# Libraries Connected Award Criteria

We are looking for individuals or teams working in public libraries in England, Wales, Northern Ireland, and The Crown Dependencies who have had a positive impact on the library service, library users or the local community. This could by introducing an innovative new idea or by going the extra to mile to provide an outstanding service.

Libraries Connected Awards are given to individuals or teams, not projects. It’s all about the contribution that library workers make, whether that’s spearheading a high-profile national initiative or making small changes that improve the everyday experience of library users.

When judging these awards, we will be assessing whether the nominees have:

1. **Gone beyond what is expected by:**

* Developing new services
* Improving existing services
* Responding to a particular local need

1. **Demonstrated innovation through:**

* Services delivered
* Methods of delivery
* Approaches to funding
* Working in partnership

1. **Widened the reach of the library by:**

* Improving access for people with impairments, disabilities, or health conditions.
* Diversifying the library offer, making it more inclusive and welcoming to all sections of the community.

1. **Had a clear impact on:**

* Improving their library service
* Increasing engagement with library users
* Understanding and meeting the needs of their local community

## Example Nomination Statements

## Example 1

**About the nominee**

Minnie is an outstanding Library Assistant who has worked for Example Library Service for over 20 years. I am nominating her for a Libraries Connected Award because I believe she deserves recognition for all the amazing work she has done to support the children and young people that use Example Library.

The homework help club is just one example of the amazing work Minnie does every day to help people and provide the highest possible standard of library services to her community.

**Gone beyond what is expected**

Minnie regularly goes above and beyond what is expected and is always looking for ways to help people using the library in particular children and young people. An example of this has been the homework club which she set up in 2018 to help the children find the information they needed to do their homework, while teaching them the crucial information literacy skills that will benefit them throughout their lives.

**Demonstrated innovation**

Minnie demonstrated innovation by developing an online hub, which children can access from home and in the library, with online activities to introduce the children to the library’s online resources and develop their information literacy skills, all of which helps them with the schoolwork. The club also provided the children with a way to connect to one another.

**Widened the reach of the library**

Minnie has widened the reach of the library by developing partnerships with the local schools to ensure those that need help know where to come. Through her hard work and perseverance, the club has grown from a couple of children attending each week when it first launched to an average attendance of around 30 children.

**Had a clear impact**

Minnie has had an impact on the library by working with local teachers and our Librarian to develop homework help collections in the library and online. Teachers and parents of children who regularly attend the homework club have reported an improvement in the standard of the children’s work and their attitude towards doing their homework.

## Example 2

**About the nominee**

Pluto is a member of the web development team and last year he transformed Example Libraries’ online resources webpage increasing the number of visits and widening the reach of the library service.

**Gone beyond what is expected**

When Pluto identified that the libraries’ online resources page was underused and difficult to find he went beyond what was expected to improve the page, really listening to what staff and customers had to say and thinking about how to make the most of the resources that were on offer.

**Demonstrated innovation**

After consultation with a group of library staff and carrying out a customer survey Pluto proposed several changes to make the resources more visible and attractive to library customers. This included making the webpage more visible from the libraries’ homepage and liaising with other council teams to add links from relevant pages on the council’s website such as the Jobs and Volunteering page and the Health and Wellbeing page. He also demonstrated innovation by grouping resources into different categories, such as Family History, Business Support, and Job Seeking, to help people with specific interests to discover new resources.

**Widened the reach of the library**

Once the page had been created Pluto worked with the library team to develop a marketing campaign on social media to promote the resources and their new look page. This included Tweets, and videos on TikTok highlighting some of the things you could discover and do using the libraries’ online resources.

The number of visits to the library’s online resources page increased by 150% over the past 6 months and there was a significant increase in the number of online resources being accessed. The library’s reach also increased with people being brought to the resources webpage from other parts of the council website and as a result of the marketing campaign.

**Had a clear impact**

As a result of the changes library staff now feel confident to promote the attractive online resources page and feedback from customers shows that it is easier for people to discover resources for themselves.

We are now working with Pluto to look at what he learnt from this project to see how it might be applied to our other library webpages.

## Example 3

**About the nominee(s)**

Micky, Daffy and Daisy work at Example library, they are outstanding members of staff who are always welcoming and go the extra mile to help customers and people in their community. An example of this is how they identified the need for a place in the village where people could meet up and spend time in the winter months and set up a group at the library in response.

Micky, Daffy and Daisy heard from customers how isolated some of them felt due to the increase in the cost of living and reduction in the local bus service and wanted to help. They spoke to the management team about setting up a group in the library to help combat loneliness and help connect people with some of the services and support currently only available to people if they travelled to the larger towns.

**Gone beyond what is expected**

Having been given permission to go ahead with their plans they went beyond what was expected to make the group a success. They listened to what people wanted and responded, sourcing guests from support organisations to provide information, or local people willing to run a workshop or talk about a topic of interest to the group. Some of the most popular sessions run have been the seated exercise classes, a talk about how to save money by using less energy, a drop-in session with a local housing support charity.

**Demonstrated innovation**

They developed innovative partnerships with local businesses, including the local food bank and organised clothes swaps and ‘essential’ give away bags for people who were struggling. They also persuaded a local supermarket to provide tea, coffee, and biscuits for the meetings.

**Widened the reach of the library**

The group has attracted over 50 new members over the winter and helped increase the library’s footfall and book issues. A number of regular library users have brought their friends along, and by promoting the group through local organisations and community groups people who haven’t visited the library in years have started using it again on a regular basis.

**Had a clear impact**

The group has helped tackle loneliness and isolation in a small rural community, provided access to support, and helped people stay warm and active over the cold winter months. One lady told us that before joining the group she sat at home wrapped in blankets because she couldn’t afford the heating and often went days without speaking to another person. The group has become the highlight of her month and she visits the library several times a week to borrow books, she is learning how to use a computer.