P2PU provides an inclusive space for collaborative education and actively contributes to the values of openness by creating and sharing Open Educational Resources (OER).

P2PU exemplifies how openness can revolutionize traditional education paradigms and make learning a more participatory and inclusive experience. Our commitment to openness not only facilitates the free exchange of ideas but also reinforces the principle that learning is a collaborative endeavor. Community contributions are an integral part of meeting the interests and needs of our global community, and the creative prowess of facilitators and learners shines through when they choose to create and contribute their own learning content to the platform. These contributions underscore the essence of P2PU as a community-driven platform, where each individual's dedication to shared learning and the creation of educational resources contributes to a richer, more inclusive learning experience.

5 years of
our reach

430+
Courses

990+
Learning circles

Highlighting popular

Learning Resources

Open

You can easily get started with learning circles using free resources from the internet or even books. Here are a few of the most popular resources.

Top 5 Learning Resources

Basic Computer Skills →

wisc-online | Created 2017 | Used in 79 learning circles

Introduction to Public Speaking →

University of Washington | Created 2016 | Used in 49 learning circles

Introduction to Computers →

Good Will Community Foundation | Created 2017 | Used in 35 learning circles

Art of Storytelling →

Khan Academy | Created 2017 | Used in 29 learning circles

ABC COMPUTER CLASS →

LEARN MY WAY | Created 2019 | Used in 29 learning circles

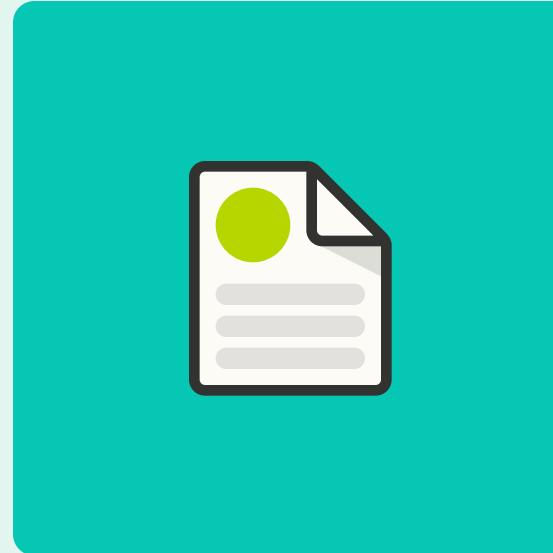
Highlighting

Facilitator Guides

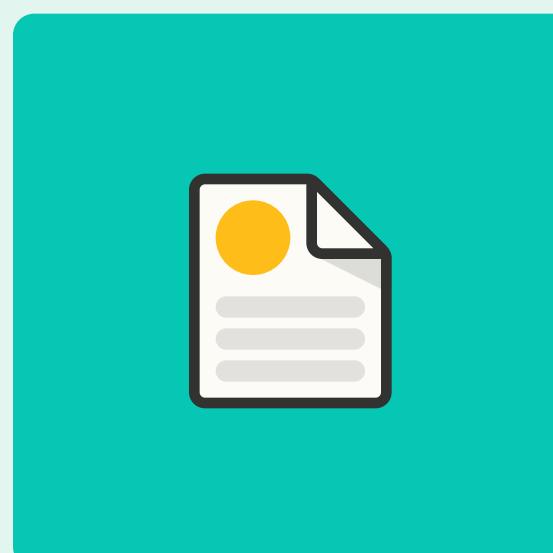
Open

Many online courses are designed for individual study, and this material doesn't always fit neatly into a learning circle structure. Facilitator guides crafted by dedicated individuals serve as invaluable resources, empowering others to guide and facilitate learning circles.

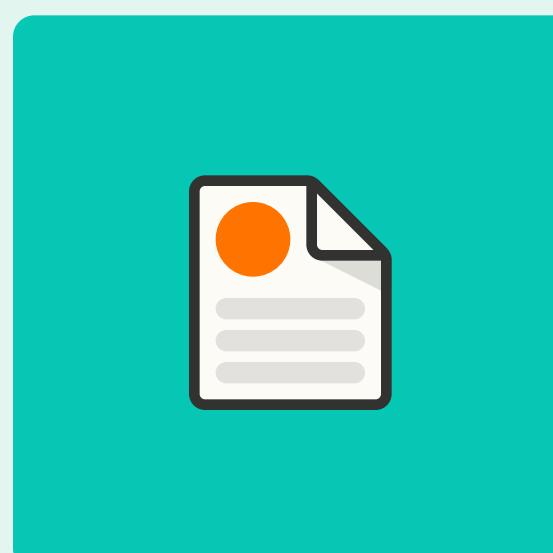
39 facilitator guides



1619 Project →
Ulonda & Hilary



21 Day Racial Equity and Social Justice →
Mimi



American Sign Language with Flash Cards + Activities →
Deb

Community created

Learning Resources

Open

Amazon Cloud AWS →

Noor, Carnegie Library Pittsburgh

Noor created this seven-week learning circle in cloud computing, and ten of eleven learners in the initial cohort completed it. Following the learning circle, learners responded that they intended to apply what they learned by taking the AWS Practitioner Certification, continuing to pursue more education, and engaging in further training and certifications.

While you don't have to be a subject matter expert to facilitate, some of our facilitators have shared their talents with the community by creating their own content.

Learn to Write Fiction →

Jordan, Boston Public Library

A very popular course; it has been used in 19 learning circles and has inspired two follow up courses "Learn to Write Fiction: Writing a Series" and "Learn to Write Fiction: World Building".

"I'm writing my novel and creating my world, and the two people I was in a small group with and I are continuing to meet up weekly throughout NaNoWriMo [National Novel Writing Month] (and beyond) to encourage each other and to write together."

Learner

How to Talk About Race →

Amrita & Denise, Charlotte, NC

This course was originally run by the creators as a full day workshop for library staff. During the pandemic, they adapted it to a multi-session learning circle and it has been used in 15 learning circles, in addition to being adapted for a credit-earning opportunity with College Unbound.

"I intend to step back and be a better listener. I also learned to recognize that discomfort is okay and does not need to be avoided."

Learner

Highlighting

Learning Resources We Co-Created

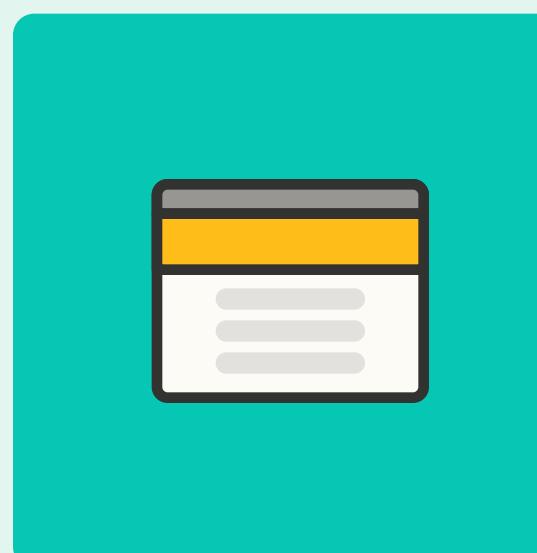
Open

In addition to community members creating resources, P2PU has also facilitated the process of creating learning resources specifically designed for peer learning and learning circles. These courses showcase that the expertise of research institutions and subject matter experts coupled with P2PU's pedagogical experience and Course-in-a-Box tool can bring expert knowledge to open education.



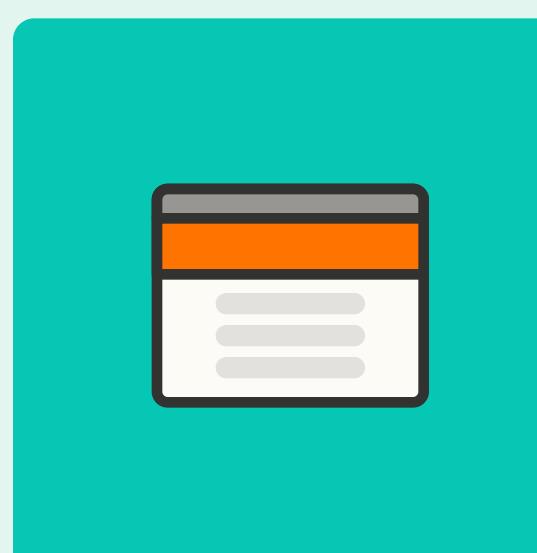
We Are AI →

NYU Tandon Center for Responsible AI x P2PU



Advanced Facilitation →

P2PU



Keystone →

NYU Tandon Future Labs x P2PU

Community

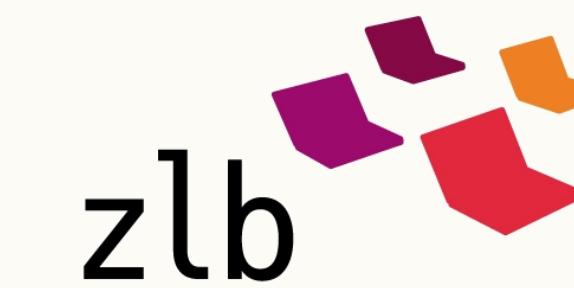
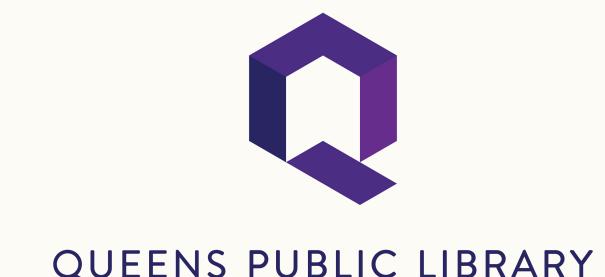
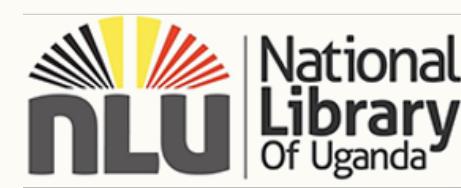


Libraries serve as natural partners for peer learning initiatives due to their commitment to providing access to information, their inclusive and diverse nature, the expertise of librarians, and their ability to foster a sense of community and lifelong learning.

These qualities make libraries invaluable supporters of peer learning, offering an environment where knowledge is shared, cultivated, and celebrated. For these reasons P2PU has always been intentional about engaging libraries.

Communities of
Collaboration

Community



Highlighting Community Stories

Community

Learning Circles can and will look different in every community because the people who participate in them will bring their own unique perspectives and experiences and even when using the same materials the learning experience is informed by the community that the learning takes place in. Here are three different and dynamic learning communities.



Uganda

A community embracing the power of learning anything.

Carnegie Library Pittsburgh

A volunteer-based community sharing cultural knowledge and appreciation through language learning.

1619 Project

A community of librarians unpacking race and social injustice to create a sense of belonging and connection.

Uganda

[Project Website](#)

A community embracing the power of learning anything.

Community

P2PU has worked with EIFL, Maendeleo Foundation, and the National Library of Uganda to train local librarians on ICT and digital literacy skills so that they can train their communities—especially women and children—on digital literacy skills to improve their lives. During the course of this two and a half year project we have seen changes in the public perception of libraries, library users learning new skills to earn income and advance their careers, and library staff becoming leaders in education and training. Several library staff have created their own course content to be shared with the library community.



"We are happy with the income we are earning. We could not have succeeded without the help of the library and the skills we learnt there."

Phinoah A.

Uganda

Community



Tugiramasiko Constance, aged 38, is a Community Development Officer. She participated in [a learning circle] training to make liquid soap, which previously has been very expensive for her to buy. She says that ever since she learned how to make liquid soap, she has saved some money from her shopping which she puts towards school materials for her children. In addition to using the soap at home, she has also started selling it to make some additional income. Kabale Public Library Uganda

Lutwama Herman is an enthusiastic facilitator and now course creator in Uganda. He has created two very popular courses with content focused on Ugandan learners; Vaseline Making and Liquid Soap Production. In his own words:

"The petroleum jelly course was the first course I've created, and I had never made petroleum jelly before this point. My process was a difficult one because I didn't know where to start. A group of participants from a Savings and Credit Cooperative Society (SACCO) approached me and requested a course that did not yet exist on the P2PU platform. I had the option of taking resources directly from any online source and delivering them to my participants, but I decided to use the steps and skills that I learned during the Training of Trainers workshop to develop my own course content."

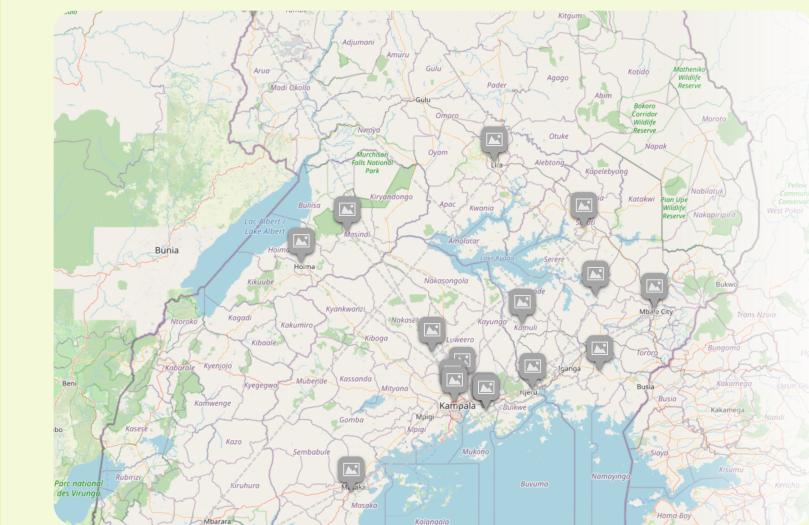
Lutwama Herman

Kawempe Youth Centre, Kampala Uganda

Learn More



Watch Video →



View Interactive Map →

Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh

[Project Website](#)

A volunteer-based community sharing cultural knowledge and appreciation through language learning.

Community

At P2PU, we know that learning in groups can yield significant benefits: deepened learning through discussion, increased motivation to tackle challenging material as a group, and the potential for like-minded individuals to form relationships that translate into community action. But sometimes, libraries don't have the resources on hand to support group learning. To address this, Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh and P2PU pioneered a volunteer-based facilitation program in which the library trained and supported community members to come to the library to facilitate on topics they are passionate about.



We Learn Staff Guide →

Dan, Carnegie Public Library of Pittsburgh



Library Insights

"Although library staff continue to play a vital role in organizing, training, and supporting facilitators, transferring leadership of the learning groups to community members offers the opportunity for them to become creators of their learning experience. We believe that this shift will enhance learning outcomes, provide a better experience, and broaden access to learning opportunities, aligning with our commitment to open and community-driven education."

Dan

Dan implemented the We Learn project alongside P2PU with support from the Institute of Museum and Library Services

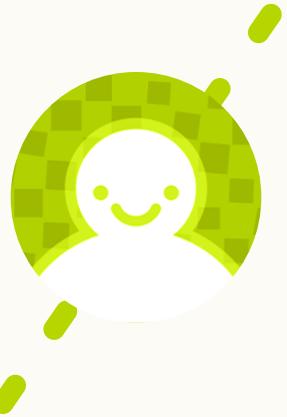


Facilitator Insights

"I want to share with you the amazing experience I had being a volunteer. [This] past Tuesday my students organized a picnic, they rented a pavilion, brought food, drinks, music. Was a pretty nice time, just talking, dancing salsa, eating and drinking. They brought me a nice card. I'm so grateful for the opportunity. I hope I can organize classes for the autumn season."

Rosse

Rosse has facilitated 8 different Spanish language learning circles at Carnegie since 2022



Since the creation of the
volunteer led learning
circle program:

65+
Subjects taught in

80+
Learning Circles

Across topics, including:
ESL, Korean, Russian,
Spanish, French, Italian,
and Japanese



Learner Insights

"The facilitators are so knowledgeable, patient, and helpful. I learned so many ways to express myself in Korean! I would recommend these classes to anyone who is interested in learning Korean!"

Learner

"Learned more about Japan and Japanese customs; and got to interact with teachers from Japan. Also found it interesting to see what other participants' experiences were with learning Japanese"

Learner

"I'm currently back in Korea for University and the practice I got during class has helped me to transition back to being in Korea"

Learner

"I intend to apply my learning to Communicate with neighbors."

Learner

1619 Project

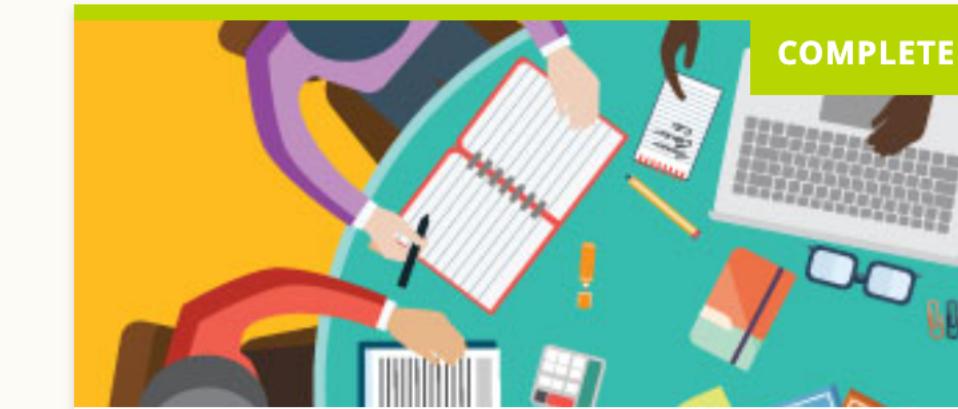
[Project Website](#)

A community of librarians unpacking race and social injustice to create a sense of belonging and connection.

Community

The [1619 Project](#) is an initiative from The New York Times Magazine developed by Nikole Hannah-Jones. It launched in August 2019, the 400th anniversary of the beginning of American slavery and aims to reframe the country's history by placing the consequences of slavery and the contributions of Black Americans at the very center of the USA's national narrative.

As a long-form journalism endeavor, the 1619 project is not formatted in the typical style of a course. Transforming the materials for use in learning circles presented an opportunity for new audiences to engage with the history, with one another, and to chart a path forward rooted in a shared sense of belonging and connection.



Ended May 31, 2022

The 1619 Project

⌚ 6:00 PM to 7:30 PM (CDT)

📅 5 meetings starting May 3, 2022

📍 Wichita

👤 Facilitated by Jennifer

💻 Meeting at Wichita Advanced Learning Library



Ended March 3, 2021

The 1619 Project

⌚ 2:00 PM to 3:30 PM (EST)

📅 6 meetings starting January 27, 2021

📍 Providence

👤 Facilitated by Janaya

💻 Meeting at Online



Ended February 24, 2021

The 1619 Project

⌚ 6:00 PM to 7:30 PM (EST)

📅 7 meetings starting January 13, 2021

📍 Charlotte

👤 Facilitated by Stacy

💻 Meeting at Online



Ended November 19, 2020

The 1619 Project at PPL

⌚ 10:00 AM to 11:00 AM (EDT)

📅 5 meetings starting October 22, 2020

📍 Providence

👤 Facilitated by Jade



Ended September 22, 2020

The 1619 Project Learning Circle

⌚ 3:30 PM to 4:30 PM (PDT)

📅 6 meetings starting August 18, 2020

📍 Los Angeles

👤 Facilitated by Hollywood Librarians



Ended September 16, 2020

The 1619 Project

⌚ 6:00 PM to 7:00 PM (EDT)

📅 7 meetings starting August 5, 2020

📍 Charlotte

👤 Facilitated by Stacy

1619 Project

Community

Librarians hosted 1619 Project learning circles in Charlotte, Los Angeles, Wichita, and Providence, with the first three libraries publishing their own facilitator guides to share with the community.

Ulonda & Stacy's guide paved the way for library staff to find a more accessible entry point into such a rich archive of materials. Priscilla, who leads ESL programming in Los Angeles, developed a guide for groups of learners who would have trouble engaging with all the text in English. And finally, Jennifer made an adaptation of Ulonda & Stacy's guide to suit a shorter programming window that she had at her library.

Each of these guides is freely available on our website.



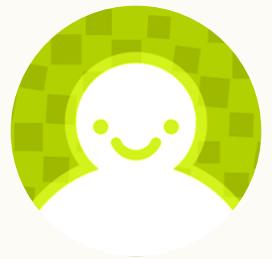
Ulonda & Stacy's Guide →
Charlotte Mecklenburg Library



Priscilla's Guide →
Los Angeles Public Library



Jennifer's Guide →
Wichita Public Library



Facilitator Insights

"I felt this was a really productive learning circle and we all learned a lot from both the readings and discussions with each other. We were able to work collaboratively to determine the direction of the conversations and provided an environment where participants felt comfortable sharing their personal experiences and observations without feeling judged or criticized, which was very helpful in building a more rich conversation, and allowed us to connect with each other in ways we might not have without this opportunity."

Jade

Providence Public Library



Learner Insights

"Hearing other people's perspectives and experiences, learning A LOT about myself in the process, deepening my understanding of how deeply systemic racism is in the US."

Learner

"What a lovely, civic way to build culture and community on a topic! I want to do a learning circle on living with nature next."

Learner

Further Afield

P2PU's approach allows the spreading of our ideas and values beyond our direct partnerships. Both learning circles and our open source course development tool, Course-in-a-Box, have been utilized for a wide range of education projects globally.

Course-in-a-Box

Further Afield

P2PU created Course-in-a-Box in 2014 as a free and lightweight tool for building online courses.

We wanted to preserve the modular structure of MOOCs outside of the bulky (and often proprietary) environment of learning/content management systems. While many people have explored this tool, here are a few of the courses that have been developed using Course-in-a-Box not initiated by the P2PU Team.



Designing for Documentation & Assessment →

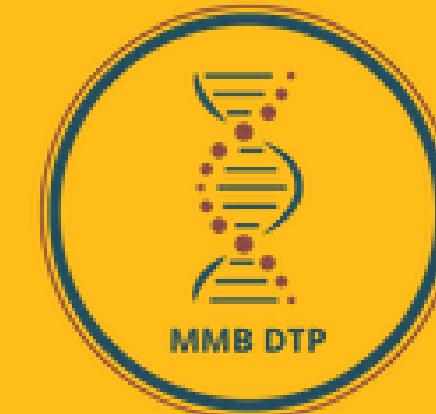


The COVID Tracking Project

Pandemic data journalism →

The Missing CS Quarter @ UC Davis

The Missing CS Quarter @ UC Davis →



MMB DTP Training →

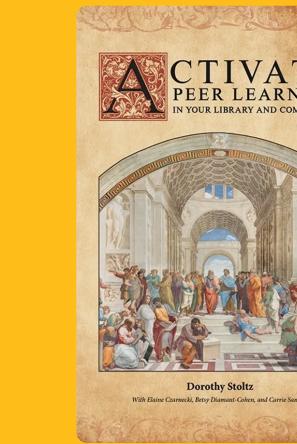
Adapting the Learning Circle Methodology

Further Afield

Learning Circles can and will look different in every community because the people who participate in them will bring their own unique perspectives and experiences and even when using the same materials the learning experience is informed by the community that the learning takes place in. Here are three different and dynamic learning communities.



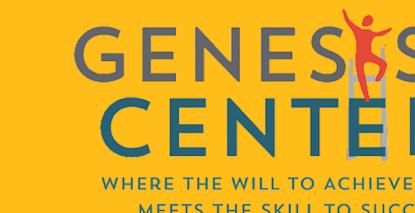
Assessing and Addressing DEI →
Relias



Activate Peer Learning →
Dorothy Stoltz,
Waldo Publishers



The Transformative Power of Peer-to-Peer Learning Networks →
Carolin Goethel



English Now! Learning Circles Partner Profile →
World Educations



Introducing Learning Circles →
Jennie Rose Halperin,
Library Futures



Join a Learning Circle →
edX

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