5-2024

It's a Three-Winged Circus! Collaborating across town yields efficiencies, programming opportunities, and expanded notions of how to best meet patron needs

Annie Epperson
University of Northern Colorado

Elena Rosenfeld
High Plains Library District

Carol Satersmoen
Aims Community College

Recommended Citation

Epperson, Annie; Rosenfeld, Elena; and Satersmoen, Carol, "It's a Three-Winged Circus! Collaborating across town yields efficiencies, programming opportunities, and expanded notions of how to best meet patron needs" (2024). *University Libraries Faculty Publications*. 167.
https://digscholarship.unco.edu/libfacpub/167

ULA/MPLA CONFERENCE

May 8-10

Just Winging It

It's a Three -Winged Circus!

Collaborating across town yields efficiencies, programming opportunities, and expanded notions of how to best meet patron needs

Annie Epperson, Elena Rosenfeld, & Carol Satersmoen
10 May 2024
Salt Lake City, UT

Introductions

- **Annie Epperson**
  University of Northern Colorado

- **Elena Rosenfeld**
  High Plains Library District

- **Carol Satersmoen**
  Aims Community College

DALLI drawn 3-winged circus

ULA/MPLA CONFERENCE
May 8-10
Just Winging It

© 2013

Photographer: Chris DuRoss

If we meet our objectives:

- Attendees will be able to name ways in which creative collaboration can save money, reduce competition, and strengthen grant proposals.

- Attendees will appreciate the diversity of patrons in their community, as well as the varied ways in which those patron needs can be met by themselves and partner organizations.

- Attendees will expand their notions of how to assess effectiveness and efficiencies in their workplaces, as well as the sustainability of collaboration over time.

Weld County, Colorado is in the northeast portion of the state, just south of Wyoming and the Nebraska panhandle.
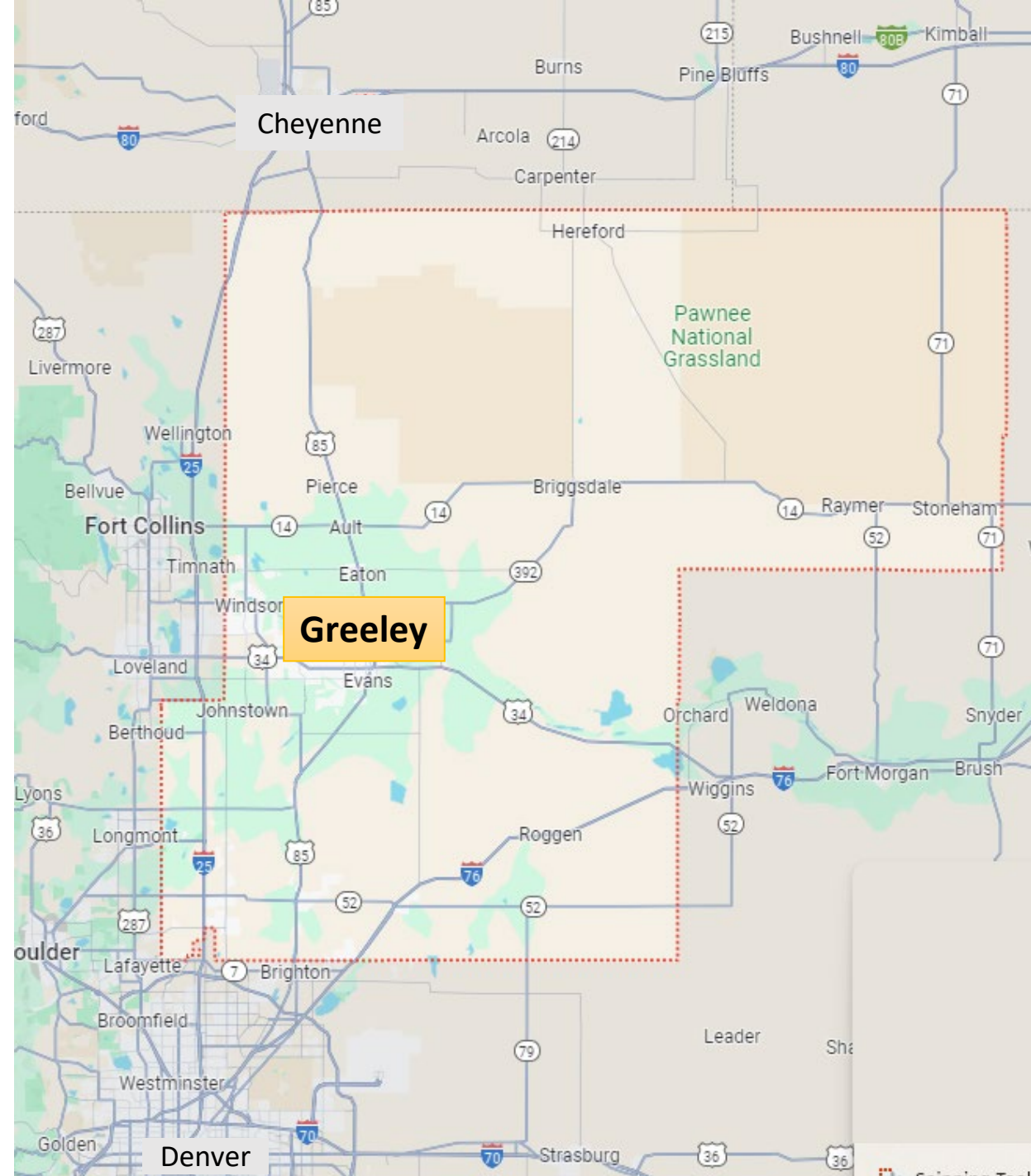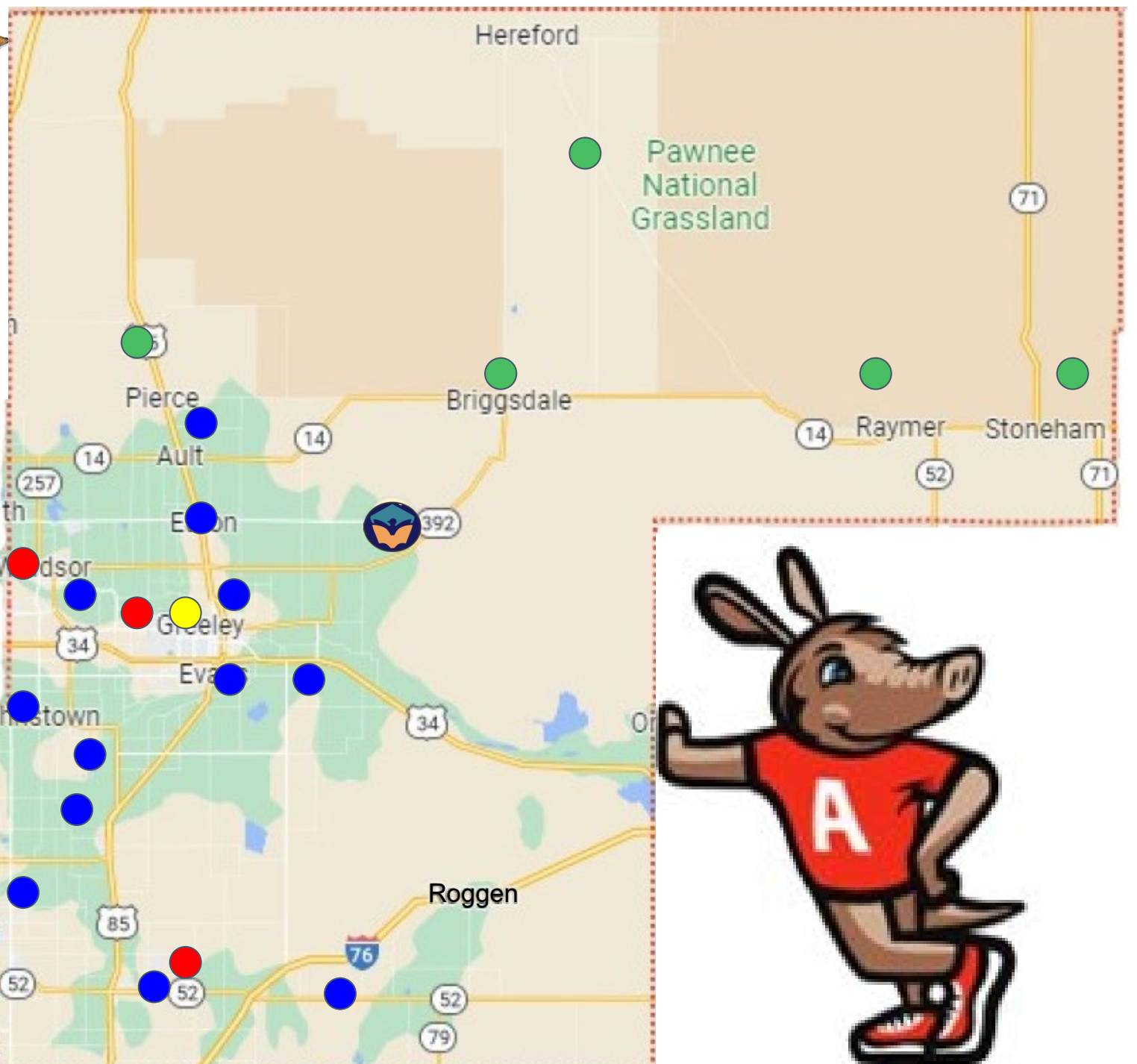
Location, location, location!
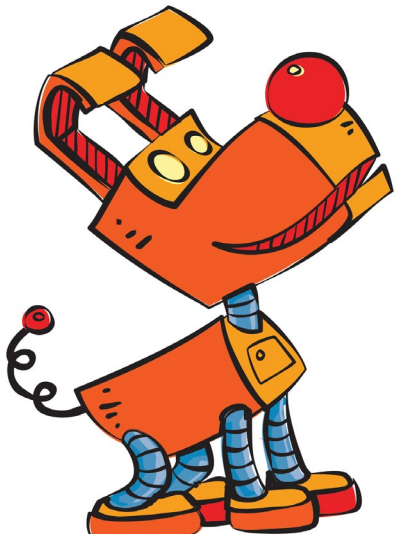
Show of hands

Library type?

Is there another/different type of library in your community?

Does your library already partner with others in the community?

Our three-winged circus is a "try-angle"

- Getting started

- Conversations, relationships, overlapping responsibilities to patrons, services

- Avoiding unintentional competition, maximizing opportunities for collaboration

"Never be afraid to try. The only angle through which you can approach success is by the 'try-angle'".   Israelmore Ayivor
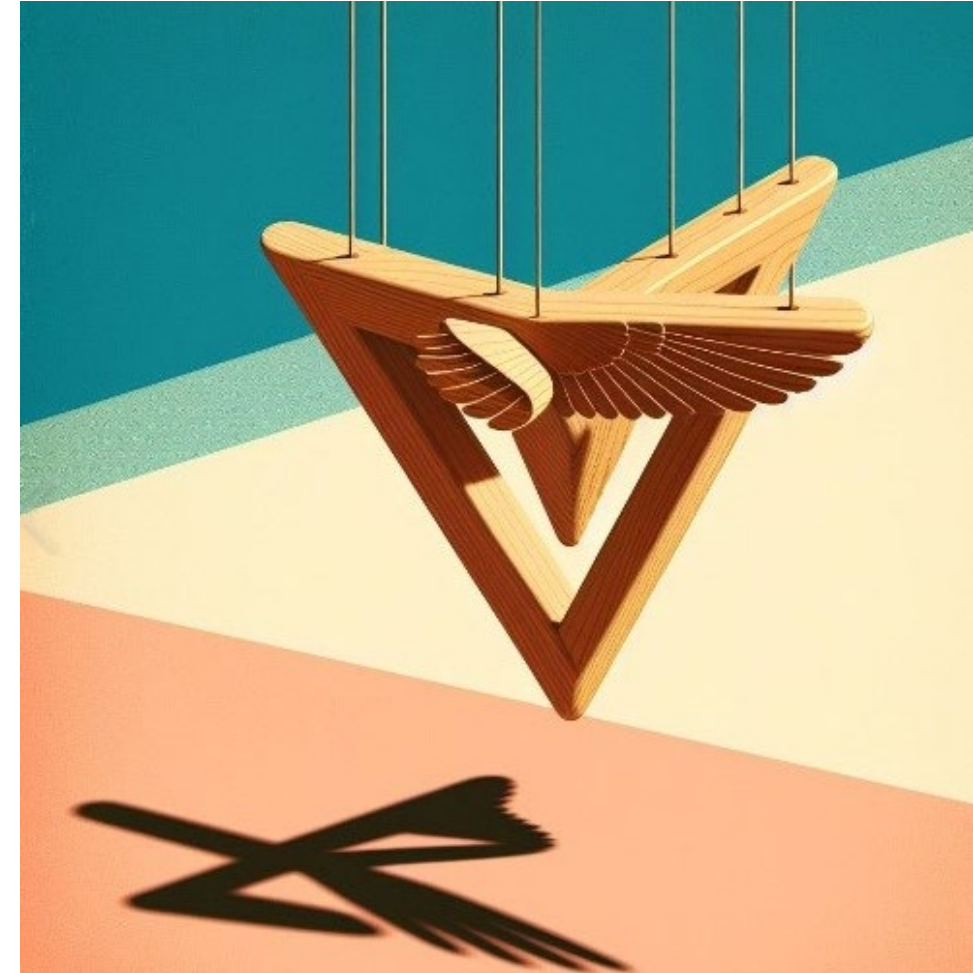
DALLI drawn 3-winged triangle

Take a Moment to Reflect

What collaborative opportunities would be most beneficial?

Pair share:

Pursuing those opportunities

Will you focus on a particular patron group?

What's your intent or idea?

Who are potential partner(s)?

How would you assess for effectiveness and/or sustainability?

Collaborating can be complicated - and scary

Leadership's support for this effort

The other organization doesn't see the value of the partnership

Personnel changes impacting the partnership

"The most important asset of any library goes home at night – the library staff." Timothy Healy

A Potential Tool for Your Toolkit!

Well…isn't this a great illegible slide? And yet…it can be helpful!

Believe it.   Or not.

PARTNERSHIP MATRIX – STAFF DIRECTLY INVOLVED WITH THE OTHER ORGANIZATION

Aka: How do we know that we are using time and money to support the right priorities?

THIS IS A GUIDE FOR THE CONVERSATIONS AND CONSIDERATIONS - IT DOES NOT PROVIDE THE ANSWER

SCALES TO USE

HPLD RESOURCES BEING USED

Staff Time, Money, Resources	For those who want the numbers (click on the small purple mark in upper corner for details)	Alignment & Results	HPLD's Perception of Value	Partner Org's Perception of Value	Numbers of People Directly Involved in the group	Visibility	What We Are Doing		
5 = Minimal impact on other services/programs	Staff Time = Under 5 hrs/month; no subs. Money (travel costs, fees, supplies, etc) = $500 or less per year	The mission of the effort aligns with HPLD priorities and the actions or results benefit both community members and HPLD.	Supports a Strategic Priority and provides HPLD with positive publicity	Can say and share how HPLD added value to their programs and/or efforts	50 or more involved on the Board or Committee	HPLD receives public thanks from community decision-makers	Co-leading or representing HPLD as a fully-engaged partner in a community effort		
4 = Occasional scheduling impact	Staff Time = 5- 10 hrs/mo; under 20 sub hrs/yr. Money (travel costs, fees, supplies, etc) = between $500 to $1,000 per year	The mission of the effort aligns with HPLD priorities and the actions or results benefit community members or HPLD.	Supports a Strategic Priority or provides HPLD with positive publicity	Can say that HPLD improves their connection to community members	30-49 people on the Board or Committee	HPLD receives positive press in local media or through letters of support	Serving on a community or organizational board.		
3 = Some scheduling impact	Staff Time = 10- 20 hrs/mo; under 40 sub hrs/yr. Money (travel costs, fees, supplies, etc) = between $1,000 to $2,000 per year	The mission of the effort aligns with HPLD priorities but there are no solid actions and/or results.	Actively models HPLD and staff as engaged partners in community success	Can share how HPLD has helped their staff grow skills/abilities.	15-29 people on the Board or Committee	Partners and outside organizations thank HPLD (in writing if requested)	Participating in a community dialog or committee effort		
2 = Longer term scheduling impact and sporatic requests for support (ie grant funds, sub coverage, etc)	Staff Time = 20- 40 hrs/mo; under 80 sub hrs/yr. Money (travel costs, fees, supplies, etc) = between $2,000 to $4,000 per year	The mission of the effort aligns with HPLD priorities but there is neither action nor results.	Supports an effort moved forward by the District's Director	Can share how HPLD supported skills/ability-related growth for their target populations	7-14 people on the Board or Committee	HPLD staff are recognized by District or in library community for work	Presenting and sharing information with partners and within the District	35- 15	Earning it's keep as an ongoing effort
1 = Long term scheduling impact and/or requests for ongoing support (ie grant funds, sub coverage, etc)	Staff Time = 40+ hrs/mo; over 80 sub hrs/yr. Money (travel costs, fees, supplies, etc) = between $4,000 to $8,000 per year	There is no clear alignment with HPLD priorities.	Supports a traditional role of libraries	Can share how everyone enjoyed the experience	6 or less involved on the Board or Committee	HPLD staff are recognized by their location/service point for work	Presenting to group or organizations - focused on HPLD's role and/or resources	14- 10	Re-evaluate: is the purpose strong? Keep if bang for buck is awesome Keep if it is occassional or one-shot
0 = Cannot sustain the staffing and/or costs	Staff Time = Beyond capacity, even with subs. Money = No funds nor grants available	The mission of the effort conflicts with HPLD priorities.	Staff person(s) or Board Member(s) have a personal commitment to the effort/agency	Individual in the partner organization has strong interest that does not necessarily match that of the organization	Working with an individual or two from one other organization	Does not consider visibility as relevant	Serves as a host location	9- 0	Is this something we should keep? Something needs significant change It might be time to let go

ORGANIZATION/PROGRAM		HPLD Resource Usage	Alignment/Results	Value to HPLD	Value to Partner	Numbers Involved	Visibility	What We Are Doing	Ranking (35 max)
sample	Carbon Valley Cares	5	5	5	5	3	5	4	32
									0
									0

A Partnership Assessment Matrix

	Staff Time, Money, Resources	For those who want the numbers (click on the small purple mark in upper corner for details)
5 =	Minimal impact on other services/programs	Staff Time = Under 5 hrs/month ; no subs Money (travel costs, fees, supplies, etc) = $500 or less per year
4 =	Occasional scheduling impact	Staff Time = 5 - 10 hrs/mo ; under 20 sub hrs/yr Money (travel costs, fees, supplies, etc) = between $500 to $1,000 per year
3 =	Some scheduling impact	Staff Time = 10 - 20 hrs/mo ; under 40 sub hrs/yr Money (travel costs, fees, supplies, etc) = between $1,000 to $2,000 per year
2 =	Longer term scheduling impact and sporatic requests for support (ie grant funds, sub coverage, etc)	Staff Time = 20 - 40 hrs/mo ; under 80 sub hrs/yr Money (travel costs, fees, supplies, etc) = between $2,000 to $4,000 per year
1 =	Long term scheduling impact and/or requests for ongoing support (ie grant funds, sub coverage, etc)	Staff Time = 40+ hrs/mo ; over 80 sub hrs/yr Money (travel costs, fees, supplies, etc) = between $4,000 to $8,000 per year
0=	Cannot sustain the staffing and/or costs	Staff Time = Beyond capacity, even with subs Money = No funds nor grants available

ALSO:

Alignment & Results Consider mission & priorities

Perception of Value Strategic Priority? Source of good publicity?

Partner's Perception Why does the other org value this?

The Numbers How many people are we impacting?

What is the Role? What are we doing and what is the visibility?

Matrix Use Takeaways

The numbers are for starting conversations. They aren't the decision point!

One size rarely fits all. Customize the matrix!

Think beyond the matrix
- Who ya gonna call when you need a connection?
- What are non-critical yet appreciated benefits?
- Can organization with disagreeing values partner?

DALLI drawn 3-winged cheetah

It's okay if these don't resonate with you. We're in touch with our felines.

Questions?

Please stay in touch - we love to talk about collaboration!

Contact info on the handout and on Sched.

DALLI drawn 3-winged circus
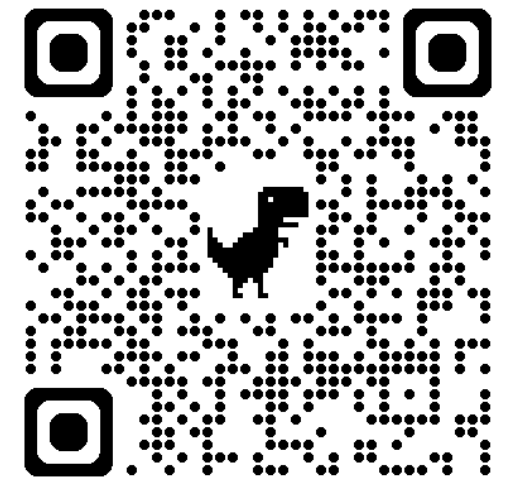
If we met our objectives, you are leaving this session:

- Able to name ways in which creative collaboration can save money, reduce competition, and strengthen grant proposals.

- Appreciating the diversity of patrons in your community, as well as the varied ways in which those patron needs can be met by your library and partner organizations.

- Have an expanded notions of how to assess effectiveness and efficiencies in your workplaces, as well as the sustainability of collaboration over time.