

DESIGNING FOR ENGAGEMENT: HILLMAN LIBRARY RENOVATION

KORNELIA TANCHEVA, PHD
Hillman University Librarian
and Director of the University Library System
tancheva@pitt.edu
Designing Libraries Conference, Oct. 2023

Hillman Renovation







Doing
Digital
Unique

REDESIGN PRINCIPLES

People, not general collections

Engagement

Active knowledge creation,
not passive consumption of
information

Exchange of ideas

Technology



ENGAGEMENT

- Learning through doing
- Creating new knowledge through doing
- Bringing in previous non-users
 - University non-users
 - Local communities
 - Artists
 - Holding events
- Sample spaces
 - Book Lab, Open Lab, Data Visualization Lab, Media Lab, Audio Lab, Interactive Digital walls





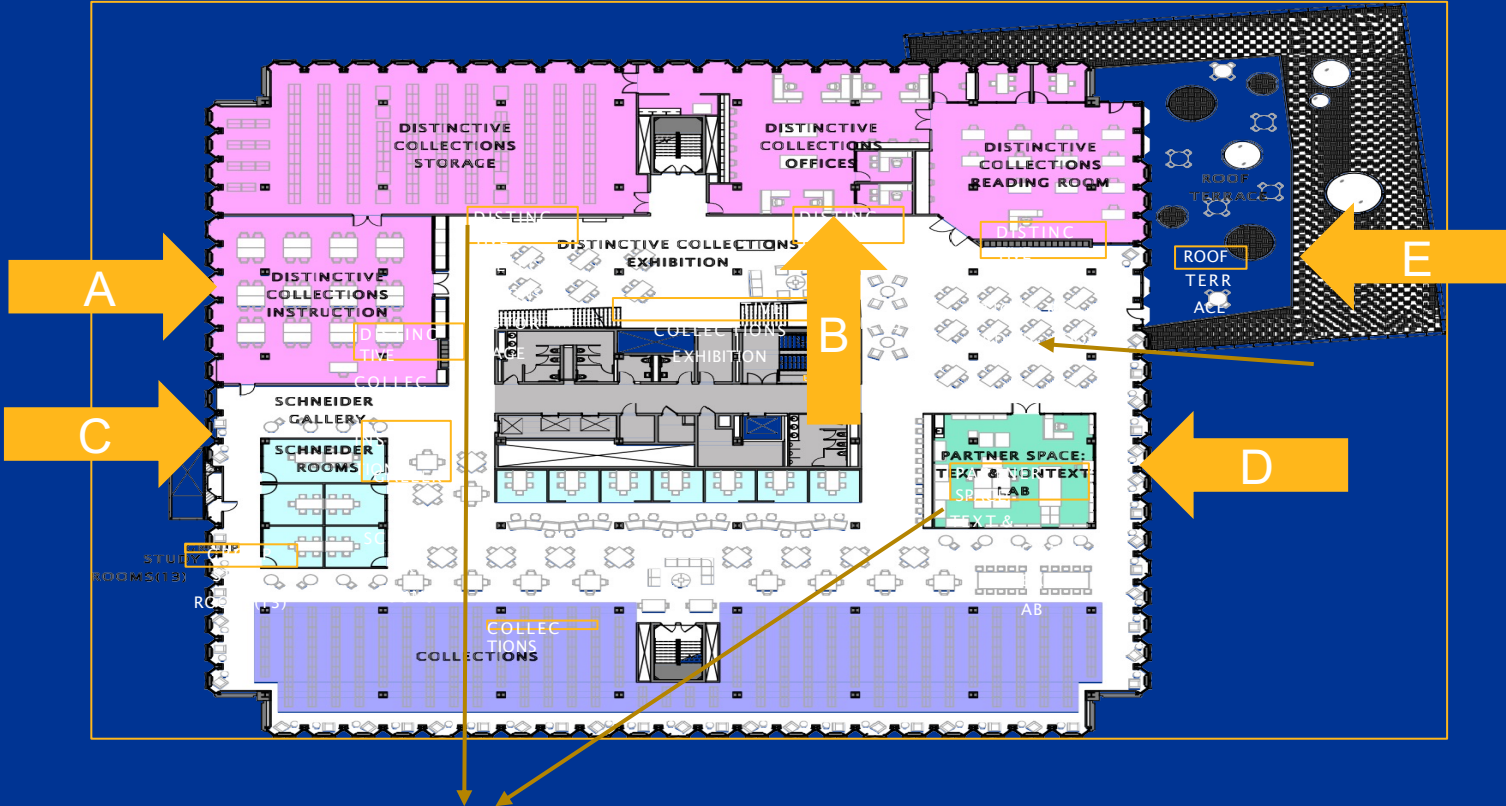
**LEARNING THROUGH
DOING**



TECHNOLOGY

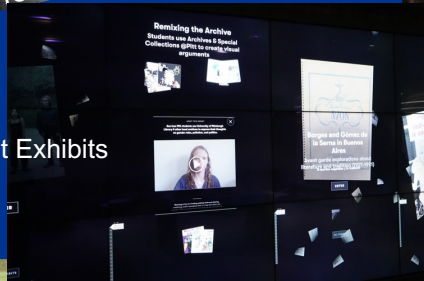


Special Collections

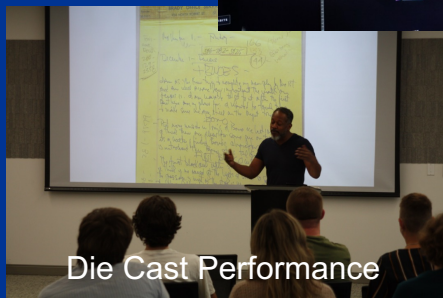


Digitization; Research Wall, Digital Media Lab

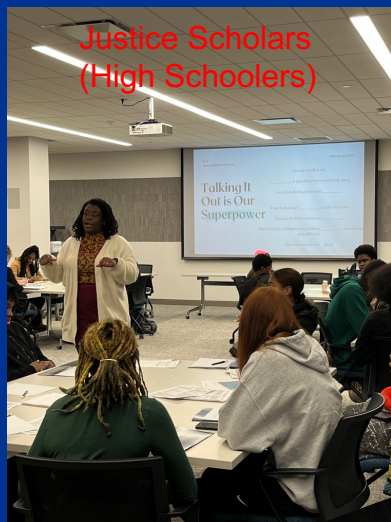
Sample Engagements



Student Exhibits



More Sample Engagements

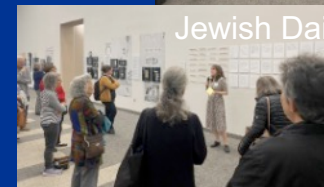


PROGRAMS, SPACES, ENGAGED PEOPLE



TAKE-AWAYS

- Design with flexibility
- Engagement through programs and services; then spaces
- Think about the non-users
- Match Institution's priorities



Jewish Daily Forward exhibit

Thank you



Questions?



tancheva@pitt.edu

(re)Engaging Communities through Renovation

At the Northeastern University Library

Schematic

- Table Setting
- Community A – The Public
- Community B - Faculty

Table Setting – the Institution



- Northeastern founded in 1898 within the Boston YMCA as the Evening Institute for Younger Men; now an R1 research university
- 2022 Total Enrollment: 48,355 across 13 campuses in the US, Canada, and England; 43,822 on the Boston campus
- “N.U.in” program allows first year students to begin their studies at one of 11 locations in Europe – students move to the Boston campus for the spring term

Table Setting – the Library

- Snell Library opened in 1990 (Boston was the sole campus)
- Sole physical library facility serving Boston campus (excluding law school)
- 5 floors; ~200,000 ft² (excluding classrooms carved out in 2013)



Table Setting - Project Overview

- University senior leaders approved plan to renovate entire library facility
- MGA Partners (mgapartners.com) selected as architectural firm
- Planning began in 2020
- Physical work began in 2022
- Completion by fall semester, 2024

Table Setting - Project Overview



Snell Library Project	
Total Building GSF	245,992 SF
Renovation Area	138,040 SF
Exterior Expansion	2,500 SF



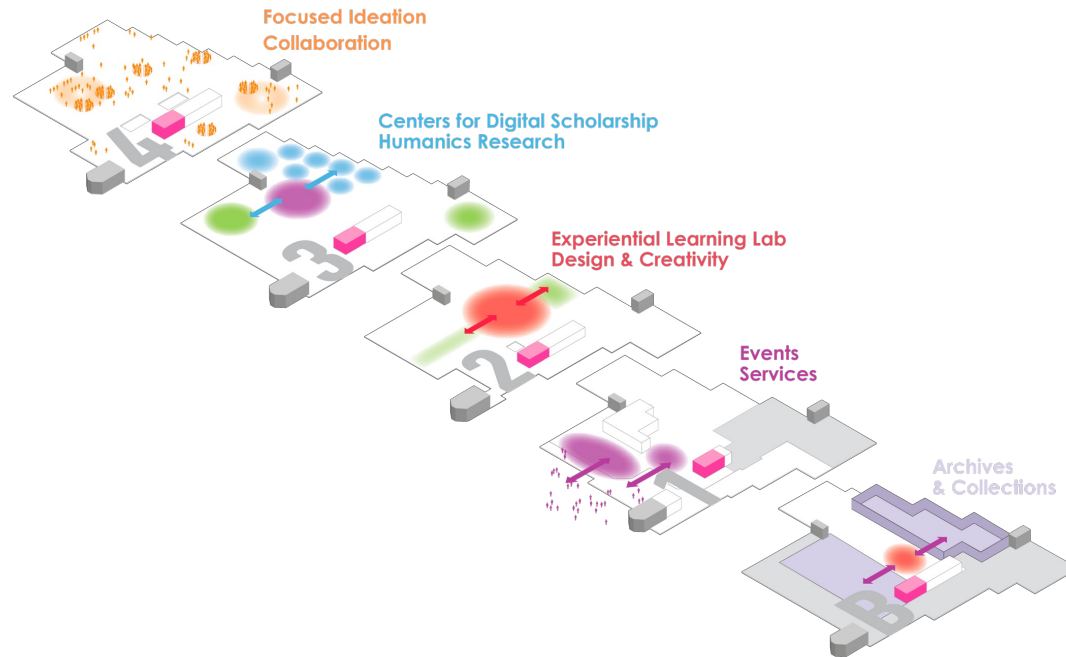
Then



Now



Table Setting – Floor Identity



The Challenge

- As an urban university library, Snell library is open only to current members of the university community
- Snell Library has longstanding and meaningful partnerships with our surrounding communities
- How do we invite the public into the library and to what degree?

Community A – The Public

Boston Research Center Initiative

- Mellon Foundation funded project that engages with local community organizations to help them document and tell their histories
- Partnership with the Boston Public Library

Neighborhood Matters

- A lunchtime series that celebrates the ways in which community groups have shaped the neighborhoods surrounding the Northeastern campus.
- All events are free and open to the public.
- Curated by the Northeastern University Library Archives and Special Collections.

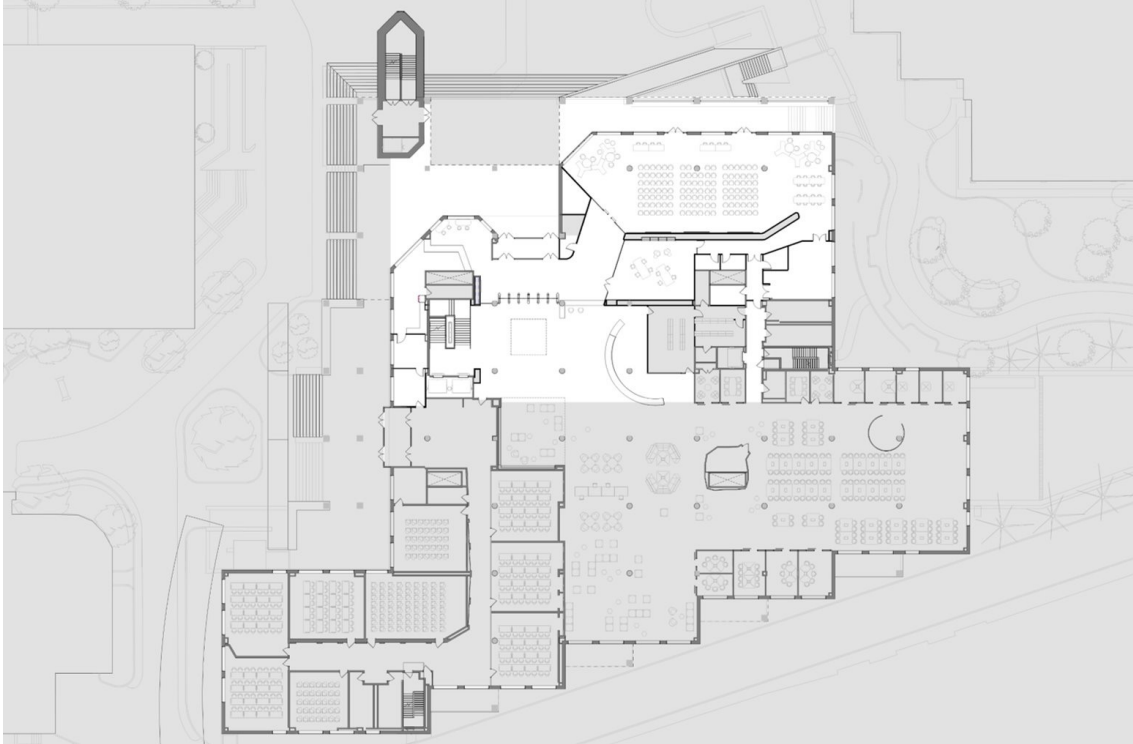
Boston Public Schools (BPS) collaborations

- Leveraging Northeastern's relationships with academic publishers to make more content accessible to BPS students
- Working with BPS educators on integrating information about archives into the curriculum
- Hosting BPS school groups in the library for workshops and presentations about archives and navigating libraries and library research

Community A – The Public



Community A – The Public



Community A – The Public



Community A – The Public



Community A – The Public



The Challenge

- Study space on the 73-acre Northeastern University Campus is a rare commodity
- Snell Library has long been referred to as “Club Snell” – marking it as student space
- How can the renovation allow us to support more student study space while simultaneously developing new spaces for faculty and graduate researchers?

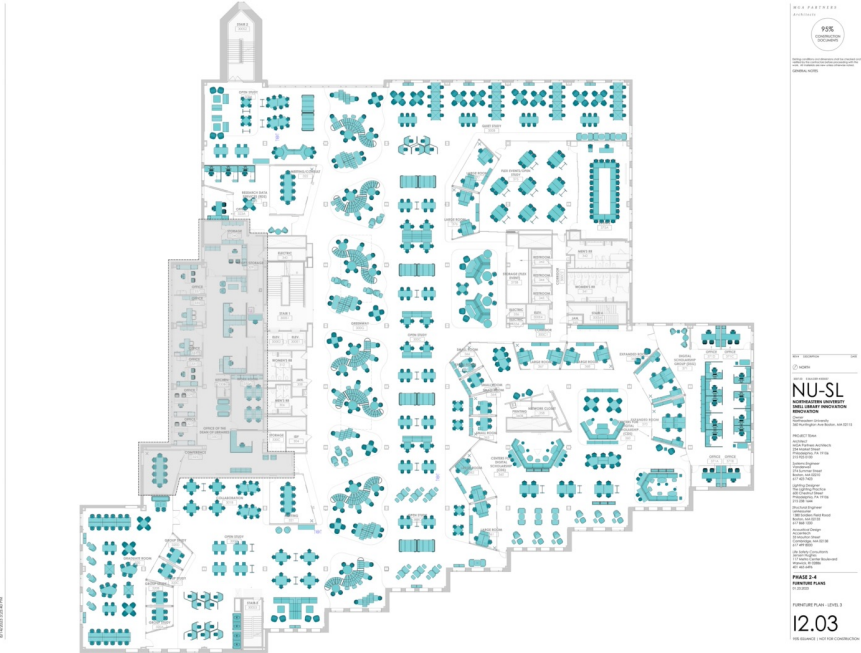
Community B – The Faculty

Centers for Digital Scholarship

- Brings together 8-10 research groups working in digital humanities and related fields
- Anchored by the Library's Digital Scholarship Group
- Provides project "offices" as well as meeting and lab space
- Flips to graduate student study at night

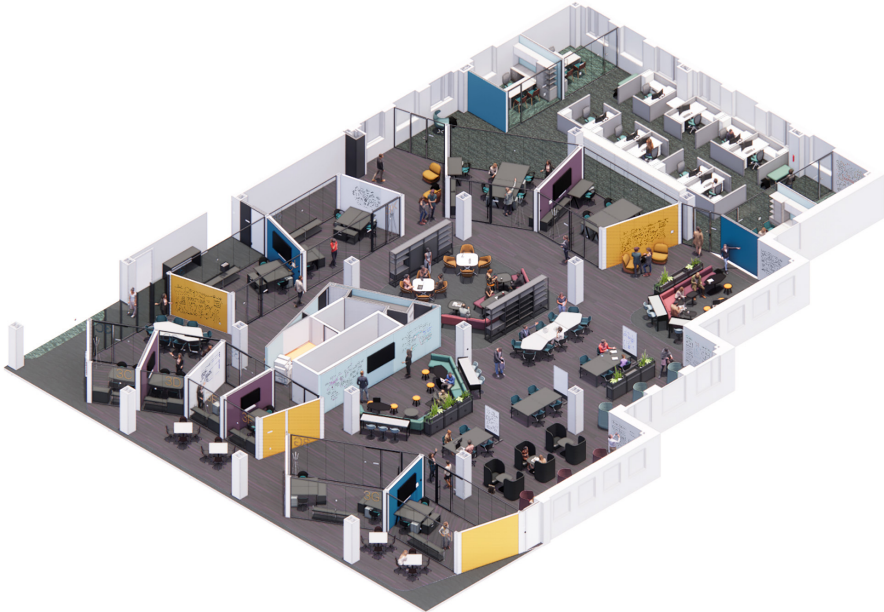
Community B – The Faculty

Centers for Digital Scholarship



Community B – The Faculty

Centers for Digital
Scholarship



Project Outcomes

- Welcoming and engaging spaces outside security perimeter
- Research space for projects from 3 Colleges (Law, CAMD, CSSH)
- Increased number of study seats

	Overall Seat Counts		
	Existing	Proposed	% Increase
User Seats - Open	2354	2,562	9%
User Seats - Closed	280	455	63%
Workspace Seats	161	304	89%
Total Seats	2,795	3,321	19%

Thank You

p.yott@northeastern.edu

<https://library.northeastern.edu>