

Ground Truths: Engaging Kansas Public Libraries in Resilience Research

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ABSTRACT

The NSF-funded Kansas statewide initiative named Adaptive and Resilient Infrastructure for Social Equity (ARISE) was formed to create tools and programs that ensure infrastructural support for communities that are most vulnerable to disaster, both natural and human-made. Data literacy was identified as a foundational infrastructure need. This poster describes findings from Data Literacy for All: A Kansas Public Library Initiative, a subaward project within the ARISE initiative. The year-long study sought to engage Kansas public library leaders in community-based research to identify the needs of their libraries for supporting everyday life data literacy in the communities they serve. Everyday life data literacy, defined as “the sociocultural data practices that occur within and across different domains of existing literacy practices,” is fundamental for social and economic resilience and can serve as a protective mechanism against misinformation. Using surveys and interviews with public library leaders, this study set out to uncover the ground truths of public library needs across the state of Kansas. An early and emerging picture suggests that public libraries may be best positioned to support data literacy and other resilience initiatives when they are recognized within their communities as critical infrastructure. This poster reports on continued findings in the Data Literacy for All project; the benefits and challenges of using community-engaged methods to involve library professionals in resilience research endeavors; and implications for preparing pre-service librarians for the profession.

ALISE RESEARCH TAXONOMY TOPICS

Data science; Information needs; Community engagement; Public libraries; Pedagogy.

AUTHOR KEYWORDS

Public libraries; Community-engaged research; Data literacy; Resilience; Kansas.

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