Serving Latinx Communities Planning Guide

Clara M. Chu

Director and Mortenson Distinguished Professor
Mortenson Center for International Library Programs
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

Background

This Serving Latinx Communities Planning Guide was developed based on the Framework for Libraries Serving Refugees, published in the *Project Welcome Guide: Public Libraries Serving Refugees*.* The guiding principle of the Guide that public libraries in the United States (US) offer welcoming spaces and services to their communities, including the newest members of society, especially refugees and asylum seekers. The Guide was a product of Project Welcome, a project of the Mortenson Center for International Library Programs at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign in partnership with the American Library Association (ALA), funded by a planning grant from the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS). The Project Welcome Guide presents a framework that employed an integrated service-approach that engages refugees and non-refugees and promotes multilingual, inclusive, and engaging services. It is made up of four **actions**:

1. **LEARN** - Know your target audience, their needs and interests, the public library's current response to them, and best practices.
2. **COLLABORATE** - Partner with community leaders and members, organizations, and government agencies for collective impact to enhance your potential to meet refugee needs.
3. **CONNECT** - Build community connections to create awareness of refugees, and foster inter/intra/cross-cultural and intergenerational relationships.
4. **SUPPORT** - Provide resources and services to support refugee communities, individually and collectively, to have the agency to flourish in the process of resettlement, integration, and lifelong learning.

Framework for Libraries Serving Latinx Communities

<u>Instructions</u>: Use this framework to plan library service to Latinx communities. Adapt the guidelines by adding your local resources, connecting and collaborating with local organizations and developing your own ideas.

LEARN: Know your target audience. *Who are they?*	*What can you do?*	*Who/what can help?*	*What's the impact?* Library staff, trustees, volunteers and stakeholders enhance knowledge of Latinx, their needs and interests, and are informed of the library's current response to them, and best practices in order to develop relevant and appropriate services.
1a. National Latinx population	Obtain socio-demographic data; create infographic or community profile	Census, encyclopedia	Understanding of national context, recognition of regional differences in Latinx migration and settlement
1b. Local Latinx population	As above	Census, local Latinx ethnic community-based organizations (ECBOs)	Understanding of local community and settlement; awareness of how community is changing, language literacy and educational attainment, anticipation of service needs
1c. Latinx histories, cultures, contributions	Consultation with Latinx; individuals working with Latinx; experts; information resources	Latinx; social scientists; Latin ECBOs; published resources	Understanding background of a sector of library community, discovery of their contributions and information needs, awareness of the stories told by Latinx themselves and those told by others
1d. Adjustment phases and integration needs	Consultation with Latinx; individuals working with Latinx; expert; information resources; information needs study	Latinx; social workers; psychologists; Latin ECBOs; published resources	Increasing empathy of a sector of library community; better prepared to serve; understanding of emotional, psychological, economic and social well-being of a sector of library community; understanding Latinx information needs
1e. Capacity building	Continuing education (expert-led, self-directed); best practices lists; Latinx library services audit	Latinx experts subject specialists; REFORMA; training opportunities; Apps (Hello Hola - Learn as you type)	Better informed and trained about Latinx, and their experiences and needs; Better informed about current library approaches to Latinx

NOTES

COLLABORATE: Partner for collective impact. *Who can we work with?*	*What can you do?*	*Who/What can help?*	*What is the impact?* Libraries partner with community leaders and members, organizations, and government agencies to leverage knowledge and resources for the collective impact on Latinx needs.
2a. Latinx and other ECBOs (Ethnic Community-Based Organizations), and non-profit organizations	Initiate conversation on collaboration, attend local Latinx service community meetings, respond to requests by ECBOs; co-design and sustain programs and services hosted at the library, virtually or elsewhere; contact/referral list	Latin and other ECBOs; non-profit organizations	Enhancing community outreach and direct partnerships for the collective impact on Latinx settlement and well-being; library serves as an essential resource for Latinx; new partnerships with established community organizations; new programming/service opportunities
2b. Information, cultural heritage and education organizations	Engage in conversations on collaboration, contact/referral list; co-design and sustain programs and services hosted at the library, virtually or elsewhere; disseminate information on learning and cultural opportunities	Other libraries; archival, museum and educational institutions; professional associations; REFORMA; faith-based organizations	Increasing access to information, learning and cultural (ILC) services; new partnerships with ILC organizations; new programming/service opportunities
2c. Government agencies	Disseminate information on government policies and services in appropriate languages	Government and public service agencies	Latinx have access to public services, know their rights and shape policy
2d. Service providers	Disseminate information on essential services, co-develop explanation sheet/guide on Latinx information needs	Health organizations; social services; financial institutions	Increasing access to essential services; new partnerships with established community organizations; new programming/service opportunities; promotion of Latinx integration into community, new programming/service opportunities
CONNECT: Build community connections. *How do we get to know them and each other?*	*What can you do?*	*Who/What can help?*	*What is the impact?* Community members understand and value Latinx, and cultivate inter/intra/cross-cultural and intergenerational relationships.
3a. Awareness about Latinx within community	Latinx cultural heritage materials; collections on Latinx; materials in Latinx languages; multicultural celebrations calendar	Latinx community; ECBOs	Sensitizing and educating the community about Latinx, their history, culture and lived experiences.
3b. Dialogue with and about Latinx and experiences	Book discussions; English, Spanish, Portuguese and/or Indigenous language conversation circles; Socratic conversations	Latinx community; ECBOs	Person-to-person understanding and relationship building; cross-cultural communication and understanding
3c. Preservation and promotion of Latinx cultural heritage and contributions	Panels; book discussions; off-site events; oral history and digital archiving; exhibits; community asset map; cultural celebrations; celebrate Hispanic Heritage Month;	Latinx community; ECBOs; archives; museums; experts	Preserving Latinx stories and integrating their narrative into community history. Celebrating Latinx culture.
3d. Solidarity with Latinx	Civic engagement and legal workshops; film presentations; forums; Latinx community events	Latin and other ECBOs; legal services and advocacy groups	Understanding the Latinx experience and Latinx crises. Affirming Latinx as integral to community.
NOTES			

SUPPORT: Contribute to settlement and ability to flourish. *What can we provide them?*	*What can you do?*	*Who/What can help?*	*What is the impact?* Latinx, individually and collectively, have the information resources and services to flourish, pursue their goals and participate in lifelong learning.
4a. Cultural services (e.g., programs, resources, etc.)	Book clubs; movie nights; human library; off-site events; digital resources and programs	Latinx and other ECBOs; best practices; community engagement librarian	Enhancing cultural respect, knowledge and inclusion. Strengthening multicultural identity of Latinx.
4b. Multilingual services	Interlibrary loan; first language (Indigenous, Spanish, Spanish and/or English) access; digital newspapers	ALA EMIERT; ethnic ILC associations; Latinx and other ECBOs; embassies; specialty bookstores	Preserving heritage language. Learning new language.
4c. National language(s) learning services (e.g., English in USA)	Collection development policy; conversation circles; tutoring programs; intergenerational programs; digital resources and programming	Local educational institutions; language learning services	Enhancing new language fluency. Community integration Individual empowerment and confidence.
4d. Needs and interest-driven Latinx services	Latinx services and resources database; job skills; life skills; mentorship; pop culture; safe spaces; print and digital literacy; Latinx artists' collective	All community and select groups; non-profit organizations	Enhancing practical and soft skills. Individual and family support and wellness. Complementary Latinx supports.
4e. Library membership	In-community campaign; community festivals; national library card sign-up month; reading clubs	ILC institutions; social services; faith-based organizations	Lifelong learning; new opportunities; resource access
4f. Community space	Co-sponsored events; meeting space; tours; public service orientations; tailored book displays	Community leaders; community centers; Latinx and other ECBOs	Increasing social capital, Building community relationships. Inter-generational engagement.
4h. Civics	Citizenship resources and classes; citizen corner; civic engagement and advocacy workshops		Civic engagement.
4i. Legal Information resources	Know Your Rights resources; access to legal resources; Department of Justice (DOJ) accreditation of non-attorney representation on legal immigration matters	Latinx ECBOs; legal aid and services; law schools	Reduction of legal vulnerability. Informed of legal processes.
NOTES			