

## *Interview Guide for Public Library Administrators*

### *Understanding the Impact of Free Access to Computers and the Internet in Public Libraries*

“Hello! My name is [name]. I’m working with a research project being conducted by the University of Washington’s Information School and sponsored by the US government’s Institute for Museum and Library Services. We’re interested in finding out how your Library has been affected by free computer and Internet access. Your responses will help us evaluate and improve library computer services in libraries all over the country. The interview will take approximately 30 minutes. You can learn more about this project at <http://www.depts.washington.edu/imlspac>

Staff Alias:

Date:

Time:

Day:

Length of Interview:

Library Code:

Place of Interview:

Interviewer Name:

Notes:

Questions:

1. How long have you been with your library?
2. What is your role/responsibilities?
3. How long has your library been offering free access to computers and the Internet? How did this come about? What were the drivers?
4. What computer and Internet services does your library provide?
5. What is your free computer and Internet service’s role in your community? What is its niche?  
(**Prompt:** What is your elevator speech?)
6. What organizations do you interact with in the community around free computer and Internet access? How important to you is your relationship with other organizations? (**Probe:** How about city Hall?)
7. How does your library promote their computer and Internet services in the community? If so, please describe (e.g. posters place outside the library, advertise in local paper, others?)
8. Who knows about free access to computers and the Internet? How?
9. Who are its users? (e.g. young kids, students, seniors/retirees, mothers, immigrants, tourists, low income, homeless, business people, other agencies, rehab teens, other) [civic engagement, eCommerce, education, eGovt, employment, health, social inclusion]
10. Who else would you like to reach/draw in? What are the challenges in reaching them?

11. How have individual users been helped?

In what ways have benefits been accrued by users' families? What is your evidence for these observations? (seen families here, users told us, etc) (**Prompt:** What is your favorite example?)

12. Have you noticed evidence of indirect computers and the Internet users—LIMB (lay information mediary behavior)—people who see/use information on behalf of others without necessarily being asked first? What kinds? (**Prompt:** What is your favorite example?)

13. In what ways have benefits been accrued by the community at-large? What is your evidence for these observations? (**Prompt:** What is your favorite example?)

14. What challenges/barriers do your computer and Internet users face?

15. Are you tracking/recording free access to computers and the Internet needs/demands? How about resolution/fulfilled need? Do you have any statistics or data?

16. How would you characterize the successes of the public library? How about non-successes/failures?

17. Why is your free access to computers and the Internet important to policy and decision makers?

18. Is there a strategic plan for the library? City? County?

19. What portion of your budget goes to supporting free access to computers and the Internet? What effect has this had on other expenditures?

20. What resources are used to support your computers and Internet services (inhouse, external agency, contract

21. What factors hindered the development and offerings of free access to computers and the Internet?

22. How could free access to computers and the Internet be improved?

23. In general, what is your view to make to see free access to computers and the Internet develop in the future?

24. What is needed to make this happen with the internal library world?

25. What is needed to make this happen with the external world, especially policy and decision makers, funding agencies?

26. Other comments?

Demographics:

Professional Training:

Years in Profession:

Gender:

Special Attributes (e.g., bilingual):

Special Awards/Recognition:

Positions (e.g., state/national committees, column editor, blogger):