

Fayetteville Public Library: From Maker to Market

Why this case matters

Many libraries already have a makerspace, or they are building one. The question is what happens after someone learns to use the equipment.

From Maker to Market is a practical answer. It is a library-designed pathway that helps people move from prototyping to business basics, with a clear cohort structure and a concrete incentive for completion.

What the library built

Fayetteville Public Library describes From Maker to Market as a micro-entrepreneurship program connected to its makerspace and innovation work.

At a high level, the program blends: - hands-on prototyping and fabrication skills, - entrepreneurship learning (business development and marketing), - and a cohort format that creates accountability.

What was reported (key outcome signals)

The library's program description includes a clear completion incentive: - participants who complete the required training receive a \$500 materials stipend.

Even without a long list of published outcomes, this detail is valuable because it signals: - the program is structured and completion-oriented, - the library is investing in patrons' ability to build a real prototype, - and the experience is designed to move beyond "intro workshop" energy.

Why it works (operationally)

1) It uses the makerspace as the bridge

For many patrons, entrepreneurship starts as a hobby, a craft, or a side project. Makerspaces are a natural entry point because they reduce the cost of experimentation.

2) It creates a repeatable format

Cohorts make staffing and scheduling easier. They also make it easier to measure participation and completion.

3) It centers tangible outputs

When people prototype, they have something real to show, test, and improve. That is the starting point for customer feedback and market fit.

Replication notes (how another library could start)

Transferable ideas a library can adopt without copying the entire program: - A short “maker to market” cohort (4–6 sessions). - A simple capstone where participants show a prototype and state who it’s for. - A lightweight completion incentive (even non-monetary) that encourages follow-through.

How Value Lab can support this kind of program

From Maker to Market is about turning hands-on creation into an ongoing journey.

Value Lab supports that same goal by providing: - a repeatable entrepreneurship pathway patrons can continue between maker sessions, - structured prompts that turn prototypes into clear value statements and next steps, - and a way for libraries to keep the momentum going after the cohort ends.

Sources

1. Fayetteville Public Library makerspace and program info: <https://www.faylib.org/maker>