



Value Co-creation and Social Innovation for a new Generation of European Libraries

Press Release

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LibrarIN launches groundbreaking managerial guidelines to boost collaborative innovation in libraries

The LibrarIN project proudly announces the publication of its second policy brief: *Boosting and Evaluating Collaborative Innovations in Libraries: Managerial Guidelines and Policy Implications*. Authored by experts from the University of Alcalá and The Lisbon Council, and enriched with insights from leading European library professionals, this policy brief marks a major step in equipping libraries with the practical tools and strategic direction needed to thrive in the 21st century.

Following on from the first policy brief, which explored the importance of collaboration and co-creation, this second edition shifts focus to actionable, managerial-level guidance. It offers a comprehensive framework for individual libraries to evaluate their innovation capabilities and implement collaboration-driven services that respond to evolving societal needs.

Libraries at the heart of innovation

Drawing on a wide-ranging literature review and the LibrarIN multi-agent conceptual model, the brief reaffirms that libraries are no longer static spaces, but vibrant community hubs and agents of social innovation. It introduces a nuanced understanding of library innovation, categorised into program, technological, process, and partnership innovations, and highlights the roles libraries play: as providers, enablers, and catalysts of change.

To support these roles, the brief identifies six core dimensions essential to innovation in libraries: *digital transformation, co-creation spaces, personalised services, partnerships, digital literacy, and*



effective management. These areas are each matched with practical variables for monitoring and evaluation, allowing libraries to track progress and adapt in real time.

A roadmap for innovation: from planning to evaluation

The brief presents a four-phase roadmap to guide libraries through collaborative innovation:

1. **Analyse needs** – identify community needs and resources.
2. **Co-Design** – plan services with staff and users.
3. **Implement** – test, deliver and promote services.
4. **Evaluate** – measure results and refine approaches.

Accompanying the roadmap is a detailed checklist for library innovators, offering step-by-step instructions tailored to public, academic and national library contexts.

Policy recommendations for European decision-makers

In line with the EU Work Plan for Culture 2023–2026, the brief offers strategic policy guidance to elevate libraries as innovation leaders, the brief outlines three priority actions:

- **Enable Innovation Hubs** – fund service development in key areas.
- **Strengthen Skills** – train library staff and partners in digital and collaborative methods.
- **Promote European Values** – position libraries as inclusive spaces fostering democracy, sustainability and community.

A comprehensive “policy menu” maps out how local and European actors can act, from promoting living labs to establishing EU contact points within libraries.

Real-world inspiration and community voices

The brief is bolstered by vivid examples of successful innovation, including the community-driven self-management model at Oodi Library in Finland, the design thinking approach in Oeiras Municipal Library in Portugal, and the Living Lab for Digital Humanities at Utrecht University in the Netherlands. Additional expert recommendations cover community mapping, inclusive participation, and techniques like design thinking and citizen labs—making this brief not only a guide, but a source of inspiration.

[Access the full brief here](#)

About LibrarIN

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