



ASPIRATIONS FACILITATOR'S GUIDE

Instructions for leading a conversation about aspirations

Take a moment to focus on your community aspirations and to identify next steps you want in creating change. Add your aspirations, challenges, and the new conditions to create in the spaces provided below. Use this on your own and then try it in a group setting—check out the Aspirations Facilitator's Guide to help in leading an aspirations conversation: ala.org/LTC

- For this exercise you'll be asking the three questions shown below and helping to identify patterns or themes from the answers given.
- Make sure everyone has a copy of the Aspirations questions.
- Give your participants ten minutes to read and write down their answers to these three questions.
- Go through the questions in order and for each, record their answers on a flip chart and identify any patterns or themes that emerge from their answers.

WHAT ARE YOUR ASPIRATIONS YOUR COMMUNITY?

Record your participant's answers on the flip chart. Capture the key words they use. Ask the group:

- What patterns do you see?
- Are there any themes emerging? Name some of these themes.

Make sure that you've captured the essence of their thoughts and responses.

WHAT CHALLENGES DO WE FACE IN REACHING THESE ASPIRATIONS?

Record your participant's answers on the flip chart. Capture the key words they use. Ask the group:

- What patterns do you see?
- Are there any themes emerging? Name some of these themes.

Make sure that you've captured the essence of their thoughts and responses.





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WHAT NEEDS TO CHANGE IN THE COMMUNITY TO REACH OUR ASPIRATIONS?

Record your participant's answers on the flip chart. Capture the key words they use. Ask the group:

- What patterns do you see?
- Are there any themes emerging? Name some of these themes.

Make sure that you've captured the essence of their thoughts and responses.

HOW TO SUMMARIZE:

Once the three questions have been answered and the responses recorded, summarize what your participants have said by telling a story.

We began by saying that we wanted a community where _____ (aspirations) but we face _____ (challenges). So if we want to reach our aspirations, we need to create _____ (new conditions/change)

HOW TO MAKE IT WORK

- 1 Record the themes and post them where people will frequently see them. Ask: If this story about our shared aspirations is true, then what does that mean for our work together?
- 2 Share this exercise with others—with your co-workers, at your place of worship, with friends, your PTA, your board, etc. Ask: What are the implications for our work? What other groups could use this exercise for their own work?

Next Step? Look for another "Turning Outward to Lead Change in Your Community" session in the PLA conference scheduler to add to learn additional community engagement skills, or visit the Libraries Transforming Communities (LTC) website www.ala.org/LTC for initiative updates and access to resources that support the work of librarians as community innovators.

