LIBRARIES AS INNOVATION HUBS: FOSTERING STARTUPS AND ENTREPRENEURIAL MINDSETS

Harshal P. Kore
Research Scholar
DLS, RTMNU Campus Nagpur
Email: kore.harshal@gmail.com

Dr. Sunil H. Urkudkar
Supervisor
Shankarrao Bhoyar Patil Mahavidyalay, Pulgaon, Dist. Wardha

Abstract :

Modern libraries are rapidly evolving into dynamic spaces that foster creativity, innovation, and entrepreneurship. Moving beyond their traditional function of lending books and archiving information, they now serve as vital hubs for startup development and entrepreneurial growth. Equipped with advanced technology such as 3D printers, high-speed internet, and digital media labs, libraries provide essential tools for idea generation and product development. Many offers co-working spaces that encourage collaboration and networking among aspiring entrepreneurs. Through access to market research databases, business planning guides, and skill-building workshops, libraries support users at every stage of their entrepreneurial journey. They also host events like startup boot camps, mentorship sessions, and pitch competitions to nurture practical business experience. Partnerships with universities, local businesses, and innovation centers further extend their impact. These collaborations offer access to expert advice and broaden entrepreneurial networks. Real-world examples from various cities highlight libraries as key players in local startup ecosystems. Despite facing budget limitations and staffing challenges, libraries continue to adapt and expand their services. Their inclusive nature ensures equal opportunities for individuals from diverse backgrounds. By promoting innovation and critical thinking, libraries play a crucial role in empowering the next generation of entrepreneurs. As their role continues to grow, libraries are becoming indispensable in building resilient, knowledge-driven economies.

Keywords : Libraries, Innovation Hubs, Startups, Entrepreneurship, Maker Spaces, Digital Literacy, Business Incubation, Entrepreneurial Mindset, Community Development

----

Introduction :

In the past, libraries were primarily viewed as quiet spaces dedicated to reading, studying, and storing vast collections of books and scholarly resources. While that foundational role remains important, the 21st-century knowledge economy has ushered in a need for more adaptive, interactive, and inclusive environments. Libraries have responded to this shift by transforming into dynamic centers of innovation, creativity, and entrepreneurship. No longer confined to passive knowledge consumption, modern libraries are actively empowering individuals and communities to become creators and problem-solvers. Equipped with advanced technologies like 3D printers, multimedia studios, high-speed internet, and coding labs, these spaces now offer tools that enable experimentation, prototyping, and digital innovation. Many

Published in Collaboration with
Central Library, Dhanwate National College, Nagpur
Department of Library & Information Science, R. T. M. Nagpur University, Nagpur
Volume-11 (2025) : Issue-1 (October-2025)

175

IMPACT FACTOR
5.473(SJIF)

UPA NATIONAL E-JOURNAL
Interdisciplinary Peer-Reviewed Indexed Journal

ISSN
2455-4375

libraries have introduced co-working spaces, innovation labs, and business resource centers to support aspiring entrepreneurs and early-stage startups. Through workshops, mentorship programs, and networking events, libraries are fostering entrepreneurial skills and encouraging collaboration among users from diverse backgrounds. These programs are especially impactful at the community level, where access to traditional startup ecosystems may be limited. Libraries are democratizing entrepreneurship by removing barriers such as high startup costs, lack of access to information, and limited professional networks. They also provide critical support in areas like business planning, market research, branding, and grant writing. By forming partnerships with local governments, universities, nonprofits, and economic development agencies, libraries are extending their reach and effectiveness in supporting innovation. Real-world examples from cities and small towns alike show how libraries have become launch pads for business ideas and social enterprises. These institutions are increasingly seen as neutral, inclusive spaces where creativity and enterprise can thrive without the pressure or exclusivity of corporate incubators. Importantly, libraries also serve as lifelong learning hubs, nurturing skills in digital literacy, financial management, and communication competencies essential for entrepreneurial success. Their role in building an entrepreneurial culture is not just about offering resources but also about inspiring confidence, curiosity, and collaboration. Especially in underserved communities, libraries are bridging opportunity gaps and enabling grassroots innovation. Despite funding and staffing challenges, they continue to evolve in response to societal and technological changes. As the demand for innovation and creative problem-solving grows, libraries are becoming indispensable players in cultivating resilient, forward-looking economies. Their expanding role reaffirms that public spaces can be powerful engines of transformation. By supporting the development of new knowledge, services, and ventures, libraries are not just preserving the past they are actively shaping the future.

1. Libraries and Their Evolving Role :

a) From Repositories to Innovation Spaces :

Traditionally, libraries served as repositories of knowledge, offering access to books, archives, and reference materials. Their core mission was to collect, preserve, and provide access to information for educational and research purposes. However, in the 21st century, libraries have undergone a significant transformation. With the rise of digital technology, changes in user expectations, and increasing financial constraints, libraries have broadened their roles from passive information centers to active innovation spaces.

Today's libraries are not just about storing knowledge they are about creating and facilitating it. Many modern libraries now house:

- **Digital creation labs :** These are spaces equipped with tools like 3D printers, audio/video production equipment, and graphic design software. They allow users to create digital content, prototype inventions, or develop media projects. These labs foster

Published in Collaboration with
Central Library, Dhanwate National College, Nagpur
Department of Library & Information Science, R. T. M. Nagpur University, Nagpur
Volume-11 (2025) : Issue-1 (October-2025)

176

IMPACT FACTOR
5.473(SJIF)

UPA NATIONAL E-JOURNAL
Interdisciplinary Peer-Reviewed Indexed Journal

ISSN
2455-4375

creativity and support STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Mathematics) education.

- **Innovation incubators :** Some libraries partner with local businesses, universities, or government agencies to provide start-up support. These incubators may offer mentoring, business development services, market research access, and networking events to help entrepreneurs and innovators develop their ideas.

- **Community entrepreneurship programs :** Recognizing the role of small businesses in local economic development, libraries have launched programs to teach essential business skills. These include workshops on business planning, marketing, budgeting, and legal compliance. They also often provide access to databases and resources that help entrepreneurs conduct market research or analyze industry trends.

This evolution reflects a shift from the library being merely a passive provider of information to an active participant in knowledge production and innovation

b) The Need for Innovation in Libraries :

The transformation of libraries into innovation hubs is driven by several critical needs and challenges that modern communities face. As society becomes increasingly digital and interconnected, libraries must adapt to remain relevant and impactful.

- **Addressing Skill Gaps in Entrepreneurship and Digital Literacy** : Many communities, particularly underserved populations, lack access to formal education or training in digital and entrepreneurial skills. Libraries fill this gap by offering workshops, one-on-one training, and certification programs in areas such as coding, financial literacy, e-commerce, and more.

- **Ensuring Inclusive Access to Technology** : Not everyone has access to high-speed internet, computers, or specialized software at home. Libraries provide free access to such technologies, ensuring that digital inclusion becomes a reality for people from all socioeconomic backgrounds. This digital equity is crucial for participation in today's economy and society.

- **Supporting Community-Based Economic Development** : Libraries increasingly act as catalysts for local economic growth. By empowering individuals with knowledge, tools, and networks, libraries contribute to job creation, support small business development, and stimulate innovation at the grassroots level. Programs tailored to local needs such as support for minority-owned businesses or rural entrepreneurship are helping communities become more resilient and self-reliant.

In essence, libraries are no longer just about lending books they are about lending opportunity. They have become dynamic, multipurpose spaces where people can learn, create, innovate, and connect.

Published in Collaboration with
Central Library, Dhanwate National College, Nagpur
Department of Library & Information Science, R. T. M. Nagpur University, Nagpur
Volume-11 (2025) : Issue-1 (October-2025)

177

2. Fostering Entrepreneurial Mindsets :

Public and academic libraries have evolved beyond their traditional roles as repositories of books. Today, they play a pivotal role in nurturing entrepreneurial thinking and supporting aspiring business owners. By offering access to vital information, skill-building opportunities, and innovative spaces, libraries serve as catalysts for economic empowerment and creativity. Here are three key ways libraries contribute to fostering an entrepreneurial mindset:

a) Information Literacy and Research Support :

One of the most critical needs of entrepreneurs is access to accurate, reliable, and up-to-date information. Libraries fulfill this need by offering curated resources and professional assistance that support informed decision-making at every stage of the business journey.

Key Resources Provided :

- **Business Databases :** Libraries subscribe to comprehensive databases such as *Statist, IBIS World,* and *Gale Business: Entrepreneurship*, which offer insights into industry trends, market sizes, and consumer behavior.

- **Market Analysis Tools :** Entrepreneurs can access demographic data, regional economic indicators, and customer segmentation reports. These tools help in identifying target markets, understanding competitors, and forecasting market demands.

- **Startup Guides and Templates :** Libraries offer books, digital toolkits, and templates for writing business plans, conducting SWOT analyses, and drafting marketing strategies. These resources are particularly helpful for first-time entrepreneurs.

- **Legal and Regulatory Information :** Libraries often maintain updated collections of legal reference materials that cover topics such as business registration, licensing, tax compliance, and intellectual property protection. Some libraries also collaborate with local government offices or legal aid clinics to offer in-person guidance.

- **Research Support Services :** Librarians assist patrons in conducting specialized research, verifying sources, and locating difficult-to-find data. Many libraries also offer online portals for accessing scholarly journals and industry white papers.

Impact :

Access to such information enables entrepreneurs to build strong, evidence-based foundations for their businesses. It helps reduce the risk of failure due to misinformation or lack of planning.

b) Workshops and Skill Development :

Libraries actively organize educational programs and hands-on training that help

Published in Collaboration with
Central Library, Dhanwate National College, Nagpur
Department of Library & Information Science, R. T. M. Nagpur University, Nagpur
Volume-11 (2025) : Issue-1 (October-2025)

178

individuals build the skills needed to run and grow a business. These events are often free or low-cost, making them accessible to a wide range of users.

Common Programs Include :

- **Business Planning Workshops :** These sessions guide participants through writing effective business plans, identifying value propositions, and understanding operational models.

- **Startup Boot camps:** Intensive, multi-day programs designed to take entrepreneurs from idea to launch. Topics often include customer discovery, pitch development, and funding strategies.

- **Digital Marketing and E-Commerce Training:** Libraries offer instruction on using social media, email marketing, search engine optimization (SEO), and platforms like Shopify or Easy. These skills are essential for building a digital presence and driving sales.

- **Financial Literacy and Funding Guidance:** Sessions cover budgeting, bookkeeping, applying for small business loans or grants, and understanding credit. Some programs partner with banks or microfinance institutions to provide deeper insights.

- **Resume-Building and Career Counseling:** For those transitioning from employment to entrepreneurship, libraries provide resume and cover letter writing workshops, interview preparation, and job search resources.

- **Mentorship and Networking Events:** Some libraries host guest speakers, local entrepreneurs, or members of the business community who provide mentorship, share real-world experiences, and connect attendees with relevant opportunities.

Impact :

These programs equip participants with practical knowledge, enhance their confidence, and provide a supportive learning environment. Libraries help democratize entrepreneurship by removing educational and financial barriers to skill acquisition.

c) Creative and Maker Spaces :

To support innovation and product development, many modern libraries have established dedicated **Maker Spaces** collaborative areas equipped with advanced tools and technology. These spaces are particularly valuable for individuals who may not have access to such resources at home or through traditional educational institutions.

Common Features of Library Maker Spaces :

Published in Collaboration with
Central Library, Dhanwate National College, Nagpur
Department of Library & Information Science, R. T. M. Nagpur University, Nagpur
Volume-11 (2025) : Issue-1 (October-2025)

179

IMPACT FACTOR
5.473(SJIF)

UPA NATIONAL E-JOURNAL
Interdisciplinary Peer-Reviewed Indexed Journal

ISSN
2455-4375

- **3D Printers and Laser Cutters :** Entrepreneurs can prototype products, create packaging samples, or experiment with custom parts at little or no cost.

- **Audio/Video Production Studios :** These spaces include professional-grade microphones, video cameras, and editing software. Entrepreneurs use them to produce promotional videos, podcasts, online courses, and other marketing materials.

- **Design and Coding Tools :** Libraries offer access to design software like Adobe Creative Cloud (Photoshop, Illustrator, In Design) and development platforms for learning web design, mobile app creation, and programming.

- **Collaborative Workspaces :** Maker Labs often include meeting rooms, whiteboards, and brainstorming areas where individuals can work together, pitch ideas, or hold small workshops.

- **Workshops in Innovation and Design Thinking :** Some libraries conduct training sessions focused on problem-solving, product development, and creative ideation core aspects of entrepreneurial thinking.

Impact :

These spaces not only encourage creativity but also make high-tech tools accessible to under-resourced communities. They foster a culture of experimentation and innovation, allowing users to test ideas without the financial risks usually associated with product development.

3. Supporting Startups and Local Innovation :

In recent years, public libraries have evolved beyond their traditional roles to become active supporters of entrepreneurship and local business development. They now serve as inclusive innovation hubs that empower startups, freelancers, and small businesses with essential resources, networking opportunities, and expert support.

a) Co-working and Networking Opportunities :

Modern libraries increasingly provide **free or low-cost co-working spaces,** becoming attractive venues for entrepreneurs and remote workers. These spaces are designed to foster collaboration, creativity, and productivity within a quiet yet resource-rich environment.
Key Features Include :

- **Free Internet Access :** High-speed Wi-Fi enables uninterrupted online work, essential for digital entrepreneurs and remote teams.
- **Meeting and Conference Rooms :** Available for business meetings, interviews, client pitches, or brainstorming sessions.
- **Business Events and Competitions :** Libraries frequently organize workshops, pitch

Published in Collaboration with
Central Library, Dhanwate National College, Nagpur
Department of Library & Information Science, R. T. M. Nagpur University, Nagpur
Volume-11 (2025) : Issue-1 (October-2025)

180

IMPACT FACTOR
5.473(SJIF)

UPA NATIONAL E-JOURNAL
Interdisciplinary Peer-Reviewed Indexed Journal

ISSN
2455-4375

contests, hackathons, and startup showcases to help entrepreneurs refine their ideas and gain visibility.

- **Networking and Mentorship :** Regularly scheduled events allow individuals to connect with **business mentors**, **industry experts**, and potential **investors**, often in partnership with local entrepreneurial networks.

These features not only lower the entry barrier for new businesses but also build a community where ideas can grow through collaboration and access to expert guidance.

b) Examples of Startup-Focused Library Services :

Some leading libraries around the world have developed specialized programs and services to meet the specific needs of entrepreneurs :

1. Toronto Public Library Entrepreneur in Residence (EIR) Program :

- This program offers aspiring business owners the chance to consult with experienced entrepreneurs during scheduled sessions.
- Services include **business plan reviews, market research assistance,** and **guidance on funding options.**
- Workshops and seminars are also part of the program, covering topics like marketing, sales, digital tools, and legal basics.

2. New York Public Library (NYPL) – Business Center :

- NYPL's Thomas Yoseloff Business Center is a dedicated space for entrepreneurs.
- Offers **free access to premium business databases,** including market research, company directories, and demographic data.
- Provides **one-on-one counseling**, career services, and business-related workshops.
- Includes resources on **intellectual property, starting an LLC**, and **accessing capital**.

3. British Library – Business & IP Centre (BIPC) :

- Located in London, the BIPC supports early-stage entrepreneurs and inventors.
- Offers expert help with **intellectual property rights**, including patents, trademarks, and copyright.
- Provides access to extensive **market intelligence tools,** financial information, and business planning resources.
- Hosts talks and mentoring sessions with successful entrepreneurs and legal advisors.

Each of these services reflects the growing role of libraries in **democratizing entrepreneurship,** providing tools that might otherwise be inaccessible to those lacking startup capital or industry connections.

c) Collaborations and Partnerships :
Libraries often strengthen their entrepreneurial programs through **strategic**

Published in Collaboration with
Central Library, Dhanwate National College, Nagpur
Department of Library & Information Science, R. T. M. Nagpur University, Nagpur
Volume-11 (2025) : Issue-1 (October-2025)

181

IMPACT FACTOR
5.473(SJIF)

UPA NATIONAL E-JOURNAL
Interdisciplinary Peer-Reviewed Indexed Journal

ISSN
2455-4375

partnerships, allowing them to offer more specialized services and extend their reach.

Common Partners Include :

- **Local Chambers of Commerce :** These collaborations help connect library users with broader business networks, support services, and funding opportunities.
- **Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) :** Many NGOs focused on youth employment, women's entrepreneurship, or digital inclusion partner with libraries to run targeted training sessions.
- **Universities and Research Institutes :** Academic partnerships bring **research expertise, technical knowledge, and innovation-focused workshops** to library programs.
- **Government Startup Agencies and Programs :** Libraries often serve as outreach points for national or regional startup initiatives, helping to deliver services like business registration, tax guidance, and grants for small businesses.

These partnerships amplify the library's ability to support entrepreneurship by pooling resources, offering expert-led programming, and ensuring alignment with broader economic development strategies.

4. Challenges in Implementing Innovation Services :

As public libraries increasingly take on the role of community innovation hubs, they also encounter significant challenges. Despite the growing demand for entrepreneurial support, digital resources, and collaborative spaces, many libraries struggle to deliver these services effectively due to systemic and operational limitations. Understanding these obstacles is crucial for developing sustainable and impactful innovation programs.

a) Limited Funding :

One of the most pressing challenges is the **lack of adequate funding.** Public libraries often rely on government allocations, municipal budgets, or grants, which may not increase in line with the expanding scope of services.

Key Issues :

- **Budget Constraints :** Innovation services like co-working spaces, modern equipment, and business databases require ongoing financial investment. These services often compete with traditional library needs, such as book procurement and staff salaries.
- **Inconsistent Funding Streams :** Many libraries depend on **short-term grants or donations**, which makes it difficult to plan and sustain long-term innovation initiatives.
- **Prioritization Issues :** In areas facing economic hardship, libraries may be pressured to prioritize essential literacy and educational programs over entrepreneurial services.

Published in Collaboration with
Central Library, Dhanwate National College, Nagpur
Department of Library & Information Science, R. T. M. Nagpur University, Nagpur
Volume-11 (2025) : Issue-1 (October-2025)

182

Without dedicated investment, libraries may struggle to modernize, expand services, or attract the right talent to support innovation.

b) Lack of Skilled Staff :

Innovation services require more than just physical resources; they also demand **staff with specialized knowledge** in business development, technology, intellectual property, and mentoring.

Challenges Include :

- **Training Needs :** Many library staff members are trained in library sciences, not in entrepreneurship, digital skills, or business planning. Up skilling them requires time and resources.
- **Limited Availability of Experts :** Hiring full-time experts like business advisors, IP consultants, or tech specialists may not be financially feasible for many libraries.
- **Increased Workload:** Introducing new programs without increasing staffing levels can overwhelm existing employees, reducing overall service quality.

Addressing this skills gap is essential to ensure that libraries can deliver meaningful and relevant support to entrepreneurs and startups.

c) Technology Access and Infrastructure Limitations :

A key pillar of innovation services is **modern and reliable technology infrastructure** yet many libraries still operate with outdated systems.

Common Barriers :

- **Old Hardware and Software :** Limited budgets often prevent libraries from upgrading computers, printers, and software essential for modern business needs.
- **Insufficient Broadband Connectivity :** Especially in rural or underserved areas, poor internet speeds can hinder digital innovation and remote work support.
- **Lack of Maker spaces or Digital Labs :** Advanced tools such as 3D printers, video production equipment, or coding stations are expensive and rare in most public libraries.

Without current technology, libraries cannot fully support the needs of today's startups or digital entrepreneurs.

d) Awareness Gaps among Entrepreneurs :

Even when innovation services are available, many entrepreneurs **remain unaware** of what libraries can offer. This communication gap limits the impact of library-based programs.

Published in Collaboration with
Central Library, Dhanwate National College, Nagpur
Department of Library & Information Science, R. T. M. Nagpur University, Nagpur
Volume-11 (2025) : Issue-1 (October-2025)

183

IMPACT FACTOR
5.473(SJIF)

UPA NATIONAL E-JOURNAL
Interdisciplinary Peer-Reviewed Indexed Journal

ISSN
2455-4375

Reasons for Low Awareness :

- **Ineffective Marketing :** Libraries may lack dedicated marketing staff or channels to promote new services effectively.
- **Perception Issues :** Many people still see libraries purely as places for books and studying not as entrepreneurial or tech spaces.
- **Limited Community Engagement :** Without proactive outreach and partnerships, libraries struggle to connect with local startup communities or underserved entrepreneurs.

As a result, valuable resources often go unused, and libraries miss opportunities to support new ventures.

5. Future Directions and Opportunities :

As public libraries continue to redefine their roles in the 21st century, there is significant potential for them to become **key players in the innovation and startup ecosystem.** Beyond offering access to books and digital resources, libraries can take proactive steps to drive economic development, foster entrepreneurial mindsets, and support local creators and innovators.

To strengthen their position as dynamic centers for innovation, libraries can explore the following forward-looking initiatives :

a) Establishing Full-Scale Business Incubators Within Library Premises :

Libraries can evolve into **full-fledged business incubators** by dedicating specific spaces for startup development. These incubators would offer more than just co-working areas they would include comprehensive support systems for early-stage businesses.

Key Features :

- Dedicated workstations and meeting areas
- On-site mentorship from business experts
- Access to legal, financial, and marketing consultations
- Workshops on business planning, pitch preparation, and scaling strategies
- Incubation programs with structured timelines and milestones

These incubators would serve as launching pads for entrepreneurs who may not have access to private co working spaces or formal startup accelerators.

b) Offering Seed Funding or Startup Grants in Partnership with Local Governments :

To bridge the funding gap faced by many startups, libraries can collaborate with

Published in Collaboration with
Central Library, Dhanwate National College, Nagpur
Department of Library & Information Science, R. T. M. Nagpur University, Nagpur
Volume-11 (2025) : Issue-1 (October-2025)

184

UPA NATIONAL E-JOURNAL
Interdisciplinary Peer-Reviewed Indexed Journal

IMPACT FACTOR
5.473(SJIF)

ISSN
2455-4375

municipal authorities, economic development agencies, or philanthropic foundations to offer small-scale **seed grants or micro-financing options**.

Benefits :

- **Empowers underrepresented entrepreneurs**, such as women, youth, and marginalized groups
- **Encourages idea-stage ventures** to move forward with minimal financial risk
- **Positions the library as an active economic contributor** in the community

The funding could be awarded through competitive pitch events or business plan competitions hosted at the library, creating excitement and visibility around local innovation.

c) Creating Digital Entrepreneurship Toolkits and Online Learning Portals :

In the digital era, self-paced learning and access to practical tools are crucial. Libraries can develop or curate **online platforms** offering educational resources for aspiring entrepreneurs.

Toolkit Inclusions :

- Business plan templates
- Financial forecasting tools
- Guides on legal compliance and licensing
- Tutorials on digital marketing, branding, and e-commerce
- Case studies of successful local startups

These resources could be made available via the library's website or a dedicated digital entrepreneurship portal, accessible to anyone with a library membership.

d) Hosting Regional Startup Festivals and Innovation Fairs :

To energize the local startup scene, libraries can organize **annual or bi-annual events** celebrating innovation and entrepreneurship. These festivals serve multiple purposes community engagement, networking, exposure for local startups, and talent discovery.

Potential Activities :

- Startup showcases and demo days
- Panel discussions with successful entrepreneurs and investors
- Hackathons and innovation challenges
- Youth entrepreneurship competitions
- Workshops and keynote talks on emerging trends

Published in Collaboration with
Central Library, Dhanwate National College, Nagpur
Department of Library & Information Science, R. T. M. Nagpur University, Nagpur
Volume-11 (2025) : Issue-1 (October-2025)

185

These events help position the library as a **central hub for entrepreneurial activity**, attracting diverse participants from schools, universities, businesses, and civil society.

e) Encouraging Youth Entrepreneurship Through School and College Outreach :

Fostering an entrepreneurial mindset from a young age is essential for long-term economic growth. Libraries can launch programs aimed specifically at **students and young adults** by collaborating with educational institutions.

Possible Initiatives :

- Entrepreneurship clubs for teens
- School visits and library-based startup workshops
- Internship opportunities within library innovation projects
- Youth innovation challenges focused on solving local problems

These initiatives help develop critical thinking, problem-solving, and leadership skills among youth preparing them to become future innovators and change makers.

f) Integrating Emerging Technologies into Library Innovation Programs :

To stay relevant and cutting-edge, libraries can integrate **emerging technologies** into their programming, giving users hands-on experience with tools that are shaping the future of business and society.

Technologies to Explore :

- **Artificial Intelligence (AI) :** Hosting AI boot camps, offering tools for chat bots, machine learning models, or AI-driven business analytics.
- **Block chain :** Providing workshops on block chain applications in business, smart contracts, and crypto currency basics.
- **Virtual and Augmented Reality (VR/AR) :** Creating immersive learning environments, product simulations, or virtual storefronts for startups.
- **Internet of Things (IoT) :** Educating users on connected devices and smart technology applications in agriculture, healthcare, and industry.
- **3D Printing and Digital Fabrication :** Allowing innovators to prototype products and experiment with design concepts.

By incorporating these technologies, libraries provide access to tools that are otherwise costly or unavailable to many aspiring entrepreneurs, leveling the playing field and encouraging experimentation.

Conclusion :

Modern libraries have evolved into vital innovation hubs, offering more than just access

Published in Collaboration with
Central Library, Dhanwate National College, Nagpur
Department of Library & Information Science, R. T. M. Nagpur University, Nagpur
Volume-11 (2025) : Issue-1 (October-2025)

186

to information they now provide tools, training, and spaces that support entrepreneurship and community development. By bridging digital and economic divides, libraries empower individuals to create, collaborate, and launch new ventures. Despite challenges like limited funding and infrastructure, their role in fostering inclusive innovation continues to grow. With the integration of emerging technologies and strategic partnerships, libraries are well-positioned to shape the future of local economies and inspire the next generation of change makers.

References :

- "British Library's Business & IP Centre national network – Case study." (2015, December 16). *Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport, UK Government.*

- "British Library's Business & IP Centre helps create over 12,000 new businesses across the UK since 2016." (2019, August 16). *Conference of European National Librarians.*

- Khongmalai, O., & Distanont, A. (2024). *Transforming Academic Libraries into Hubs of Innovation and Entrepreneurship: A Case Study of a New Library Model.* European Conference on Innovation and Entrepreneurship, Vol. 19, No. 1.

- "Public Libraries Emerge as Hubs for Entrepreneurs." (2024, October 14). *ICSC – Small Business Center / Commerce + Communities Today.*

- "Entrepreneur in Residence: Programs, Classes & Exhibits: Toronto Public Library." (2024). Toronto Public Library.

- Mehrhoff, L. A. (2022). University libraries as open innovation partners: Harnessing hidden potential to foster global entrepreneurship. *Journal of Academic Librarianship, 48*(2), Article 102432. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.acalib.2021.102432

- ULC & Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation. (2018–2022). *Strengthening Libraries as Hubs for Entrepreneurship*. Urban Libraries Council.

- Henkel, M., Ilhan, A., Mainka, A., & Stock, W. G. (2017). Case studies on open innovation in libraries. *Proceedings of the Association for Information Science and Technology, 54*(1), 705–706.

- Das, R. K., & Ul Islam, M. S. (2021). Application of Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning in Libraries: A Systematic Review. *arXiv preprint arXiv:2112.04573.*

- Paul, S., Chauhan, S., & Pal, A. K. (2024). Empowering Library Users: Creative Strategies for Engagement and Innovation. *arXiv preprint arXiv:2411.02993.*

- "New British Library report confirms Business & IP Centre North East is an engine of economic recovery and growth." (2023, July 13). Newcastle City Council.

- "New British Library report confirms Business & IP Centre Greater Manchester is an engine of economic recovery and growth." (2023, July 14). Manchester City Council.

- "Business & IP Centre (BIPC) – Business & Intellectual Property Centre – British Library London." (2017, March). GOV.UK.

- British Library. (n.d.). Business & IP Centre: Free business support, workshops, and IP advice. *British Library*.

- "Co working and innovation: new concepts for academic libraries and learning centers." (2014). *New Library World*. Emerald Publishing.

Published in Collaboration with
Central Library, Dhanwate National College, Nagpur
Department of Library & Information Science, R. T. M. Nagpur University, Nagpur
Volume-11 (2025) : Issue-1 (October-2025)

187