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## Makerspaces in Libraries (Library Technology Essentials)

By Theresa Willingham, Jeroen de Boer



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**Makerspaces in Libraries (Library Technology Essentials)** By Theresa Willingham, Jeroen de Boer

Makerspaces, sometimes also referred to as hackerspaces, hackspaces, and fablabs are creative, DIY spaces where people can gather to create, invent, and learn. In libraries they often have 3D printers, software, electronics, craft and hardware supplies and tools, and more. Makerspaces are becoming increasingly popular in both public and academic libraries as a new way to engage patrons and add value to traditional library services. Discover how you can create a makerspace within your own library through this step-by-step guidebook. From planning your innovation center to hosting hack-a-thons, guest lectures, and social events in your new lab, *Makerspaces in Libraries* provides detailed guidance and best practices for creating an enduring, community driven space for all to enjoy and from which both staff and patrons will benefit.

This well researched, in-depth guide will serve libraries of all sizes seeking to implement the latest technologies and bring fresh life and engaging programming to their libraries. Highlights and best practices include:

1. budgeting and business planning for a librarymakerspace,
2. creating operational documents,
3. tools and resources overviews,
4. national and international case studies,
5. becoming familiar with 3D printers through practical printing projects (seed bombs),
6. how to get started with Arduino (illuminate your library with a LED ambient mood light),
7. how to host a FIRST Robotics Team at the library,
8. how to develop hands-on engagement for senior makers (Squishy Circuits), and
9. how to host a Hackathon and build a coding community.



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## **Editorial Review**

### **Review**

Libraries are different things to diverse populations. For some, the library is a place for study or research. For others, it's a community hub, a social meeting place. Increasingly, with the addition of multifunctional, interactive creative spaces where people gather to build, experiment, and innovate, the library as an idea incubator is coming into its own. Whether they host programming code camps or provide arts and crafts or fabrication tools, Hacker spaces, Fab Labs, and Maker spaces are examples of ways that both public and academic libraries in the United States and Europe are finding new ways to engage with users. Maker space advocates Willingham and De Boer provide a brief overview and history of Maker spaces in libraries before launching into a well-written practical guide to these innovation centers. Case studies, equipment, project and event ideas, tips and tricks for getting started, funding, policies and procedures, and recommended further reading are all included. Verdict: recommended for librarians, administrators, and staff considering a foray into Maker spaces. (*Library Journal*)

I enthusiastically recommend the *Library Technology Essentials* series. Many libraries will want to invest in the entire set as a professional development resource since they will inevitably face some degree of involvement with each of the volume topics. Library technologists will want one of these books at their side as they launch new projects or initiatives. Ellyssa Kroski has shepherded a collection that makes an important contribution to the professional practice of library technology. (Marshall Breeding, Independent Consultant, Speaker, and Author; editor Library Technology Guide editor, Computers in Libraries columnist, and Smart Libraries Newsletter editor)

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### **From the Author**

The process of writing *Makerspaces in Libraries* with Jeroen De Boer, of Frysklab in the Netherlands, was exciting and reassuring. The time is clearly ripe now, for libraries to take their rightful place at the heart of our communities as 21st century centers of skills and knowledge development. Makerspaces are central to the revitalization of libraries, and thriving communities. For maximum sustainability and measurable impact, though, those spaces need to be developed intelligently and thoughtfully, from the ground up in a way that leverages the interest and support of all stakeholders.

*Makerspaces in Libraries* draws on the best practices of progressive libraries and practiced leadership from all over the world, including my own experience in makerspace development, to chart a path that helps libraries explore maker culture, understand and develop staff capabilities, evaluate community needs and preferences, understand volunteer capacity and collaborative possibilities to help ensure long term program sustainability and growth. Libraries hold the key to an empowered future for all of us and I'm honored to share here some valuable tools for helping librarians open the door to that future.

## About the Author

**Theresa Willingham** is a professional writer and the author of two books on health, with more than thirty years' experience across a diverse spectrum of fields and interests, all focused on doing work she's passionate about, in a way she hopes helps make her corner of the world a better place. She believes strongly in the value of collaboration and the strength of mentor-based learning. Theresa is Regional Director for *FIRST* STEM education programs in central Florida, and a Creative Partner with Eureka! Factory, working as a consultant and creative space designer with her husband, Steve, helping libraries and other organizations develop makerspaces and creative programming. They are the designers of the 10,000 sq. ft. Hive, Community Innovation Center, at the John F. Germany Library, the main branch of the Tampa-Hillsborough Public Library System in Tampa, Florida. They annually produce Gulf Coast MakerCon, Tampa Bay's signature maker festival, Celebrating the DIY Inventive Spirit, and ROBOTICON Tampa Bay, a *FIRST* Robotics Showcase.

**Jeroen de Boer** works at Bibliotheekservice Fryslân (BSF, Leeuwarden, The Netherlands) as new media specialist. He's a strong believer in open technologies and the way libraries can and should learn from maker culture. This is one of the main reasons why he's on the board of the FabLab Benelux Foundation. One of the projects Jeroen is currently working on is FryskLab, a Mobile Library FabLab. He writes regularly on his personal blog and in professional magazines.

He gives presentations about libraries, innovation and makerspaces at (international) library conferences. In 2012 and 2014 Jeroen was awarded with the BibliotheekInitiatiefPrijs (Library Initiative Award). In 2012 for SocialMediaCaster, an interactive kiosk with a touchscreen and RFID reader that bridges the physical library collections to the digital realm of social media. In 2014 for FryskLab, together with my two project members at BSF.

He is on the Advisory Committee of Internet Librarian International and a member of the Programming Committee of the 2015 Conference of the International Association of School Librarianship (IASL). In 2015 Jeroen is nominated for Librarian of the Year in the Netherlands.

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