

# Public Library Staffing Report

RESULTS FROM THE  
2024 PLA ANNUAL SURVEY

# Acknowledgments

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## Public Library Association

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# Executive Summary

“From Alabama to Alaska, from the Bronx to Maui, the vital services these librarians provide reinforces what we all know: that libraries everywhere are an essential public good, and the people who power them serve to inform, connect, educate, and empower their communities.”<sup>1</sup>

—Cindy Hohl, ALA Past President

The Public Library Association (PLA) conducted the 2024 Public Library Staff Survey as part of a commitment to understanding and addressing the evolving needs of library staff across the country. The survey gathered information about staff roles and representation, hiring and retention practices, and goals and activities aimed at creating a welcoming environment for staff and community members of all backgrounds and abilities in public libraries nationwide. The findings highlight both the opportunities and challenges faced by libraries today and in the future.

**Salaries** for library directors and beginning librarians are not keeping pace with inflation. In real terms, the average salaries reported in 2024 represent a slight decrease from 2021. Survey respondents indicate that low salaries or wages have a negative impact on their ability to hire and retain staff.



Overall, 18% of all public libraries report **losing staff positions** in the 12 months prior to the 2024 survey, a lower percentage than in 2021 (22.6%). Nearly one in three city libraries (29.1%) report losing staff positions in the past 12 months, compared to 18% of suburban libraries, and 17.1% of town/rural libraries.

While the most common **library staff roles** remain consistent from 2021, a greater percentage of libraries now have staff in roles dedicated to community engagement and outreach. Asked what new types of roles the library would like to create if funding were available, community engagement and outreach also topped the list (19.5% of open-ended comments mentioned this type of role).



Most libraries (96.4%) continue to support **staff advancement** within the field in one or more ways, but fewer libraries offer time or funding for professional development relative to 2021.

Relative to 2021, more public libraries have formal, written goals related to **equity, diversity, inclusion, and accessibility**. However, they report engaging with fewer EDIA activities overall. The exceptions are slight increases in the percentage of libraries conducting reviews of their digital presence for accessibility (57.1%) and providing programming and outreach for community members who are neurodivergent or disabled (47.3%).





Over 90% of public libraries have main entrances that are **accessible** for individuals with disabilities, and over 80% have interior hallways and bathrooms that meet ADA standards. However, only about a third (36%) have braille signage or other assistance for low vision individuals, and half (48.4%) have public computers with accessible technologies and software.

As a profession, the 2024 survey results can inform how we continue to look for opportunities to learn and improve, welcome new library workers into the field, and ensure evolving staff roles meet community needs. Staff are essential to our public libraries, making all other services and resources possible. PLA is committed to providing opportunities for professional growth and advocating for the needs of libraries and library workers.

## About the Survey

PLA fielded the Public Library Staff Survey in fall 2024. This survey was first administered in 2021 in response to requests for current data on staffing trends. The Measurement, Evaluation, and Assessment Advisory Group worked with PLA staff to update the survey for 2024, ensuring it meets library needs for actionable data regarding staff roles and related policies.



In 2024 a special section on Accessibility was developed in partnership with ALA's Public Programs Office, the Office for Diversity, Literacy, and Outreach Services, and the Association of College and Research Libraries.

PLA invited all U.S. public libraries (9,226 administrative entities, as defined by the Institute of Museum and Library Services) to participate in the 2024 Staff Survey between September 23 and December 21, 2024. Ultimately, 1,478 public libraries participated, with a response rate of 16.0%. While usually a single individual—the library director, administrator, or data coordinator—responds on behalf of the library, that person may have worked with other staff or departments, such as Human Resources, to answer some of the questions, particularly regarding staff counts and representation. Survey respondents were able to save their progress and complete the survey in more than one sitting.

Unless otherwise noted, the results presented in this report are weighted to account for differences between the responding libraries and the universe of all U.S. public libraries. All questions on the survey were voluntary, and the tables in the [Detailed Results](#) section include the number of respondents for each survey question. The percentage estimates reflect the percentage of respondents for a particular question, rather than the percentage of the full sample. See [Appendix A](#) for further details on the sampling and analysis methodology.

The 2021 Public Library Staff and Diversity Survey serves as a baseline year, enabling a comparison with the results from 2024. However, in the process of conducting the 2024 analysis we discovered an error in the 2021 weights. We corrected the error and produced revised weights that are reflected in this report. The revisions do not substantively affect the conclusions drawn in the *2021 Public Library*

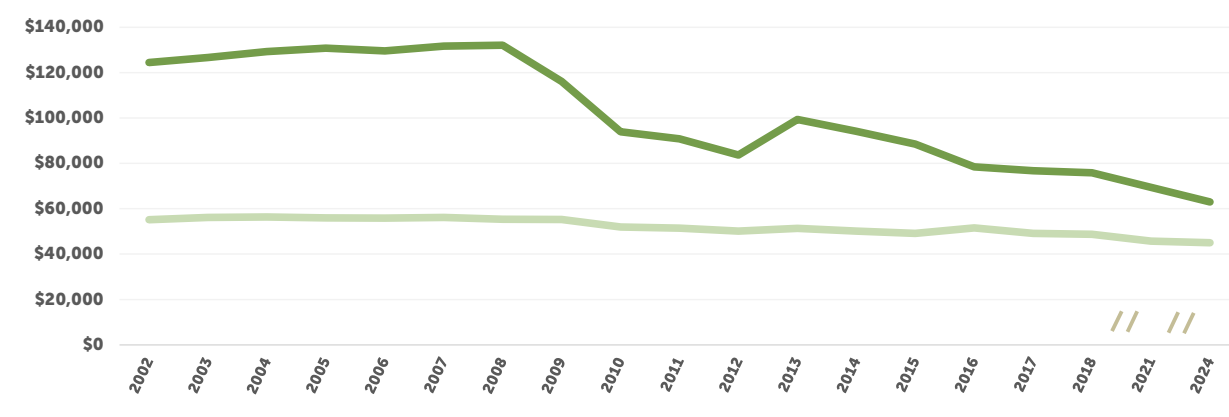
*Staff and Diversity Report*. Any future research or reporting should nonetheless rely on the revised estimates, which are available in full from Benchmark ([librarybenchmark.org](https://librarybenchmark.org)).

The charts and tables throughout the report provide results for public libraries overall and by locale. Locale indicates the level of urbanization of a given location, with libraries categorized as city, suburban, or town/rural. Examining libraries across locale facilitates a greater understanding of how library staff, services, and resources vary across geographic and demographic contexts. Library systems are not evenly distributed across locale: While city libraries are a small proportion (6%) of all administrative entities (AEs), they serve over a third (37%) of the U.S. population. Suburban libraries are 25% of AEs and serve 42% of the population. Town/rural libraries make up the majority of AEs (69%) but serve less than a quarter (22%) of the population.<sup>2</sup> By examining libraries through the lens of the communities they serve, library staff can see trends for organizations like theirs, and PLA can identify challenges facing the profession and develop tailored, data-driven recommendations that advance the mission of public libraries and their staff.

## Salaries and Staff Representation

Competitive and fair salaries are essential to building, diversifying, and maintaining the library workforce. Data on library salaries and staff representation can shape policies that promote fairness and support libraries in addressing the needs of their staff and communities.

**Figure 1** shows the median annual salaries of library directors and beginning librarians for select years from 2002–2024, adjusted for inflation.<sup>3</sup> Data from 2002 to 2018 are drawn from the Public Library Data Service (PLDS) survey. PLA retired the PLDS after the 2018 collection and adapted these two salary questions for the staff survey starting in 2021. Data from the PLDS are unweighted, while data from 2021 and 2024 are weighted. In 2024, the overall median annual salary of a library director is \$63,000, meaning that half of all library directors earn more than \$63,000 annually, while the other



**Figure 1. Median salaries of library directors and beginning librarians in the United States, select years 2002–2024 (in 2024 dollars).** See [Tables 1 and 2](#) for detailed results for 2024.

Note: results prior to 2021 are unweighted.

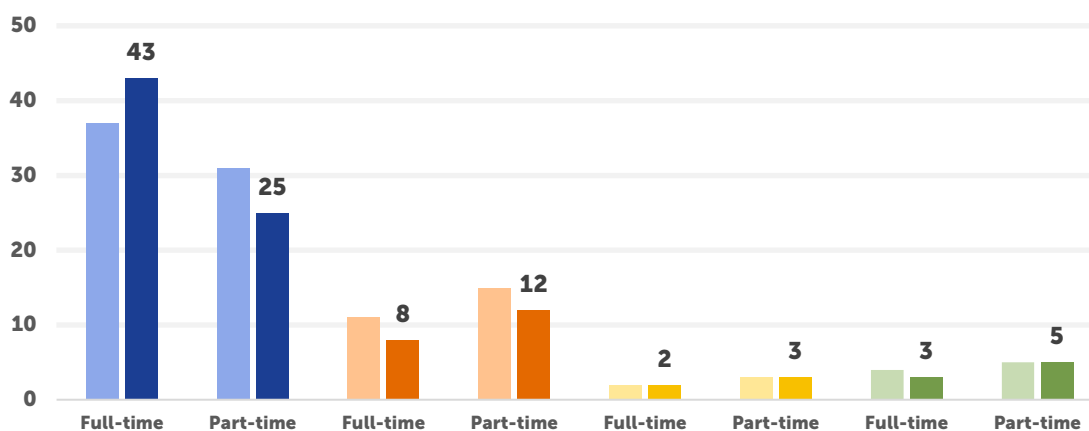
■ Library Director ■ Beginning Librarian

half earn less. In real terms, accounting for inflation, this represents a decrease of about \$5,500 from the 2021 median of \$69,430. The median annual salary of a beginning librarian is \$45,000, a slight decrease from the 2021 median of \$45,752.

Salaries for a library director and a beginning librarian differ based on the library’s locale (see [Tables 1 and 2](#)). Library directors in city libraries have a median annual salary of \$144,724, compared to \$98,000 for directors of suburban libraries and \$50,000 for directors of town/rural libraries. Salaries for beginning librarians also differ by locale, though to a lesser extent. Beginning librarians in city libraries have a median annual salary of \$53,737, compared to \$50,000 in suburban libraries, and \$38,000 in town or rural libraries.

Libraries that struggle to fill positions indicate that compensation is a top concern. 44.3% of respondents (n=219) to an open-ended question point to pay and benefits as a reason, particularly for part-time or hourly staff. Low compensation can also make it difficult to retain staff. One town/rural library respondent wrote, “The pay is very low and no benefits, especially health care. Each time our programming position is filled, it is less than three months and we are searching again.” Respondents in city libraries point to the same trends, for example: “Our library struggles to fill open positions because our salaries are not competitive. Pay rate is a significant factor for on-boarding new staff and retaining staff.” 20% of respondents (n=99) indicate that a lack of qualified candidates is also an issue. Other factors include limited work hours or part-time schedule and the location of the library, including the cost of living and availability of housing in the area.

The 2024 survey asked libraries to report on their number of full-time and part-time staff members. Asking about the number of staff, rather than the number of full-time equivalent (FTE) positions, complements existing data (e.g., the IMLS Public Libraries Survey) and centers *people* over positions and hours. [Figure 2](#) shows the median number of full-time and part-time staff in public libraries by locale for 2021 and 2024. Overall, public libraries in 2024 report a median of 3 full-time



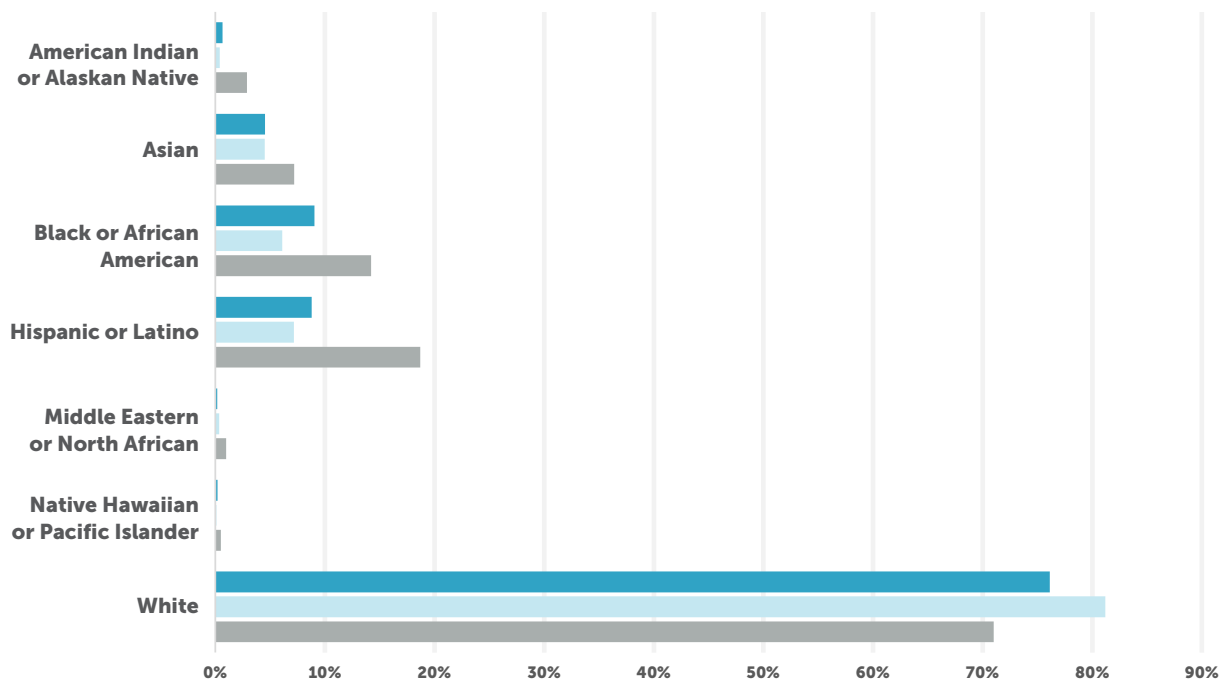
**Figure 2. Median number of full-time and part-time library staff by locale, 2021 (lighter-colored bars on the left in each pair) and 2024 (darker-colored bars with data labels).**

See [Table 3](#) for detailed results for 2024.

■ City ■ Suburban ■ Town/Rural ■ Overall

paid staff members and 5 part-time staff members, with the number of full-time and part-time staff differing by locale. In 2024, city libraries have a median of 43 full-time and 25 part-time staff members; suburban libraries have a median of 8 full-time and 12 part-time staff members; and libraries in town/rural areas reported a median of 2 full-time and 3 part-time staff members. The only increase from 2021 is in the median full-time staff in city libraries; all other counts remain the same or show slight declines. Data from the IMLS Public Libraries Survey also suggest that staffing levels remain below pre-pandemic levels.

It is important for library patrons to see themselves reflected in both the library’s personnel and collections to foster a sense of belonging within the community. The survey asked questions regarding staff identity and representation to gauge how well library staff reflect the communities they serve. The results from 2024 show that Black, Indigenous, and people of color (BIPOC) are underrepresented in the library workforce compared to the U.S. population.<sup>4</sup> This finding is consistent with 2021 and long-standing trends in the library workforce.<sup>5</sup> **Figure 3** shows the distribution of full-time and part-time library staff by race and ethnicity reported by libraries in 2024, compared to the U.S. population as reported on the 2020 Census. An individual may report multiple identities, so the total percentages do not add up to 100.



**Figure 3. Percentage of full-time and part-time library staff by race/ethnicity compared to the U.S. population.** See [Tables 4](#) and [5](#) for detailed results. Note: Some libraries reported that they did not know or could not report the race and/or ethnicity of their staff. Estimates presented in this report exclude unknown or unreported race/ethnicity.

■ Full-time library staff ■ Part-time library staff ■ U.S. population

Overall, among full-time library staff whose race and ethnicity were reported, 76.1% are White, 9.1% are Black or African American, 8.8% are Hispanic or Latino, 4.5% are Asian, and fewer than 1.0% each are American Indian or Alaskan Native, Middle Eastern or North African, or Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander. The survey findings suggest that part-time library staff are slightly less diverse than the full-time staff. Among part-time library staff whose race and ethnicity were reported, 81.2% are White, 7.2% are Hispanic or Latino, 6.1% are Black or African American, 4.5% are Asian, and fewer than 1.0% each are American Indian or Alaskan Native, Middle Eastern or North African, or Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander.

The diversity of library staff varies by locale (see [Tables 4](#) and [5](#)), with city libraries having a greater proportion of BIPOC staff members. White full-time staff members comprise the largest single racial group across all library types in 2024, representing 65.3% of staff in city libraries, 78.9% in suburban libraries, and 89.3% in town/rural libraries. Black or African American full-time staff members make up 14.3% of staff at city libraries, 7.1% of staff at suburban libraries, and 3.6% of staff in town/rural libraries. Similarly, city libraries have a larger percentage of Hispanic or Latino and Asian full-time staff compared to suburban and town/rural libraries.

By gender, 75.9% of full-time staff members identify as female, 23.2% are male, and 0.9% are a different gender identity. This pattern is also evident among part-time staff, where 81.7% of part-time staff are female, compared with 16.6% male and 1.7% with a different gender identity. This overrepresentation of female staff is consistent with results from 2021.

Not all public libraries collect data on staff race, ethnicity, and/or gender, and those that do may not have the data in a form that enables them to easily report it. Of the libraries that provided an explanation for not reporting, 65.3% said they do not collect the data, 14.6% said they do not feel confident about the accuracy of the data they do have, 11.9% are not able to share the data, and 9.0% reported they do not have access to the data.

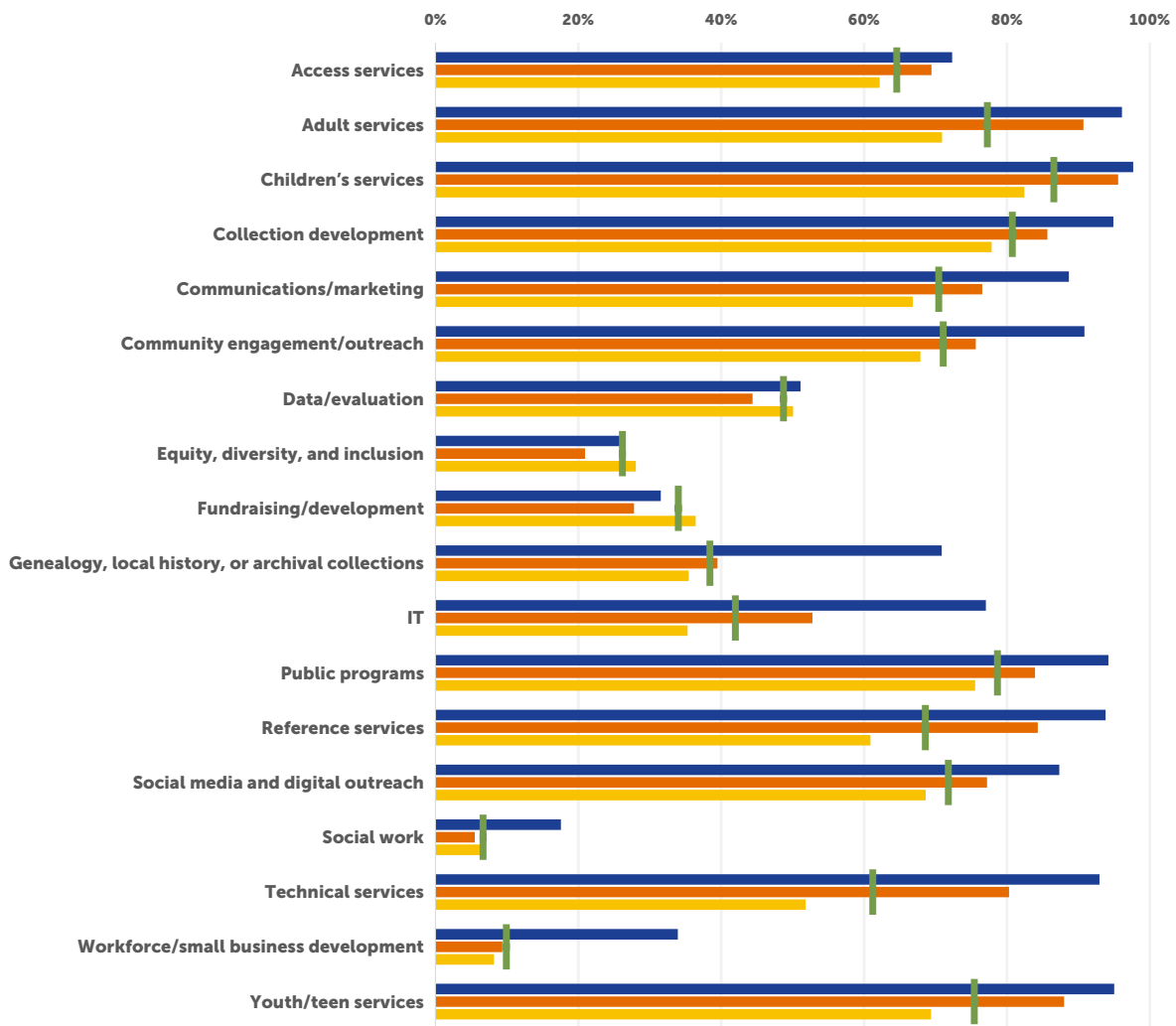
## Library Roles

The 2024 Public Library Staff Survey asked libraries to indicate whether they have staff members whose job title or description falls under certain specified roles ([Figure 4](#)). At least three-quarters of all public libraries have staff dedicated to five core roles: children's service (86.6%), collection development (80.8%), public programs (78.7%), adult services (77.3%), and youth/teen services (75.4%). These five library roles were also the most common in public libraries in 2021.

The frequency of dedicated staff roles differed based on the library's locale.<sup>6</sup> For example, children's services is one of the most common staff roles for libraries overall, but while nearly all libraries in cities and suburban locales have dedicated staff (97.7% and 95.6%, respectively), a smaller percentage of town/rural libraries (82.5%) have staff dedicated to



**86.6% of libraries have staff dedicated to children's services and 75.4% have youth/teen services.**



**Figure 4. Library Roles.** See [Table 9](#) for detailed results.

■ City ■ Suburban ■ Town/Rural ■ Overall

children’s services. In contrast, town/rural libraries are more likely than city or suburban libraries to have staff dedicated to fundraising (36.4% compared to 31.5% and 27.8%, respectively, for city and suburban libraries). The proportion of city libraries that have specialized staff for social work (17.6%) and workforce/small business development (33.9%) is more than double the proportion for suburban or town/rural libraries.

Some staff roles have become more common since 2021, particularly those related to community engagement, outreach, and communications. For example, 71.1% of all public libraries have staff dedicated to community engagement and outreach in 2024, an increase from 65.6% in 2021. Similarly, 70.5% of all public libraries have staff dedicated to communications and marketing roles in 2024, an increase from 65.3% in 2021. Furthermore, roles pertaining to public programs and social media and digital outreach increased by nearly five percentage points. In 2024, 78.7% of libraries report having

staff dedicated to public programs (compared to 73.8% in 2021), and 71.8% have staff dedicated to social media and digital outreach (compared to 67.0% in 2021). These findings suggest that libraries have continued to increase their focus on engaging and connecting with the community they serve, in-person and online.

Two open-ended questions asked respondents to share details of new types of roles the library has hired staff to fill within the past year, and new types of roles libraries would like to create if they had funding. Recent hiring has focused most on access services (17.6% of respondents, n=86), administrative or leadership roles (14.7%, n=72), and community engagement and outreach (13.3%, n=65). If funding were available, respondents would prioritize hiring for roles in community engagement and outreach (19.5%, n=187), communications and marketing (16.1%, n=154), social work (13.1%, n=126), and public programs (12.8%, n=123). Other emerging roles respondents mention include makerspace staff, digital navigators, and AI specialists.

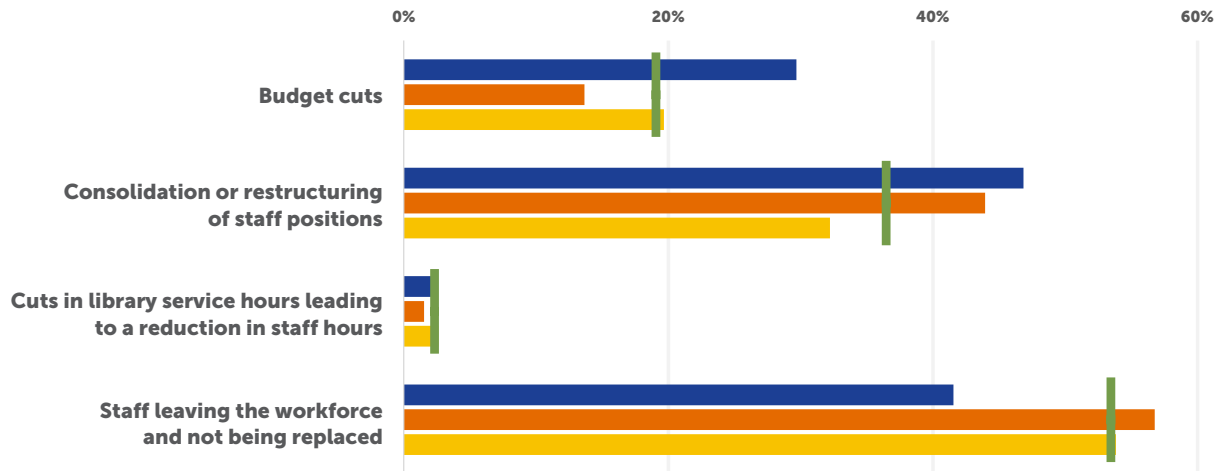
The survey asked respondents whether their library offers structured or formal programs or benefits to support staff in advancing within their profession. Providing these programs can boost retention and morale, as well as strengthen the profession. Nearly all public libraries (96.4%) indicate they have at least one structured or formal program for staff advancement in 2024. The most common is time during work hours or paid time off for professional development activities (90.6%), followed by opportunities to participate in library work beyond assigned duties to improve skills or broaden experience (81.4%), and funding for professional development (79.6%). The least common programs are mentorship (9.1%) and tuition reimbursement (34.6%). Given the importance of professional development to the advancement of the library field, it is concerning that the proportion of libraries offering time or funding for it has declined in the past three years. In 2021, 93.8% of libraries offered time for professional development and 84.2% offered funding; in 2024 those numbers are 90.6% and 79.6% respectively.



**79.6% of libraries provide funding for staff professional development.**

Support for staff advancement varies by locale (see [Table 10](#)). Over 95% of city and suburban libraries report having funding for professional development, compared to 73.8% of town/rural libraries. In addition, about three-quarters of city and suburban libraries offer funding for professional association memberships, compared to fewer than two-thirds of town/rural libraries. Likewise, tuition reimbursement is offered at city libraries (70.1%) at more than twice the rate of town/rural libraries (27.9%). Mentorship programs have the lowest overall support (9.1%), but they are offered in city libraries at a rate of 19.5%, more than twice the rate of town/rural libraries (7.2%).

When asked about the eligibility for staff advancement programs, nearly two-thirds of public libraries report that all staff are eligible. Of those libraries that restrict eligibility, about one-third indicate that eligibility is determined based on job role or title, and about 20% of libraries reported that eligibility is restricted to full-time staff. In the open-ended responses to an “other” option, some libraries indicate that eligibility may also depend on the availability of funding or job performance.



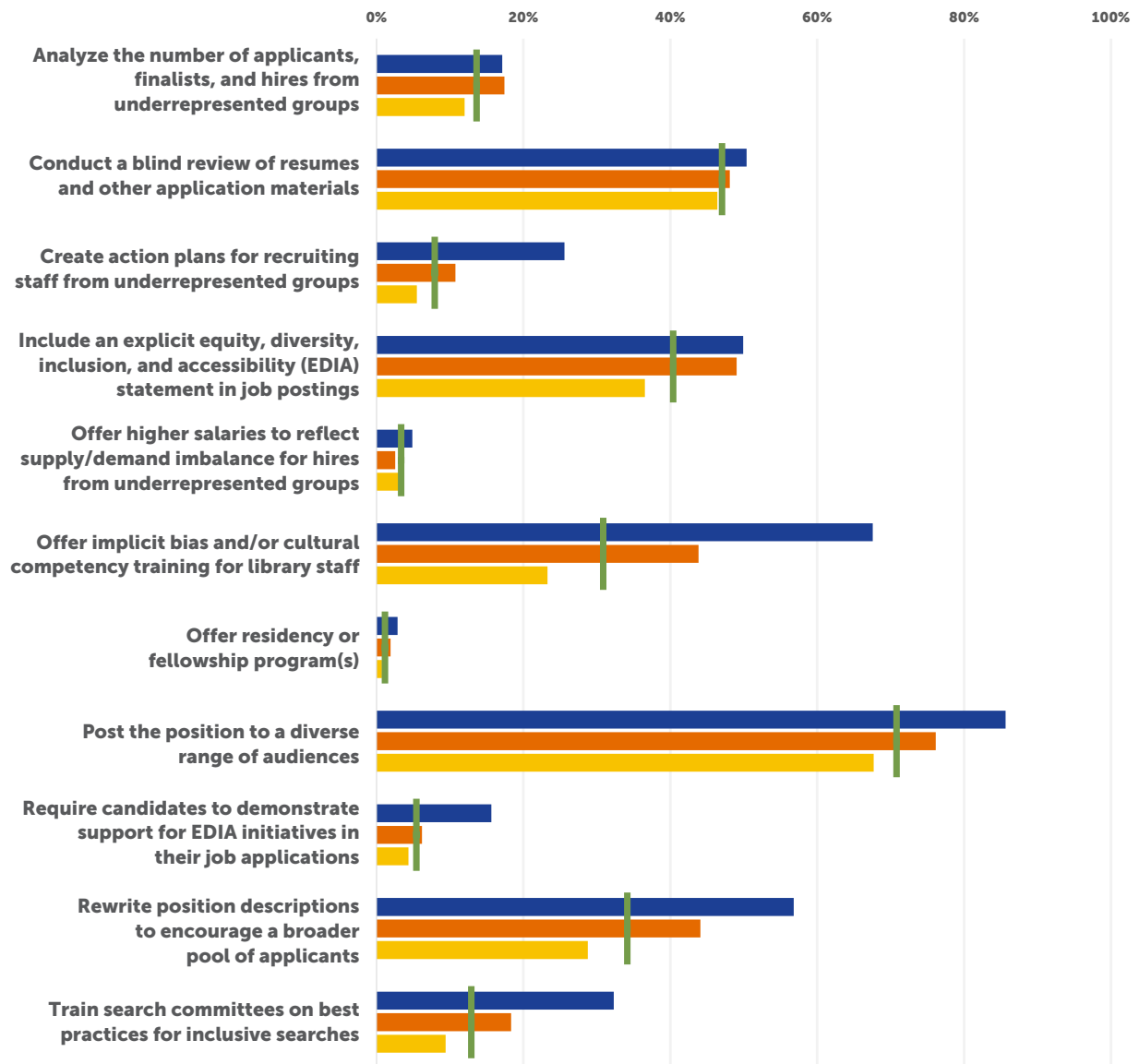
**Figure 5. Reasons for lost staff positions.** See [Table 13](#) for detailed results.

■ City ■ Suburban ■ Town/Rural ■ Overall

A two-part survey question asked public libraries if they have lost staff positions in the last 12 months, and if they have, the reasons for the loss. Overall, 18% of public libraries lost staff positions, compared to 22.6% of all libraries in 2021. In 2024, nearly one in three city libraries (29.1%) report losing staff positions within the past 12 months, compared to 18% of suburban libraries, and 17.1% of town/rural libraries. **Figure 5** shows the reasons why libraries lost staff positions. Overall, the most frequently reported reason is staff leaving the workforce and not being replaced (53.5%). More town/rural and suburban libraries cite this reason than their city counterparts. Among city libraries the top reason is consolidation or restructuring of staff positions (46.8%).

## Hiring and Retention

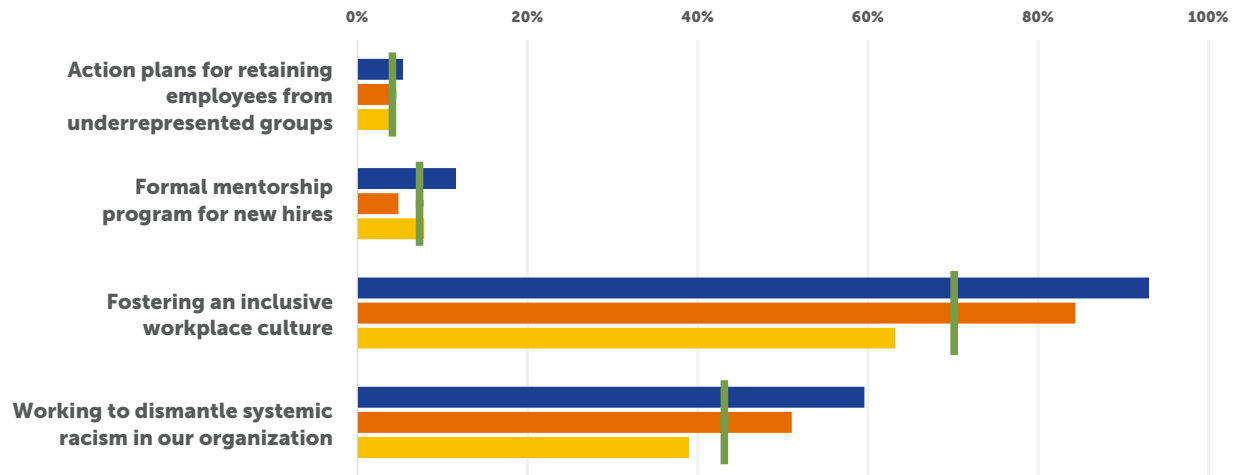
Staff hiring and retention practices can have a direct impact on the quality, efficiency, and inclusiveness of public library services. The Staff Survey asked libraries to report various strategies they use to hire staff from underrepresented groups, including but not limited to gender, race, sexual orientation, or ability. In 2024, 88.5% of all public libraries use at least one hiring strategy, compared to 91.5% in 2021 (**Figure 6**). The most common strategy is posting the position to a diverse range of audiences (70.8%), followed by conducting a blind review of resumes and other application materials (47.1%), and including an explicit equity, diversity, inclusion, and accessibility (EDIA) statement in job postings (40.4%). These three strategies were also the top choices in 2021. The strategies that are least employed include offering higher salaries to reflect the supply/demand imbalance for hires from underrepresented groups (3.4%) and offering residency or fellowship programs (1.2%). The greatest change between 2021 and 2024 was in the proportion of libraries offering implicit bias and/or cultural competency training for staff, which declined from 38.3% in 2021 to 30.9% in 2024.



**Figure 6. Hiring strategies.** See [Table 14](#) for detailed results.

■ City ■ Suburban ■ Town/Rural ■ Overall

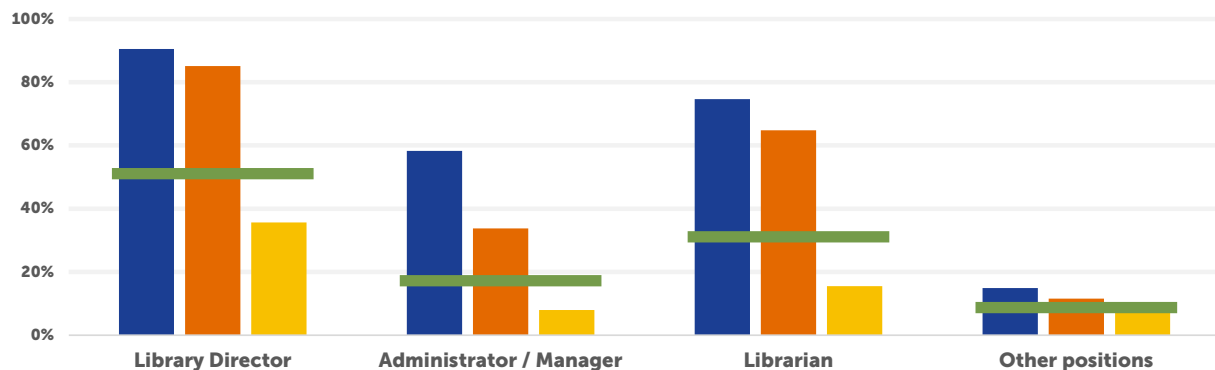
About three quarters (76.7%) of libraries overall engage in at least one strategy to improve the retention of staff from underrepresented groups, including 94.8% of city libraries, 86.5% of suburban libraries, and 67.9% of town/rural libraries. [Figure 7](#) shows that 70.1% of all public libraries report fostering an inclusive workplace culture and 43.1% report working to dismantle systemic racism within their organization. However, consistent with findings from 2021, considerably fewer libraries implement action plans for retaining employees from underrepresented groups (4.1%) or formal mentorship programs for new hires (7.3%).



**Figure 7. Retention strategies.** See [Table 15](#) for detailed results.

■ City ■ Suburban ■ Town/Rural ■ Overall

New questions added to the 2024 Staff Survey asked respondents whether certain types of positions at the library require a Master’s of Library Science (MLS) or Master’s of Library and Information Science (MLIS) and whether those requirements have changed. From the IMLS Public Libraries Survey, we know that 24% of total full-time equivalent (FTE) staff are librarians with an MLS.<sup>7</sup> In some states, the degree is a statutory requirement for the library director.<sup>8</sup> However, up to this point we had no consistent information about MLS/MLIS requirements by position or how requirements have changed over time. The Staff Survey results indicate that just over half (51%) of libraries require an MLS/MLIS for a director position, 31.1% for a librarian, and 17.2% for an administrator or manager ([Figure 8](#)). MLS/MLIS requirements are more common among city libraries than their suburban or town/rural counterparts.



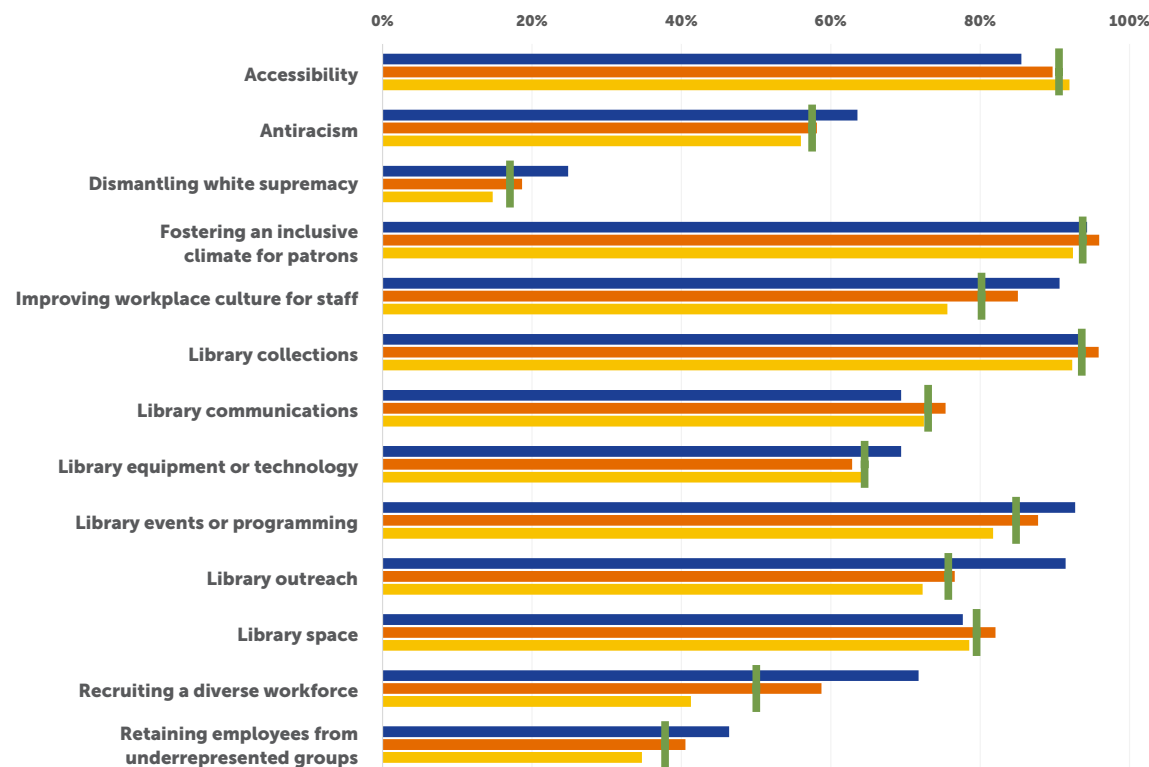
**Figure 8. MLS/MLIS requirements by type of staff position.** See [Table 16](#) for detailed results.

■ City ■ Suburban ■ Town/Rural ■ Overall

7.4% of libraries overall report that MLS/MLIS requirements have changed in the previous two years. Of the 244 respondents who provided an explanation in open-ended comments, 16% (n=39) said they removed requirements for one or more positions, compared to 8.6% (n=21) that added the requirement. 11.1% (n=27) of respondents indicate that the requirement changed to include equivalent education or experience. Research has suggested that the MLS can be a “gatekeeper” to the profession, limiting potential to diversify its ranks. While there are meaningful outcomes and skills of a library science degree, considering which positions truly require it and supporting staff as they pursue the degree could help reduce barriers to hiring and retention.<sup>9</sup>

## EDIA Goals and Activities

Improving equity, diversity, inclusion, and accessibility (EDIA) in libraries creates an environment of belonging, where all staff and community members can feel welcome. In 2024, 22.1% of all public libraries report that they have formal, written goals for equity, diversity, inclusion, and accessibility, an increase from 19.1% in 2021. The proportion of public libraries with formal, written goals is higher for libraries in cities (43.2%) than for those in suburban (26.9%) or town/rural locales (18.7%). [Figure 9](#) shows the areas of focus among libraries with formal EDIA goals. Overall, the most common goal



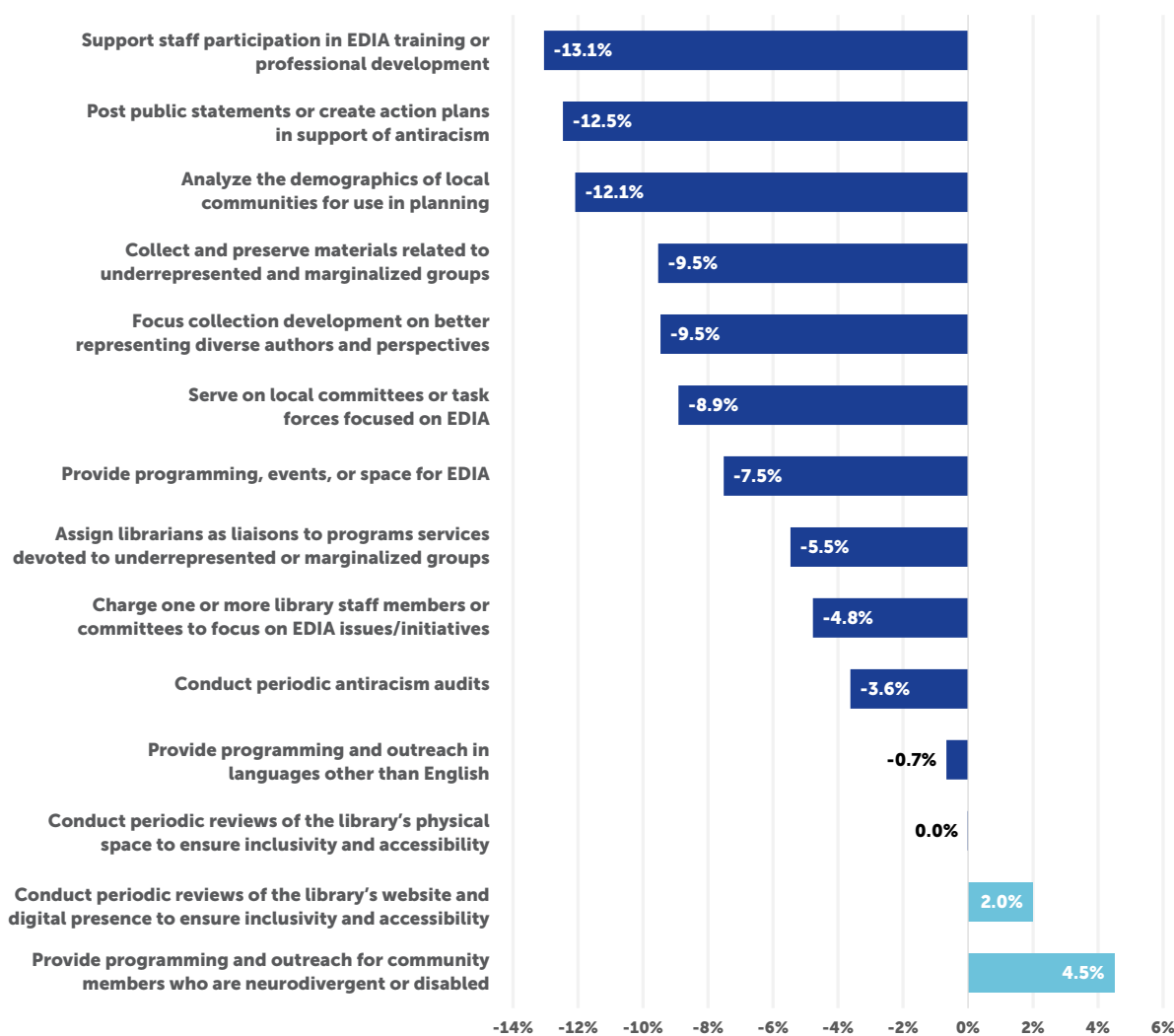
**Figure 9. EDIA goal areas.** See [Table 17](#) for detailed results.

■ City ■ Suburban ■ Town/Rural ■ Overall

areas are fostering an inclusive climate for library users (93.7%), library collections (93.6%), and accessibility (90.5%). In 2024, fewer libraries have goals related to dismantling white supremacy (17.1%) and efforts to retain staff from underrepresented groups (37.8%) relative to 2021.

Regardless of whether the library has formal goals, the survey also asked libraries to report on the types of activities they engage in related to EDIA (Table 19). In 2024 the most common activities include focusing collection development on better representing diverse authors and perspectives (75.0%), conducting periodic reviews of the library’s physical space to ensure inclusivity and accessibility (65.5%), and analyzing the demographics of local communities for use in planning (59.1%).

Overall, library engagement with EDIA activities has declined in the past three years (Figure 10). 93.3% of libraries reported at least one EDIA activity in 2021 and that proportion decreased to 87.4%



**Figure 10. Change in overall proportion of libraries engaging in each type of EDIA activity, 2021 to 2024.** See Table 18 for detailed results on EDIA activities by locale.

■ Reduced activity ■ Increased activity



**57.1% of libraries regularly review their website to ensure digital accessibility.**

in 2024. Given how the terms equity, diversity, and inclusion and related work have become increasingly politicized, this is perhaps unsurprising. The largest declines are in the areas: supporting staff participation in EDIA training or professional development (a decline of 13.1% overall), posting public statements or creating action plans in support of antiracism (-12.5%), and analyzing the demographics of local communities for use in planning (-12.1%). In the latter case, the percentage of city and suburban libraries who analyze demographic data remained relatively unchanged, but this activity decreased by about 17 percentage points for town/rural libraries, from 67.3% in 2021

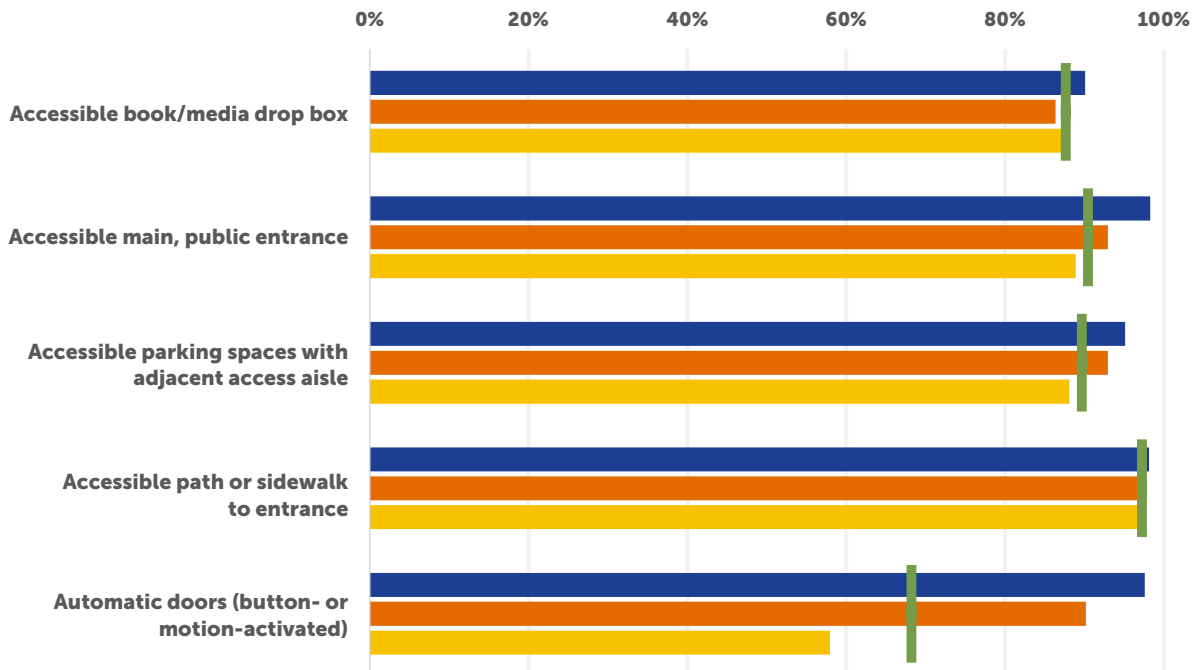
to 50.5% in 2024. In another example, the percentage of libraries that assign librarians as liaisons to programs/services devoted to underrepresented or marginalized groups decreased from 2021 (27.5%) to 2024 (22.0%). In this case, the percentage of suburban and town/rural libraries assigning librarians as liaisons did not vary much between 2021 and 2024, but the proportion of city libraries decreased by 11 percentage points. Two areas saw increases: in 2024, a greater percentage of public libraries overall provide programming and outreach for community members who are neurodivergent or disabled, and a greater percentage report conducting periodic reviews of the library's website and digital presence to ensure inclusivity and accessibility.

## Special Section Accessibility

The 2024 Public Library Staff Survey included a special section with questions about accessibility for people with disabilities in library spaces and programs. These new questions were developed through a partnership with the American Library Association's Public Programs Office and its Libraries Transform Communities initiative, and in consultation with the Office for Diversity, Literacy, and Outreach Services and the Association of College and Research Libraries (the same questions appeared on ACRL's 2024 survey). For the purposes of the survey, accessibility is defined as "ensuring that opportunity is afforded to persons with disabilities to acquire the same information, engage in the same interactions, and enjoy the same services as someone without a disability," a definition adapted from the Office of Civil Rights at the U.S. Department of Education and the American Alliance of Museums. The survey questions focus primarily on physical, rather than digital, accessible facilities and practices in libraries. Results will inform further research and advocacy efforts to improve library accessibility across the country.

**Figure 11** illustrates the prevalence of specific physical accommodations implemented outside the library to support access for individuals with disabilities. (For libraries with multiple branches, respondents were asked to answer for their main or central library.) Overall, a very high percentage of libraries report exterior physical accommodations to help individuals with disabilities access the facility.



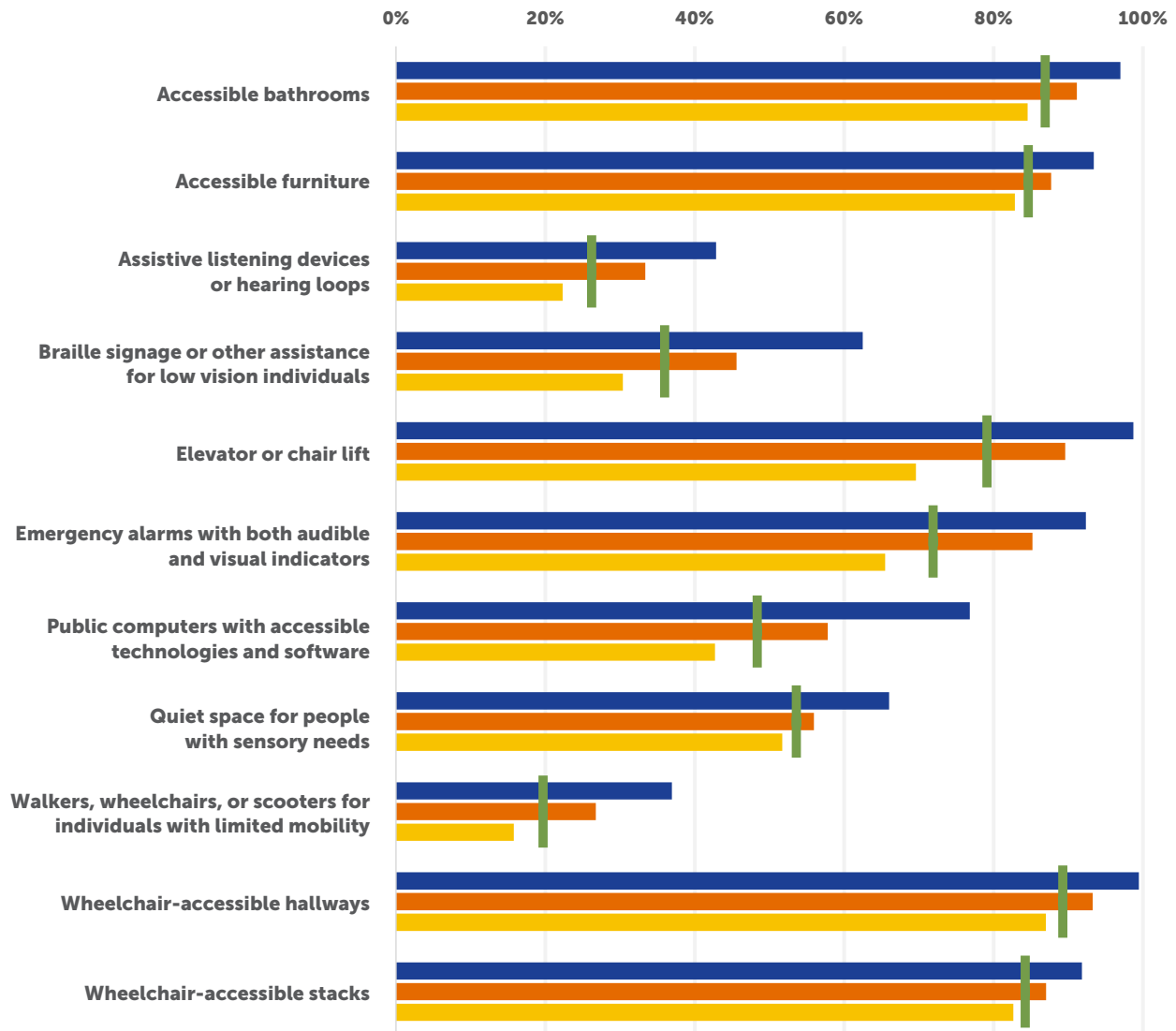


**Figure 11. Physical accommodations outside the library.** See [Table 19](#) for detailed results.

■ City ■ Suburban ■ Town/Rural ■ Overall

Nearly all libraries (97.2%) report having an accessible path or sidewalk to the entrance, and most have an accessible main/public entrance (90.4%), accessible parking spaces with adjacent access aisles (89.7%), and an accessible book/media drop box (87.9%). Over two-thirds (68.2%) of all libraries have automatic doors.

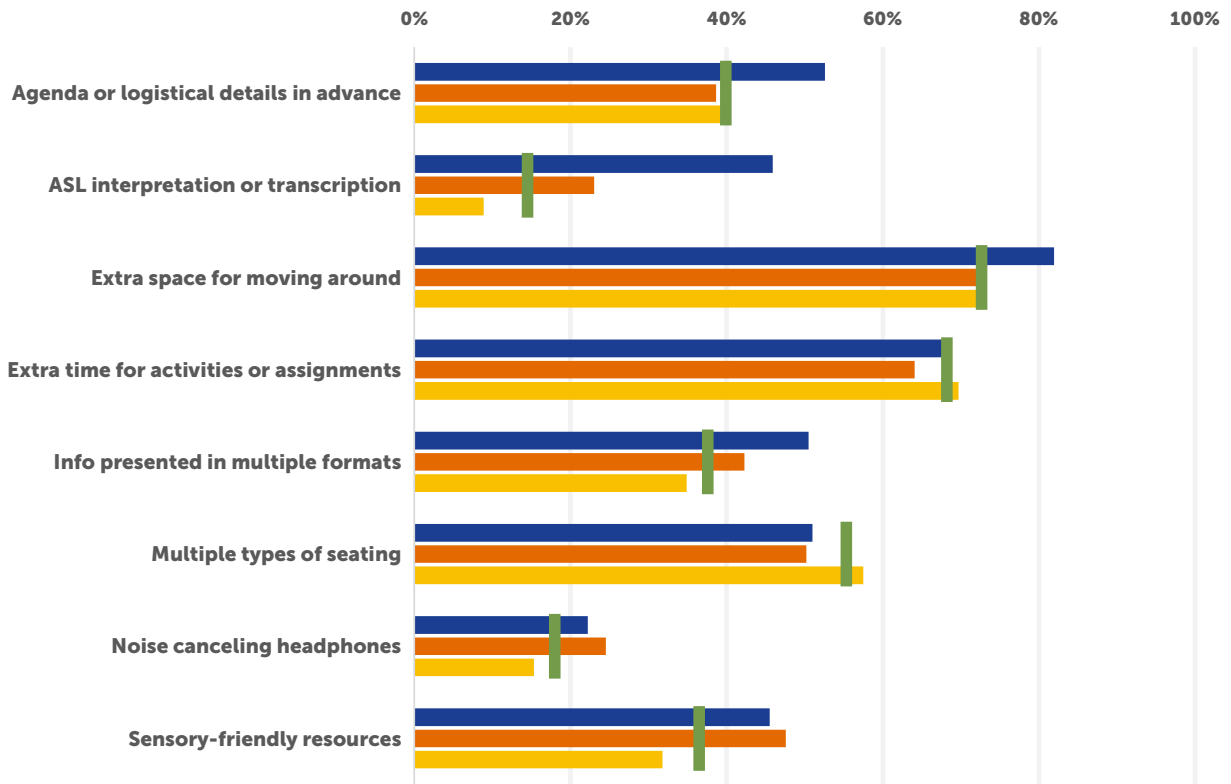
There is greater variability in the extent to which public libraries offer accommodations inside of their facilities ([Figure 12](#)). The most common physical accommodations are wheelchair-accessible hallways (89.3%); accessible bathrooms (86.9%); accessible furniture (84.7%); wheelchair-accessible stacks (84.2%), and, within multi-story buildings, an elevator or chair lift (79.1% of libraries with multi-story buildings). Wheelchair-accessible facilities fall within clear standards and expectations under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). However, only around half of libraries have quiet space for people with sensory needs (53.6%) or public computers with accessible technologies and software (48.4%). About one quarter of public libraries have assistive listening devices or hearing loops (26.2%), and relatively few (19.7%) offer walkers, wheelchairs, or scooters for individuals with limited mobility. The extent to which libraries have implemented indoor accessibility accommodations varies by locale. For example, city libraries are twice as likely to have braille signage or other assistance for low vision individuals (62.5%) than town/rural libraries (30.4%). Additionally, town/rural libraries (65.5%) are much less likely than suburban (85.2%) or city libraries (92.4%) to have emergency alarms with both audible and visual indicators.



**Figure 12. Physical accommodations inside the library.** See [Table 20](#) for detailed results.

■ City ■ Suburban ■ Town/Rural ■ Overall

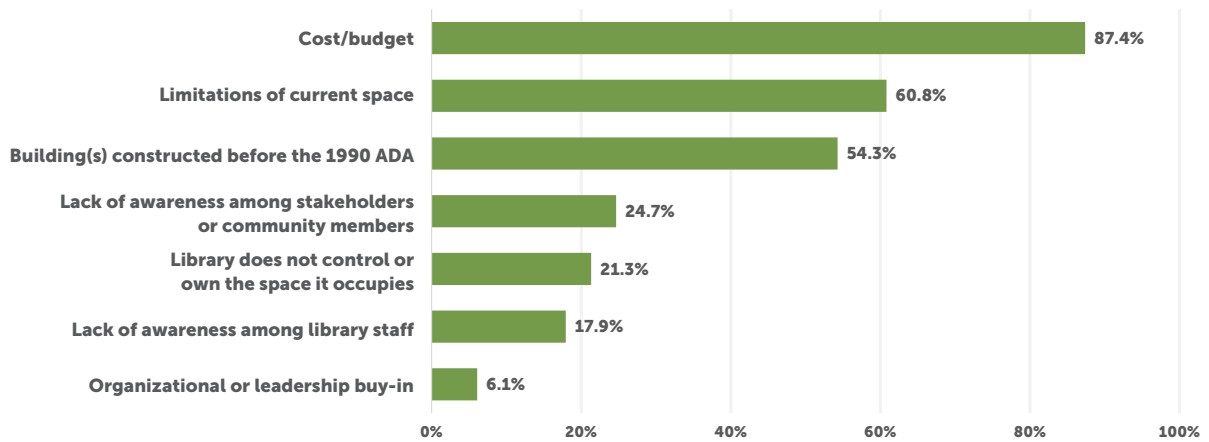
Another question asked respondents what resources are available to patrons with disabilities who attend library programs or classes, either as standard practice or upon request ([Figure 13](#)). The most common resources offered by all libraries are extra space for moving around (72.7%), extra time to complete activities or assignments (68.2%), and multiple types of seating (55.3%). The availability of other resources for patrons with disabilities varies greatly by locale. For example, 45.9% of city libraries report having an ASL interpreter or transcription available for patrons, compared with 23.0% of suburban libraries and 8.9% of town/rural libraries. In contrast, town/rural libraries are more likely than city or suburban libraries to offer extra time to complete activities and are more likely to offer multiple types of seating.



**Figure 13. Accessibility resources in programs or classes.** See [Table 21](#) for detailed results.

■ City ■ Suburban ■ Town/Rural ■ Overall

A final question asked libraries about limitations on their ability to improve the accessibility of library facilities in 2024 ([Figure 14](#)). While cost or budget is the top reason that 87.4% of libraries cite for being unable to make accessibility improvements, the limitations of the current space (60.8%), or building(s) constructed before the 1990 Americans with Disabilities Act (54.3%) are also limitations. Based on findings of the 2022 Services for Strong Communities Survey, 40.3% of library buildings have not undergone major renovations since 2000 or earlier, and these outdated facilities can be a barrier to inclusion.<sup>10</sup> Very few libraries report organizational or leadership buy-in (6.1%) as a limitation. There is relatively little variability by locale in reported limitations on the ability to improve accessibility, with a few notable exceptions (see [Table 22](#)). Suburban libraries are less likely than either city or town/rural libraries to report that their buildings were constructed before the 1990 Americans with Disabilities Act (47.9% compared to 55.1% and 56.4% for city and town/rural libraries, respectively). Town/rural libraries are more likely to report cost or budget limitations (89.3% compared to 82.8% for both city and suburban libraries). City libraries are less likely to say that stakeholders or community members lack awareness of accessibility needs and best practices (14.9% compared to 26.8% for suburban and 24.7% for town/rural libraries).



**Figure 14. Limitations on the library’s ability to improve accessibility of facilities (overall).** See [Table 22](#) for detailed results by locale.

A final question in this section asked libraries to share information about other improvements, policies, or protocols they are considering related to accessibility. The respondents (n=354) make it clear that accessibility is top of mind as they review existing infrastructure and plan for improvements. A respondent at a city library in the southeast wrote that though their branches include older buildings, leased spaces, and newer construction, “accessibility is taken into consideration whenever we renovate an older facility or construct a new library.” In those circumstances, “sometimes we are able to provide accessibility improvements across all libraries at the same time . . . [and] other times we may pilot things at a few libraries to see if we should pursue funding for more widespread implementation.” While respondents from town and rural libraries are just as focused on taking accessibility needs into account, their comments show a greater concern for the barriers to improvement, particularly aging buildings and limited budgets. They highlight the importance of working with local government, friends’ groups, and state and national organizations to secure funding. Overall, respondents share the desire to “truly make the library welcoming and available to all people in the community.”

### Accessibility Resources

- ALA provides many [Accessibility Resources](#) and guides to best practices for libraries.
- Several [member groups](#) across ALA and its divisions work in this area and offer opportunities to connect to peers.
- The Libraries Transforming Communities: Accessible Small and Rural Communities initiative from ALA’s Public Programs Office provides grants for libraries. They have also compiled guides to best practices: “[Serving Patrons with Disabilities in Small and Rural Libraries](#)” and “[Accessible Conversations in Small and Rural Libraries](#).”



## Conclusion

The 2024 Public Library Staff Survey provides valuable insight into the dedicated individuals who power our nation's libraries and the ongoing efforts to provide critical services and a welcoming environment for all community members. The data on library staffing, salaries, activities, and accessibility can help identify challenges and guide improvements.

The results highlight the fact that public libraries are placing increased focus on engaging and connecting with the community they serve. Yet, like many public institutions, they face persistent challenges such as losing staff positions, a lack of staff diversity, and unequal distributions of resources across different community types. These challenges are neither unique nor exclusive to the library profession; however, collecting and reporting data on these topics helps generate awareness and support advocacy efforts aimed at strengthening the field.

Moving forward, ALA and PLA will continue to work closely with our members and partners to continue to support and advocate for library workers, and to strive for libraries as more inclusive and accessible spaces.

## Notes

1. ALA, "Ten Honorees Receive Prestigious I Love My Librarian Award for Outstanding Public Service," Dec. 16, 2024, [ala.org/news/2024/12/ten-honorees-receive-prestigious-i-love-my-librarian-award-outstanding-public-service](https://ala.org/news/2024/12/ten-honorees-receive-prestigious-i-love-my-librarian-award-outstanding-public-service).
2. Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS), Public Libraries Survey (FY 2023), [imls.gov/research-evaluation/data-collection/public-libraries-survey](https://imls.gov/research-evaluation/data-collection/public-libraries-survey).
3. A beginning librarian is defined as someone with an MLS degree and no professional experience, and respondents were asked to report the salary paid to a recent hire or the average of salaries if the library made multiple hires for a beginning librarian role in the previous 12 months.
4. In FY 2023, U.S. public libraries had 143,305 total full-time equivalent staff, an increase from 2022, but still slightly below the 143,883 reported in 2019. IMLS, "FY 2023: PLS Benchmarking Tables," [imls.gov/research-evaluation/surveys/public-libraries-survey-pls](https://imls.gov/research-evaluation/surveys/public-libraries-survey-pls).
5. The Staff Survey questions on race/ethnicity were updated for 2024 to align with new standards approved by the U.S. government's Office of Management and Budget. These revised standards use a single combined question for race and ethnicity where individual respondents may select as many options as apply. They also add a new category for Middle Eastern or North African. The changes will not be implemented in the Census Bureau's American Community Survey until 2027. PLA had already included the MENA category on the 2021 Staff Survey. For 2024, we removed the category for "multiple racial or ethnic identities" and added explicit instruction that staff may identify with multiple categories. See: OMB, Statistical Policy Directive No. 15: Standards for Maintaining, Collecting, and Presenting Federal Data on Race and Ethnicity (2024), [spd15revision.gov/](https://spd15revision.gov/).
6. Gallup & ALA, "Empowering Voices, Inspiring Change: Advancing Diversity within Librarianship," 2025, [acrobat.adobe.com/id/urn:aaid:sc:VA6C2:cca003bf-08b1-445a-9e5c-b18ace5fea9a](https://acrobat.adobe.com/id/urn:aaid:sc:VA6C2:cca003bf-08b1-445a-9e5c-b18ace5fea9a); ALA Office for Diversity, Literacy, and Outreach Services, "Diversity Counts," 2012, [ala.org/aboutala/offices/diversity/diversitycounts/divcounts](https://ala.org/aboutala/offices/diversity/diversitycounts/divcounts); Ioana G. Hulbert & Curtis Kendrick, "By Any Measure: The Racial Demographics of Librarians," Ithaka S+R, April 18, 2023, [sr.ithaka.org/publications/by-any-measure/](https://sr.ithaka.org/publications/by-any-measure/).

7. Note that while the question asked about staff dedicated to the area as part of their job title or description, respondents may overreport. In other words, while the library may have a staff member who does data/evaluation, that person's position description may not specifically mention data/evaluation as a responsibility.
8. IMLS, Public Libraries Survey (FY 2023).
9. EveryLibrary Institute, "Requirements to Become a Librarian by State," accessed July 2025, [everylibraryinstitute.org/requirements\\_to\\_become\\_a\\_librarian\\_by\\_state](https://everylibraryinstitute.org/requirements_to_become_a_librarian_by_state).
10. Curtis L. Kendrick, "Changing the Racial Demographics of Librarians," Ithaka S+R, April 18, 2023, [sr.ithaka.org/publications/changing-the-racial-demographics-of-librarians](https://sr.ithaka.org/publications/changing-the-racial-demographics-of-librarians).
11. Public Library Association, Public Library Services for Strong Communities Report: Results from the 2022 PLA Annual Survey (Chicago: Public Library Association, 2023).

## Dive into the survey results and peer comparisons with **Benchmark!**

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If you need assistance logging into your library's account, please contact [plabenchmark@ala.org](mailto:plabenchmark@ala.org).



## 2024 PLA Annual Survey

# Detailed Results

The tables below contain detailed results for each question on the survey by library locale (city, suburban, and town/rural) and nationally. All results are weighted. For multiple choice or check-all-that-apply questions, the percentage of question respondents who selected each positive response is reported. The final row in each table reports the total number of respondents who answered that question on the survey. See [Appendix A](#) for a description of the survey and analysis methodology.

To explore the results further and create custom peer comparisons, access the full dataset with a subscription to Benchmark: Library Metrics and Trends ([librarybenchmark.org](https://librarybenchmark.org)).

**Table 1. Library Director Salary**

**Question:** Current annual salary of library director.

	City	Suburban	Town/Rural	Overall
Weighted mean	\$147,768	\$102,189	\$53,381	\$71,421
Weighted median	\$144,724	\$98,000	\$50,000	\$63,000
Unweighted mean	\$159,581	\$111,900	\$55,745	\$85,878
Unweighted median	\$153,025	\$102,500	\$52,000	\$75,000
Total question responses	167	436	785	1,388

**Table 2. Beginning Librarian Salary**

**Question:** Salary of beginning librarian.

	City	Suburban	Town/Rural	Overall
Weighted mean	\$55,910	\$50,206	\$36,488	\$42,860
Weighted median	\$53,737	\$50,000	\$38,000	\$45,000
Unweighted mean	\$56,656	\$50,965	\$37,315	\$45,811
Unweighted median	\$54,254	\$50,000	\$39,146	\$47,493
Total question responses	167	376	440	983

**Table 3. Numbers of Staff and Volunteers****Question:** How many staff members does the library currently have in each of the following categories?

	City	Suburban	Town/Rural	Overall
<b>Full-time paid staff members</b>				
<b>Mean</b>	79	19	4	12
<b>Median</b>	43	8	2	3
<b>Total full-time staff reported</b>	20,978	15,197	4,308	40,483
<b>Part-time paid staff members</b>				
<b>Mean</b>	45	20	5	11
<b>Median</b>	25	12	3	5
<b>Total part-time staff reported</b>	10,917	12,966	4,706	28,589
<b>Temporary or occasional paid staff</b>				
<b>Mean</b>	8	3	1	2
<b>Median</b>	0	0	0	0
<b>Total temporary staff reported</b>	2,365	1,996	691	5,052
<b>Volunteers</b>				
<b>Mean</b>	142	38	9	23
<b>Median</b>	25	6	2	3
<b>Total volunteer responses</b>	33,634	28,767	8,373	70,774
<b>Total question responses</b>	<b>170</b>	<b>451</b>	<b>853</b>	<b>1,474</b>

**Table 4. Full-Time Staff Representation by Race/Ethnicity****Question:** How many full-time library staff members identify with each of the following racial or ethnic groups?

Note: Weighted results are reported for libraries that indicated they had at least one full-time employee. Libraries with a difference of greater than 10% between the total number of full-time staff they reported for this question and the number reported in table 3 were excluded from the percentage estimates below due to potential data quality problems. The sum of percentages can exceed 100 because individual staff may be reported in more than one race/ethnicity category. Counts of race or ethnicity reported as “unknown or prefer not to say” were assumed to represent individual staff members for whom race and ethnicity were excluded from the estimations below. Thus, the denominator used to calculate the percentages is the total number of full-time staff for whom race/ethnicity is known.

	City	Suburban	Town/Rural	Overall
<b>American Indian or Alaskan Native</b>	0.6%	0.3%	1.3%	0.7%
<b>Asian</b>	6.9%	4.4%	0.8%	4.5%
<b>Black or African American</b>	14.3%	7.1%	3.6%	9.1%
<b>Middle Eastern or North African</b>	0.1%	0.3%	0.1%	0.2%
<b>Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander</b>	0.3%	0.2%	0.1%	0.2%
<b>White</b>	65.3%	78.9%	89.3%	76.1%
<b>Hispanic or Latino</b>	11.5%	8.4%	4.9%	8.8%
<b>Question responses meeting conditions</b>	<b>106</b>	<b>307</b>	<b>552</b>	<b>965</b>

**Table 5. Part-Time Staff Representation by Race/Ethnicity**

**Question:** How many part-time library staff members identify with each of the following racial or ethnic groups?

Note: Weighted results are reported for libraries that indicated they had at least one part-time employee. Libraries with a difference of greater than 10% between the total number of part-time staff they reported for this question and the number reported in [Table 3](#) were excluded from the percentage estimates below due to potential data quality problems. The sum of percentages can exceed 100 because individual staff may be reported in more than one race/ethnicity category. Counts of race or ethnicity reported as “unknown or prefer not to say” were assumed to represent individual staff members and were excluded from the estimations below. Thus, the denominator used to calculate the percentages is the total number of part-time staff for whom race/ethnicity is known.

	City	Suburban	Town/Rural	Overall
American Indian or Alaskan Native	0.4%	0.2%	0.7%	0.4%
Asian	9.4%	5.3%	0.8%	4.5%
Black or African American	10.5%	6.9%	2.7%	6.1%
Middle Eastern or North African	0.1%	0.8%	0.1%	0.4%
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	0.1%	0.2%	0.0%	0.1%
White	67.9%	78.8%	91.6%	81.2%
Hispanic or Latino	11.3%	7.7%	4.2%	7.2%
Question responses meeting conditions	96	289	652	1,037

**Table 6. Full-Time Staff Representation by Gender**

**Question:** How many full-time library staff members identify with each of the following gender identities?

Note: Weighted results are reported for libraries that indicated they had at least 1 full-time employee. Libraries with a difference of greater than 10% between the total number of full-time staff they reported for this question and the number reported in [table 3](#) were excluded from the percentage estimates below due to potential data quality problems. Counts of gender reported as “unknown or prefer not to say” were assumed to represent individual staff members and were excluded from the estimations below. Thus, the denominator used to calculate the percentages is the total number of full-time staff for whom gender is known.

	City	Suburban	Town/Rural	Overall
A different gender identity	0.9%	1.0%	0.9%	0.9%
Female	67.6%	77.8%	84.3%	75.9%
Male	31.7%	21.1%	14.6%	23.2%
Question responses meeting conditions	103	337	607	1,047

### Table 7: Part-Time Staff Representation by Gender

**Question:** How many part-time library staff members identify with each of the following gender identities?

Note: Weighted results are reported for libraries that indicated they had at least 1 full-time employee. Libraries with a difference of greater than 10% between the total number of full-time staff they reported for this question and the number reported in table 3 were excluded from the percentage estimates below due to potential data quality problems. Counts of gender reported as “unknown or prefer not to say” were assumed to represent individual staff members and were excluded from the estimations below. Thus, the denominator used to calculate the percentages is the total number of full-time staff for whom gender is known.

	City	Suburban	Town/Rural	Overall
A different gender identity	1.7%	1.5%	1.7%	1.7%
Female	73.1%	81.4%	86.6%	81.7%
Male	25.0%	17.0%	11.6%	16.6%
Question responses meeting conditions	<b>98</b>	<b>333</b>	<b>720</b>	<b>1,151</b>

### Table 8. Reasons for Not Reporting Staff Representation Data

**Question:** If your library is unable to answer the questions above about race/ethnicity and gender, please explain why.

	City	Suburban	Town/Rural	Overall
The library does not collect the data.	54.7%	71.9%	62.7%	65.3%
The library does not have access to the data (e.g., if the data are collected at the city or municipality level).	20.4%	7.3%	7.2%	9.0%
We are not able to share the data.	11.8%	9.9%	13.6%	11.9%
We do not feel confident about the accuracy of the data we have.	15.6%	16.4%	12.8%	14.6%
Other	26.9%	13.1%	18.4%	17.4%
Total question responses	<b>87</b>	<b>159</b>	<b>133</b>	<b>379</b>

### Table 9. Library Roles

**Question:** Does your library have staff dedicated to any of the following roles as part of their job title or description?

	City	Suburban	Town/Rural	Overall
Access services	72.3%	69.4%	62.2%	64.6%
Adult services	96.1%	90.7%	70.9%	77.3%
Children's services	97.7%	95.6%	82.5%	86.6%
Collection development	94.9%	85.7%	77.9%	80.8%
Communications/marketing	88.7%	76.5%	66.8%	70.5%
Community engagement/outreach	90.8%	75.7%	67.9%	71.1%
Data/evaluation	51.1%	44.4%	50.1%	48.7%
Equity, diversity, and inclusion	26.1%	20.9%	28.1%	26.2%
Fundraising/development	31.5%	27.8%	36.4%	34.0%
Genealogy, local history, or archival collections	70.9%	39.5%	35.5%	38.4%
IT	77.1%	52.8%	35.3%	42.0%
Public programs	94.2%	83.9%	75.6%	78.7%
Reference services	93.8%	84.3%	60.9%	68.6%
Social media and digital outreach	87.3%	77.2%	68.6%	71.8%
Social work	17.6%	5.5%	6.2%	6.7%
Technical services	93.0%	80.3%	51.8%	61.2%
Workforce/small business development	33.9%	9.4%	8.2%	9.9%
Youth/teen services	95.0%	88.0%	69.4%	75.4%
<b>Yes to any of the above</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>98.9%</b>	<b>91.6%</b>	<b>94.8%</b>
<b>Total question responses</b>	<b>173</b>	<b>452</b>	<b>853</b>	<b>1,478</b>

### Table 10. Programs for Staff Advancement

**Question:** Does your library provide the following structured or formal programs or benefits to staff to help them advance within the library field?

	City	Suburban	Town/Rural	Overall
A mentorship program	19.5%	12.1%	7.2%	9.1%
Encouragement to engage in service at the state or national level (e.g., serving on library association committees)	88.7%	74.6%	53.6%	60.8%
Funding for professional association memberships	73.5%	78.4%	60.4%	65.6%
Funding for professional development	95.2%	92.5%	73.8%	79.6%
Opportunities to participate in library work beyond their assigned duties to improve skills or broaden experience	86.8%	89.5%	78.0%	81.4%
Time during work hours or paid time off for professional development activities	98.8%	96.3%	87.9%	90.6%
Tuition reimbursement	70.1%	45.4%	27.9%	34.6%
Other	11.4%	6.6%	5.2%	5.9%
<b>Yes to any of the above</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>99.1%</b>	<b>94.3%</b>	<b>96.4%</b>
<b>Total question responses</b>	<b>173</b>	<b>452</b>	<b>853</b>	<b>1,478</b>

**Table 11. Determining Staff Eligibility for Support**

**Question:** If you answered yes to any of the above options [programs for staff advancement], how does your library determine staff eligibility for those types of support?

	City	Suburban	Town/Rural	Overall
Educational achievement status	16.7%	8.4%	6.5%	7.6%
Full-time status	30.0%	25.1%	16.7%	19.7%
Internal application process and/or performance planning	40.8%	17.5%	8.9%	13.0%
Job role/job title (e.g., management training for new managers)	49.8%	43.2%	30.2%	34.7%
Length of employment	16.6%	10.3%	7.5%	8.8%
Minority status	1.6%	0.0%	0.0%	0.1%
No restrictions, all staff are eligible for the types of support offered	52.0%	58.7%	68.2%	64.7%
Other	10.4%	10.2%	5.2%	6.8%
<b>Total question responses</b>	<b>171</b>	<b>441</b>	<b>776</b>	<b>1,388</b>

**Table 12. Staff Positions Lost in Past 12 Months**

**Question:** In the past 12 months, has your library lost staff positions?

	City	Suburban	Town/Rural	Overall
Percentage of libraries that have lost staff positions	29.1%	18.0%	17.1%	18.0%
<b>Total question responses</b>	<b>173</b>	<b>452</b>	<b>852</b>	<b>1,477</b>

**Table 13. Reasons for Lost Staff Positions**

**Question:** If your library has lost staff positions, why?

	City	Suburban	Town/Rural	Overall
Budget cuts	29.7%	13.7%	19.7%	19.1%
Consolidation or restructuring of staff positions	46.8%	43.9%	32.2%	36.5%
Cuts in library service hours leading to a reduction in staff hours	2.5%	1.5%	2.6%	2.3%
Staff leaving the workforce and not being replaced	41.6%	56.8%	53.8%	53.5%
Other reasons	24.3%	21.7%	29.4%	27.0%
<b>Total question responses</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>148</b>	<b>284</b>

**Table 14. Hiring Strategies**

**Question:** Does the library use any of the following strategies to hire staff from underrepresented groups, including but not limited to gender, race, sexual orientation, or ability?

	City	Suburban	Town/Rural	Overall
Analyze the number of applicants, finalists, and hires from underrepresented groups	17.1%	17.4%	12.0%	13.6%
Conduct a blind review of resumes and other application materials	50.4%	48.1%	46.4%	47.1%
Create action plans for recruiting staff from underrepresented groups	25.6%	10.8%	5.5%	7.9%
Include an explicit equity, diversity, inclusion, and accessibility (EDIA) statement in job postings	49.9%	49.0%	36.5%	40.4%
Offer higher salaries to reflect supply/demand imbalance for hires from underrepresented groups	4.9%	2.6%	3.5%	3.4%
Offer implicit bias and/or cultural competency training for library staff	67.6%	43.9%	23.3%	30.9%
Offer residency or fellowship program(s)	2.9%	1.9%	0.8%	1.2%
Post the position to a diverse range of audiences	85.6%	76.2%	67.7%	70.8%
Require candidates to demonstrate support for EDIA initiatives in their job applications	15.6%	6.2%	4.4%	5.4%
Rewrite position descriptions to encourage a broader pool of applicants	56.8%	44.1%	28.8%	34.2%
Train search committees on best practices for inclusive searches	32.3%	18.3%	9.4%	12.9%
Other strategies (please specify)	13.5%	9.0%	10.1%	10.0%
<b>Yes to any hiring strategy</b>	<b>97.7%</b>	<b>95.1%</b>	<b>83.1%</b>	<b>88.5%</b>
<b>Total question responses</b>	<b>173</b>	<b>451</b>	<b>853</b>	<b>1,477</b>

**Table 15. Retention Strategies**

**Question:** Does the library use any of the following strategies to retain staff from underrepresented groups?

	City	Suburban	Town/Rural	Overall
Action plans for retaining employees from underrepresented groups	5.4%	4.2%	4.0%	4.1%
Formal mentorship program for new hires	11.6%	4.8%	7.9%	7.3%
Fostering an inclusive workplace culture	93.0%	84.4%	63.2%	70.1%
Working to dismantle systemic racism in our organization	59.6%	51.0%	39.0%	43.1%
Other retention strategies (please specify)	9.1%	6.3%	5.4%	5.8%
<b>Yes to any retention strategy</b>	<b>94.8%</b>	<b>86.5%</b>	<b>67.9%</b>	<b>76.7%</b>
<b>Total question responses</b>	<b>173</b>	<b>451</b>	<b>853</b>	<b>1,477</b>

**Table 16. MLS/MLIS Requirement**

**Questions:**

- Does your library currently require an MLS/MLIS for the following types of positions?
- Have these MLS/MLIS requirements at your library changed in the past two years?

	City	Suburban	Town/Rural	Overall
Library Director	90.5%	85.1%	35.7%	51.0%
Administrator/Manager	58.3%	33.8%	8.0%	17.2%
Librarian	74.7%	64.8%	15.5%	31.1%
Other positions that require an MLS/MLIS (please specify)	15.0%	11.6%	7.3%	8.8%
<b>Total question responses</b>	<b>173</b>	<b>452</b>	<b>853</b>	<b>1,478</b>
MLS/MLIS requirements have changed recently	16.3%	12.5%	4.9%	7.4%
<b>Total question responses</b>	<b>173</b>	<b>451</b>	<b>853</b>	<b>1,477</b>

**Table 17. Formal Goals for Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Accessibility (EDIA)**

**Questions:**

- Does your library have formal, written goals for equity, diversity, inclusion, and accessibility (EDIA)?
- Which of the following are areas of focus within your library’s formal EDIA goals?

	City	Suburban	Town/Rural	Overall
Does the library have formal, written goals for EDIA?	43.2%	26.9%	18.7%	22.1%
<b>Total question responses</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>449</b>	<b>830</b>	<b>1,452</b>
<b>Goal areas</b>				
Accessibility	85.5%	89.7%	92.0%	90.5%
Antiracism	63.6%	58.1%	56.0%	57.5%
Dismantling white supremacy	24.8%	18.7%	14.7%	17.1%
Fostering an inclusive climate for library users	94.3%	95.9%	92.4%	93.7%
Improving workplace culture for all library staff	90.6%	85.1%	75.6%	80.2%
Library collections	94.0%	95.9%	92.3%	93.6%
Library communications	69.4%	75.4%	72.5%	73.0%
Library equipment or technology	69.4%	62.9%	64.5%	64.5%
Library events or programming	92.7%	87.8%	81.7%	84.8%
Library outreach	91.4%	76.6%	72.3%	75.7%
Library space	77.7%	82.1%	78.5%	79.5%
Recruiting a diverse workforce	71.7%	58.8%	41.3%	50.0%
Retaining employees from underrepresented groups	46.4%	40.5%	34.7%	37.8%
Other areas	11.9%	6.5%	6.4%	7.0%
<b>Total question responses</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>134</b>	<b>155</b>	<b>373</b>

**Table 18. EDIA Activities****Question:** Does your library do (or has it done) any of the following activities related to EDIA?

	City	Suburban	Town/Rural	Overall
Analyze the demographics of local communities for use in planning	84.7%	77.2%	50.5%	59.1%
Assign librarians as liaisons to programs/services devoted to underrepresented or marginalized groups	49.5%	34.5%	15.3%	22.0%
Charge one or more library staff members or committees to focus on EDIA issues/initiatives	46.5%	28.3%	8.5%	15.6%
Collect and preserve materials related to underrepresented and marginalized groups	65.4%	56.2%	45.5%	49.3%
Conduct periodic antiracism audits	14.6%	12.7%	7.5%	9.2%
Conduct periodic reviews of the library's physical space to ensure inclusivity and accessibility	73.8%	74.3%	61.7%	65.5%
Conduct periodic reviews of the library's website and digital presence to ensure inclusivity and accessibility	77.5%	71.3%	50.3%	57.1%
Focus collection development on better representing diverse authors and perspectives	87.9%	89.5%	68.7%	75.0%
Post public statements or create action plans in support of antiracism	27.2%	18.2%	8.8%	12.2%
Provide programming and outreach for community members who are neurodivergent or disabled	71.1%	61.1%	40.4%	47.3%
Provide programming and outreach in languages other than English	68.2%	45.2%	21.7%	30.2%
Provide programming, events, or space for EDIA	67.3%	55.6%	31.7%	39.7%
Serve on local committees or task forces focused on EDIA	45.1%	30.2%	10.2%	17.1%
Support staff participation in EDIA training or professional development	87.8%	75.8%	49.4%	58.2%
Other activities (please specify)	5.1%	5.0%	3.4%	3.9%
<b>Yes to Any EDI Activity</b>	<b>95.3%</b>	<b>95.3%</b>	<b>81.6%</b>	<b>87.4%</b>
<b>Total question responses</b>	<b>171</b>	<b>449</b>	<b>842</b>	<b>1,462</b>

**Table 19. Physical Accommodations for Accessibility Outside the Library**

**Question:** Which of the following physical accommodations are in place outside your main/central library to help individuals with disabilities access the facility?

	City	Suburban	Town/Rural	Overall
Accessible book/media drop box	90.1%	86.4%	87.9%	87.6%
Accessible main, public entrance (i.e., mobility device users do not have to use a separate entrance from other library users)	98.3%	92.9%	88.9%	90.4%
Accessible parking spaces with adjacent access aisle	95.1%	92.9%	88.1%	89.7%
Accessible path or sidewalk to entrance	98.1%	97.6%	97.0%	97.2%
Automatic doors (button- or motion-activated)	97.6%	90.2%	58.0%	68.2%
Other outdoor accommodations (please specify)	8.3%	6.6%	6.8%	6.9%
<b>Total question responses</b>	<b>172</b>	<b>446</b>	<b>845</b>	<b>1,463</b>
<b>Yes to Any</b>	<b>99.4%</b>	<b>99.6%</b>	<b>99.3%</b>	<b>99.4%</b>

**Table 20. Physical Accommodations for Accessibility Inside the Library**

**Question:** Which of the following physical accommodations are in place inside your main/central library to help individuals with disabilities access the facility?

	City	Suburban	Town/Rural	Overall
Accessible bathrooms	97.0%	91.2%	84.6%	86.9%
Accessible furniture	93.4%	87.7%	82.9%	84.7%
Assistive listening devices or hearing loops	42.9%	33.4%	22.3%	26.2%
Braille signage or other assistance for low vision individuals	62.5%	45.6%	30.4%	36.0%
Elevator or chair lift *	98.7%	89.6%	69.6%	79.1%
Emergency alarms with both auditory and visual indicators	92.4%	85.2%	65.5%	71.9%
Quiet space for people with sensory needs	66.0%	56.0%	51.7%	53.6%
Public computers with accessible technologies and software	76.8%	57.8%	42.7%	48.4%
Walkers, wheelchairs, or scooters for individuals with limited mobility	36.9%	26.8%	15.8%	19.7%
Wheelchair-accessible hallways (minimum width 36")	99.4%	93.3%	87.0%	89.3%
Wheelchair-accessible stacks (minimum width 36")	91.8%	87.0%	82.6%	84.2%
Other indoor accommodations (please specify)	8.3%	7.8%	5.0%	5.9%
<b>Total question responses</b>	<b>172</b>	<b>446</b>	<b>844</b>	<b>1,462</b>
<b>Yes to Any</b>	<b>99.4%</b>	<b>99.8%</b>	<b>99.1%</b>	<b>99.3%</b>

\* *Elevator or chair lift*: estimates reflect the proportion of respondents to whom this is applicable, i.e., the library has a multi-floor building with stairs. Libraries that do not have multiple floors used by the public were instructed to select N/A.

**Table 21. Accessibility Resources for Patrons in Programs**

**Question:** What resources do you provide for patrons with disabilities who attend your programs or classes, either as standard practice or upon request?

	City	Suburban	Town/Rural	Overall
A program agenda or logistical details provided in advance	52.6%	38.6%	39.3%	39.9%
ASL interpretation or transcription	45.9%	23.0%	8.9%	14.5%
Extra space for moving around	81.9%	72.3%	72.1%	72.7%
Extra time to complete activities or assignments	68.2%	64.1%	69.7%	68.2%
Information presented in multiple formats	50.5%	42.3%	34.9%	37.6%
Multiple types of seating	51.0%	50.2%	57.5%	55.3%
Noise canceling headphones	22.2%	24.5%	15.3%	18.0%
Sensory-friendly resources	45.5%	47.6%	31.8%	36.5%
Other resources (please specify)	4.1%	4.1%	2.4%	3.0%
<b>Total question responses</b>	<b>172</b>	<b>446</b>	<b>843</b>	<b>1,461</b>
<b>Yes to Any</b>	<b>93.6%</b>	<b>91.0%</b>	<b>87.9%</b>	<b>89.5%</b>

**Table 22. Limitations to Improving Accessibility of Library Facilities**

**Question:** Do any of the following limit your ability to improve the accessibility of facilities at your library?

	City	Suburban	Town/Rural	Overall
Building(s) constructed before the 1990 Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)	55.1%	47.9%	56.4%	54.3%
Cost/budget	82.8%	82.8%	89.3%	87.4%
Lack of awareness among library staff about accessibility needs and best practices	20.4%	19.7%	17.1%	17.9%
Lack of awareness among stakeholders or community members	14.9%	26.8%	24.7%	24.7%
Library does not control or own the space it occupies	21.1%	22.7%	20.9%	21.3%
Limitations of current space (e.g., carpeting, stairs)	58.2%	60.1%	61.2%	60.8%
Organizational or leadership buy-in	5.2%	7.4%	5.7%	6.1%
Other limitations (please specify)	4.5%	7.0%	5.7%	6.0%
<b>Total question responses</b>	<b>144</b>	<b>367</b>	<b>723</b>	<b>1,234</b>



## Appendix A. Methodology

### Sample

The 2024 Public Library Staff Survey collected data at the administrative entity (AE) level, as defined by IMLS: the agency that is legally established under local or state law to provide public library service to the population of a local jurisdiction.<sup>1</sup> The AE was used as the sampling unit to provide comparability with results from previous PLA surveys and to leverage the wealth of information about AEs from IMLS' Public Libraries Survey (PLS) to improve the quality of the survey results. The original sample frame was based on the FY 2023 Public Libraries Survey and included libraries from all 50 states and District of Columbia. PLA modified the sample to include eight tribal libraries and 12 new or reopened libraries that were open in fall 2024 but not represented in the available PLS data. PLA also removed 14 libraries that IMLS reported were closed in fall 2024. In total, the 2024 Public Library Staff Survey sample included 9,226 libraries.

### Survey Design

The 2024 Public Library Staff Survey was primarily developed by PLA's Measurement, Evaluation, and Assessment Advisory Group. The 2024 survey was designed to allow for comparisons to results from the 2021 survey, and any changes to survey questions were carefully considered. In some instances, questions or instructions were modified to maintain currency with best practices and add important clarifications. For example, questions related to Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Accessibility (EDIA) were modified slightly from their form in 2021, which referenced accessibility in the description but not the title of the section. Additionally, based on analyses of results from 2021, additional response options were added to selected items. For example, an option for data/evaluation was added to the question about staff roles.

Changes to the 2024 Public Libraries Staff Survey include a revision to the collection of information about the race and ethnicity of full-time and part-time library staff, and inclusion of a special section on accessibility of library facilities and programs. In 2024 the questions that collect information on the race and ethnicity of library staff were revised for consistency with current best practices. The 2021 questions included a response option for "multiple racial or ethnic identities," which was intended to allow for the enumeration of staff with more than one category racial or ethnic identity. Properly completed, the sum of full- or part-time counts by race were expected to sum to the total number of full- or part-time staff. The 2024 item removed the "multiple racial or ethnic identities" category and instructed respondents that staff with multiple identities could be reflected more than once in the data and therefore the total may not sum to the current number of full- or part-time staff.

A special section was added to the survey with a focus on accessibility. The questions in Accessibility Special Section were developed through a partnership with the ALA Public Programs

Office’s Libraries Transform Communities initiative and in consultation with the Office for Diversity, Literacy, and Outreach Services. The questions focused primarily on accessibility of physical settings, including outdoor accommodations, indoor accommodations, resources, and limitations on libraries’ ability to improve the accessibility of facilities. The survey questionnaire is included in [Appendix B](#).

## Survey Administration

The 2024 Public Library Staff survey opened on September 18, 2024, with the first email invites sent on September 23, 2024, in addition to a physical letter sent to all library directors. Libraries were notified that they could save their survey responses and complete the survey in multiple sessions. The deadline for survey completion was December 14, 2024, although this deadline was extended. The survey administration window closed on January 2, 2025. In total, 1,475 libraries completed the survey, for a response rate of 16.0%.

Table A1 below outlines the percentage of respondents by five key characteristics—locale, region, legal basis, legal service area population, and administrative structure—compared to the percentage of public libraries (AEs) nationwide with each of those characteristics (based on the FY 2022 IMLS Public Libraries Survey). The section on weighting below describes how the final estimates were calculated to account for these differences.

**Table A1**

	Survey Respondents	All AEs
<b>Locale</b>		
City	11.6%	6.0%
Suburban	30.5%	25.2%
Town/Rural	57.8%	68.8%
<b>Region</b>		
Far West	8.4%	5.5%
Great Lakes	23.9%	20.5%
Mid East	13.9%	16.8%
New England	11.1%	13.8%
Plains	13.7%	17.2%
Rocky Mountains	5.6%	4.3%
Southeast	12.8%	12.6%
Southwest	10.6%	9.3%
<b>Legal Basis</b>		
County or City/County	12.6%	11.1%
Library District	17.8%	15.2%
Municipal	49.8%	52.8%
Nonprofit	12.6%	14.2%
Other	7.2%	6.6%

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	Survey Respondents	All AEs
<b>Legal Service Area Population</b>		
<10,000	43.7%	57.4%
10,000 - 24,999	20.1%	19.1%
25,000 - 99,999	22.0%	17.1%
>100,000	14.2%	6.4%
<b>Administrative Structure (Outlets)</b>		
Multiple	28.4%	19.0%
Single	71.6%	81.0%

## Analysis and Weighting

This section outlines the procedure used to calculate weights for the 2024 Public Library Staff Survey. Because all public libraries were invited to complete the survey and the response rate was 16%, nonprobability sample weighting was used to calculate final weights for responding libraries.<sup>2</sup> This quasi-randomization approach corrects for selection bias—the sample differs from the rest of the population such that the results from the sample cannot be projected to the full population—by using a probability-based reference sample to estimate pseudo-inclusion probabilities for the responding libraries. In this case, the sample of responding libraries ( $n = 1,475$ ) was combined with the reference sample of nonresponding libraries ( $n = 7,667$ ). This combined sample covered the total population ( $N = 9,142$ ) of public libraries represented in the 2022 PLS sample that were categorized as “current,” had a peer group in the PLA Benchmark system, and were not missing values in the *population of Legal Service Area* variable.

### Weighting Procedure

Weights were assigned to 1,475 libraries that (1) responded to the survey (two law libraries and one new library were excluded) and (2) had data in the PLS. For a given responding library, the final weight was calculated by:

1. Coding the libraries in the reference sample as 0 and the responding libraries as 1.
2. Assigning a probability sample weight to libraries in the reference sample ( $w = N/n$ ) and the libraries that responded to the survey ( $w = 1$ ).
3. Fitting a binary regression using the following library characteristics to predict the probability of being in the sample of responding libraries:
  - **PLA\_LOCALE:** City, Suburban, Town/Rural
  - **PLA\_REGION:** New England, Mid East, Great Lakes, Plains, Southeast, Southwest, Rocky Mountains, Far West, Outlying Areas
  - **PLA\_LEGBAS:** County or City/County, Municipal, Library District, Nonprofit, Other

- **POPU\_LSA:** Population of Legal Service Area
- **LIBRARIA:** Total FTE of librarians (includes MASTER)
- **TOTSTAFF:** Total FTE of paid employees (LIBRARIA + OTHPAID)
- **TOTOPEXP:** Total operating expenditures

4. Calculating the inverse probability for each library that responded to the survey ( $w_{np} = 1/P$ ).

Three libraries not represented in the PLS were assigned a weight of 0 for a total number of 1,478 libraries in the analytic sample.

## Estimate Precision

The PLS population-level data was used to check how effective weighting was for estimating mean values across a number of variables. For example, the mean “total FTE of librarians” (variable LIBRARIA in the PLS) in the library population was 5.61. Before weighting, the mean “total FTE of librarians” in the sample of responding libraries in the PLS was 12.10—higher in responding libraries than in the library population. After weighting, the population estimate for the mean “total FTE of librarians” in the PLS was 5.87 ( $se = .23$ )—closer to the population mean. These results indicate that the weights were effective in reducing selection bias.

## Notes

1. M. Pelczar, J. Soffronoff, J. Li, S. Alhassani & S. Mabile, *Data File Documentation: Public Libraries in the United States Fiscal Year 2021* (Washington, D.C.: Institute of Museum and Library Services, 2023).
2. R. Valliant, J.A. Dever & F. Kreuter, *Practical Tools for Designing and Weighting Survey Samples* (Springer, 2018): [doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-93632-1](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-93632-1)

## Appendix B. Survey Reference Copy

### 2024 Public Library Staff Survey



#### Instructions

Log into your library's [Benchmark account](#) to enter your responses for the 2024 Public Library Staff Survey. Please submit your responses by **Saturday, December 14, 2024**.

Click on "Surveys" in the menu at the top and select "2024 Staff Survey." You do not need to complete the survey in one session. Rather, you may save your responses and return to the survey at another time. It should take 30 to 45 minutes to complete this survey on behalf of your library.

We recommend using the **Survey Worksheet** (this document) to collect responses before entering them in the online form. This form is provided for your convenience and contains FAQs about the survey.

We ask that you respond to questions at the library **administrative entity** level. This is the same level at which you report annual statistics to your state library agency. Some questions ask about whether your library offers resources/services in "at least one location." A **location** refers to your single main library or any of your library branches that are usually open to the public and provide services to the community (e.g., lends books, offers public access to computers, etc.).

Unless otherwise stated, your responses should reflect the **current situation** within your library at the point in time when you are completing this survey.

One person should submit the survey on behalf of a single library at the administrative entity level. Often that person is the library director, administrator, or data coordinator. You may need to work with other staff or departments, such as the HR department that serves your library, to answer some of these questions, particularly staff counts and representation. Note that employers with 100 or more employees are required to report race/ethnicity data to the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), so those organizations (which may be the local government, not the library) should have this data. No individually identifiable information will be shared – the data you provide will be used to calculate percentages in aggregate for libraries in peer groups and nationwide.

A glossary of terms can be found on the last page of this document.

If you have any questions about the survey, please contact the project team at [plabenchmark@ala.org](mailto:plabenchmark@ala.org).

## 2024 Public Library Staff Survey



Please enter responses in your library's account in [Benchmark: Library Metrics and Trends](#). This document is a copy of the survey *for reference purposes only* – the questions shown to you in Benchmark are not numbered, nor presented in table format as shown here, and may vary depending on your answer choices.

### Section 1: Salaries and Staff Representation

Please work with the HR department that serves your library to complete these questions. Note that employers with 100+ employees are required to report race/ethnicity data to the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), so those organizations (which may be the local government, not the library) should have these data.

PLA will not share any individually identifiable information – the staff numbers reported will be used to calculate percentages in aggregate for libraries in peer groups and nationwide.

1. Current annual salary of library director:

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ [numerical value, U.S. dollars]

2. Salary of beginning librarian. Report the current annual salary that would typically be paid to a beginning librarian with an MLS degree and no professional experience.

*Provide the salary of the library's most recent hire in a beginning librarian role. If the library has recently (within the previous 12 months) made multiple hires for a beginning librarian role, you may provide an average of those salaries.*

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ [numerical value, U.S. dollars]

3. How many staff members does the library currently have in each of the following categories? Report the actual number of staff members, not full-time equivalent (FTE).

*Staff are employees or contractors of the library who are paid on either an hourly or salaried basis. Full-time staff members are those whose positions are classified by your organization as full-time and who regularly work the full number of hours in a standard work week. Part-time staff members are those who regularly work less than the number of hours in a standard work week. Volunteers are unpaid persons under the supervision of library staff.*

Full-time paid staff members	
Part-time paid staff members	
Temporary or occasional paid staff (e.g., summers only)	
Volunteers (annual average)	

4. How many *full-time* library staff members identify with each of the following racial or ethnic groups?

*Voluntary self-identification by staff is the preferred method of identifying the race/ethnicity information. Staff may identify with multiple categories, so the total may not add up to your current number of full-time staff.*

American Indian or Alaska Native	
Asian	
Black or African American	
Hispanic or Latino	
Middle Eastern or North African	
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	
White	
Unknown or prefer not to say	

5. How many *part-time* library staff members identify with each of the following racial or ethnic groups?

*Voluntary self-identification by staff is the preferred method of identifying the race/ethnicity information. Staff may identify with multiple categories, so the total may not add up to your current number of part-time staff.*

American Indian or Alaska Native	
Asian	
Black or African American	
Hispanic or Latino	
Middle Eastern or North African	
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	
White	
Unknown or prefer not to say	

6. How many *full-time* library staff members identify with each of the following gender identities?

*Voluntary self-identification by staff is the preferred method of identifying gender designation. Your organization may collect using only a binary option or have some staff that choose not to report. Utilize the "Unknown or prefer not to say" category as necessary.*

Male	
Female	
A different gender identity	
Unknown or prefer not to say	

7. How many *part-time* library staff members identify with each of the following gender identities?

*Voluntary self-identification by staff is the preferred method of identifying gender designation. Your organization may collect using only a binary option or have some staff that choose not to report. Utilize the "Unknown or prefer not to say" category as necessary.*

Male	
Female	
A different gender identity	
Unknown or prefer not to say	

8. If your library is unable to answer the questions above about race/ethnicity or gender, please explain why. Select all that apply.

- The library does not collect the data.
- The library does not have access to the data (e.g., the data are collected at the city or municipality level).
- We are not able to share the data.
- We do not feel confident about the accuracy of the data we have.
- Other explanation (please specify)

## Section 2: Library Roles

9. Does your library have staff dedicated to any of the following roles as part of their job title or description?

*Answering "yes" could indicate there is a single staff person for whom this is their primary role, or that multiple people cover these duties. Exclude staff who may do these tasks under the remit of "other duties as assigned."*

	Yes	No
Access services *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Adult services	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Children's services	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Collection development	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Communications/marketing	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Community engagement/outreach	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Data/evaluation	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Equity, diversity, and inclusion	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Fundraising/development	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Genealogy, local history, or archival collections	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
IT	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Public programs	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Reference services	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Social media and digital outreach	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Social work	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Technical services	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Workforce/small business development	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Youth/teen services	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

*\* Access services is defined as staff who develop and provide services that connect library users to library resources. Access Services staff are the primary point of contact for library users. (Definition adapted from the [ACRL Framework for Access Services Librarianship](#).)*

10. Does your library provide the following structured or formal programs or benefits to staff to help them advance within the library field?

	Yes	No
Encouragement to engage in service at the state or national level (e.g., serving on library association committees)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Funding for professional association memberships	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Funding for professional development	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
A mentorship program	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Opportunities to participate in library work beyond their assigned duties to improve skills or broaden experience	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Time during work hours or paid time off for professional development activities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Tuition reimbursement	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Other support ( <i>please specify</i> )		

11. If you answered yes to any of the above options, how does your library determine staff eligibility for those types of support? Select all that apply.

- Educational achievement status
- Full-time status
- Internal application process and/or performance planning
- Job role/job title (e.g., management training for new managers)
- Length of employment
- Minority status
- No restrictions, all staff are eligible for the types of support offered
- Other eligibility requirements (please specify)

12. In the *past 12 months*, has your library lost staff positions?

- Yes
- No

13. If your library has lost staff positions, why? Select all that apply.

- Budget cuts
- Consolidation or restructuring of staff positions
- Cuts in library service hours leading to a reduction in staff hours
- Staff leaving the workforce and not being replaced
- Other reasons (please specify)

14. If your library is struggling to fill open positions, why do you think that is the case?

15. In the *past 12 months*, what **new** types of roles has the library hired staff to fill?

16. What new types of roles would the library like to create if funding were available?

### Section 3: Hiring and Retention

17. Does the library use any of the following strategies to hire staff from underrepresented groups, including but not limited to gender, race, sexual orientation, or ability?

*Please only select strategies that have been adopted or implemented and are currently part of the library's regular practice.*

	Yes	No
Analyze the number of applicants, finalists, and hires from underrepresented groups	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Conduct a blind review of resumes and other application materials	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Create action plans for recruiting staff from underrepresented groups	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Include an explicit equity, diversity, inclusion, and accessibility (EDIA) statement in job postings	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Offer higher salaries to reflect supply/demand imbalance for hires from underrepresented groups	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Offer implicit bias and/or cultural competency training for library staff	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Offer residency or fellowship program(s)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Post the position to a diverse range of audiences	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Require candidates to demonstrate support for EDIA initiatives in their job applications	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Rewrite position descriptions to encourage a broader pool of applicants	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Train search committees on best practices for inclusive searches	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Other strategies ( <i>please specify</i> )		

18. Does the library use any of the following strategies to retain staff from underrepresented groups?

*Please only select strategies that have been adopted or implemented and are currently part of the library's regular practice.*

	Yes	No
Action plans for retaining employees from underrepresented groups	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Formal mentorship programs for new hires	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Fostering an inclusive workplace culture	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Working to dismantle systemic racism in the organization	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Other retention strategies ( <i>please specify</i> )		

19. If the library is currently developing strategies for hiring or retention of people from underrepresented groups, please share details of what you are considering.

20. Does your library currently require an MLS/MLIS for the following types of positions?

	Yes	No
Library Director	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Administrator/Manager	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Librarian	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Other positions ( <i>please specify</i> )		

21. Have these MLS/MLIS requirements at your library changed in the past two years?

- Yes
- No

Please explain:

*If the MLS/MLIS requirements have changed, please describe what has changed and why. If the MLS/MLIS requirements have not changed, please describe relevant considerations or circumstances (e.g., state statutes, union contracts).*

## Section 4: EDIA Goals and Activities

This section encompasses the goals and activities that your library may engage in to create an environment of belonging, where all members of the staff and community can feel welcome and included. The words used to describe these ideas are often contested and continue to evolve. For clarification on the meaning of equity, diversity, inclusion, and accessibility (EDIA), please see the glossary below, which references definitions adopted by ALA's Office for Diversity, Literacy and Outreach Services ([ODLOS](#)).

22. Does your library have formal, written goals for equity, diversity, inclusion, and accessibility (EDIA)? [If no, skip question 23.]

- Yes  
 No

23. Which of the following are areas of focus within your library's formal EDIA goals?

	Yes	No
Accessibility	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Antiracism	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Dismantling white supremacy	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Fostering an inclusive climate for library users	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Improving workplace culture for all library staff	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Library collections	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Library communications	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Library equipment or technology	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Library events or programming	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Library outreach	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Library space	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Recruiting a diverse workforce	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Retaining employees from underrepresented groups	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Other areas ( <i>please specify</i> )		

24. Does your library do (or has it done) any of the following activities related to EDIA?

	Yes	No
Analyze the demographics of local communities for use in planning	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Assign librarians as liaisons to programs/services devoted to underrepresented or marginalized groups	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Charge one or more library staff members or committees to focus on EDIA issues/initiatives	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Collect and preserve materials related to underrepresented and marginalized groups	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Conduct periodic antiracism audits	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Conduct periodic reviews of the library's physical space to ensure inclusivity and accessibility	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Conduct periodic reviews of the library's website and digital presence to ensure inclusivity and accessibility	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Focus collection development on better representing diverse authors and perspectives	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Post public statements or create action plans in support of antiracism	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Provide programming and outreach in languages other than English	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Provide programming and outreach for community members who are neurodivergent or disabled	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Provide programming, events, or space for EDIA	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Serve on local committees or task forces focused on EDIA	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Support staff participation in EDIA training or professional development	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Other activities ( <i>please specify</i> )		

## Special Section: Accessibility

The questions in this special section were developed through a partnership with the ALA Public Programs Office's Libraries Transform Communities initiative and in consultation with the Office for Diversity, Literacy, and Outreach Services. These questions focus primarily on physically, rather than digitally, accessible facilities and practices.

For the purposes of this survey, **accessibility** is defined as:

*Ensuring that opportunity is afforded to persons with disabilities to acquire the same information, engage in the same interactions, and enjoy the same services as someone without a disability. Accessibility encompasses the broader meanings of compliance and refers to how organizations make space to give access to everyone's ability and experience. (adopted from both the Office for Civil Rights and the American Alliance of Museums)*

Individuals with **disabilities** may include those with mobility, neurodivergence, vision, hearing, intellectual/developmental disabilities, or other accessibility needs.

If your library has multiple outlets/branches, please respond to the first two questions as they apply to your main/central library location only.

25. Which of the following physical accommodations are in place *outside* your main/central library to help individuals with disabilities access the facility?

	Yes	No	N/A
Accessible book/media drop box	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
Accessible main, public entrance (i.e., mobility device users do not have to use a separate entrance from other library users)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
Accessible parking spaces with adjacent access aisle	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
Accessible path or sidewalk to entrance	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
Automatic doors (button- or motion-activated)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
Other outdoor accommodations ( <i>please specify</i> )			

26. Which of the following physical accommodations are in place *inside* your main/central library to help individuals with disabilities access the facility?

	Yes	No	N/A
Accessible bathrooms ( <a href="#">ADA standards guide</a> )	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
Accessible furniture (e.g., tables or desks for wheelchair users, seating with/without arms)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
Assistive listening devices or hearing loops	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	

	Yes	No	N/A
Braille signage or other assistance for low vision individuals	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
Elevator or chair lift (if your library does not have multiple floors used by the public, select N/A)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Emergency alarms with both auditory and visual indicators (i.e., lights and sound)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
Quiet space for people with sensory needs	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
Public computers with accessible technologies and software (e.g., screen readers, adaptive keyboards)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
Walkers, wheelchairs, or scooters for individuals with limited mobility	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
Wheelchair-accessible hallways (minimum width 36" for ADA compliance)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
Wheelchair-accessible stacks (minimum width 36" for ADA compliance)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
Other indoor accommodations ( <i>please specify</i> )			

27. What resources do you provide for patrons with disabilities who attend your programs or classes, either as standard practice or upon request?

	Yes	No
A program agenda or logistical details provided in advance	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
ASL interpretation or transcription	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Extra space for moving around	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Extra time to complete activities or assignments	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Information presented in multiple formats	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Multiple types of seating	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Noise canceling headphones	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Sensory-friendly resources (e.g., fidget toys, stress balls, chewing gum)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Other resources ( <i>please specify</i> )		

28. Do any of the following limit your ability to improve the accessibility of facilities at your library? Select all that apply.

- Building(s) constructed before the 1990 Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)
- Cost/budget
- Lack of awareness among library staff about accessibility needs and best practices
- Lack of awareness among stakeholders or community members
- Library does not control or own the space it occupies
- Limitations of current space (e.g., carpeting, stairs)
- Organizational or leadership buy-in
- Other limitations (please specify)

29. What other accessibility-related improvements, policies, or protocols are you considering at your library? In addition, if your library has multiple outlets or branches, please use this space to explain how accessibility features differ across those locations.

### Thank You and Final Thoughts

30. Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey! Please take a moment to describe any other issues or concerns related to your library's staffing and EDIA initiatives that were not reflected in this survey. In particular, please explain challenges and/or successes and trends you are watching for the future.

## Glossary

**Disabilities:** Individuals with disabilities may include those with mobility, neurodivergence, vision, hearing, intellectual/developmental disabilities, or other accessibility needs.

**Equity, diversity, inclusion, and accessibility (EDIA):** This survey relies on the definitions adopted by ALA's Office for Diversity, Literacy and Outreach Services (ODLOS): <http://www.ala.org/aboutala/odlos-glossary-terms>

**Equity** is not the same as formal equality. Formal equality implies sameness. Equity, on the other hand, assumes difference and takes difference into account to ensure a fair process and, ultimately, a fair (or equitable) outcome. Equity recognizes that some groups were (and are) disadvantaged in accessing educational and employment opportunities and are, therefore, underrepresented or marginalized in many organizations and institutions. The effects of that exclusion often linger systemically within organizational policies, practices, and procedures. Equity, therefore, means increasing diversity by ameliorating conditions of disadvantaged groups.

**Diversity** can be defined as the sum of the ways that people are both alike and different. Visible diversity is generally those attributes or characteristics that are external. However, diversity goes beyond the external to internal characteristics that we choose to define as 'invisible' diversity. Invisible diversity includes those characteristics and attributes that are not readily seen. When we recognize, value, and embrace diversity, we are recognizing, valuing, and embracing the uniqueness of each individual.

**Inclusion** means an environment in which all individuals are treated fairly and respectfully; are valued for their distinctive skills, experiences, and perspectives; have equal access to resources and opportunities; and can contribute fully to the organization's success.

**Accessibility** ensures that opportunity is afforded to persons with disabilities to acquire the same information, engage in the same interactions, and enjoy the same services as someone without a disability. Accessibility encompasses the broader meanings of compliance and refers to how organizations make space to give access to everyone's ability and experience. (adopted from both the Office for Civil Rights and the American Alliance of Museums)

**Staff** are employees or contractors of the library who are paid on either an hourly or salaried basis.

**Full-time staff** members are those whose positions are classified by your organization as full-time and who regularly work the full number of hours in a standard work week.

**Part-time staff** members are those who regularly work less than the number of hours in a standard work week.

**Volunteers** are unpaid persons under the supervision of library staff.

## Appendix C. Survey Instructions and Glossary

### 2024 Public Library Staff Survey



#### Instructions | Glossary | Survey Navigation

Log into your library's [Benchmark account](#) to enter your responses for the 2024 Public Library Staff Survey. Please submit your responses by **Saturday, December 14, 2024**.

Click on "Surveys" in the menu at the top and select "2024 Staff Survey." You do not need to complete the survey in one session. Rather, you may save your responses and return to the survey at another time. It should take 30 to 45 minutes to complete this survey on behalf of your library.

We recommend using the **Survey Worksheet** (a PDF form) to collect responses before entering them in the online form. This form is provided for your convenience and contains FAQs about the survey.

We ask that you respond to questions at the library **administrative entity** level. This is the same level at which you report annual statistics to your state library agency. Some questions ask about whether your library offers resources/services in "at least one location." A **location** refers to your single main library or any of your library branches that are usually open to the public and provide services to the community (e.g., lends books, offers public access to computers, etc.).

Unless otherwise stated, your responses should reflect the **current situation** within your library at the point in time when you are completing this survey.

One person should submit the survey on behalf of a single library at the administrative entity level. Often that person is the library director, administrator, or data coordinator. You may need to work with other staff or departments, such as the HR department that serves your library, to answer some of these questions, particularly staff counts and representation. Note that employers with 100 or more employees are required to report race/ethnicity data to the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), so those organizations (which may be the local government, not the library) should have this data. No individually identifiable information will be shared – the data you provide will be used to calculate percentages in aggregate for libraries in peer groups and nationwide.

A glossary of terms and survey navigation tips can be found below.

If you have any questions about the survey, please contact the project team at [plabenchmark@ala.org](mailto:plabenchmark@ala.org).

## Glossary

**Disabilities:** Individuals with disabilities may include those with mobility, neurodivergence, vision, hearing, intellectual/developmental disabilities, or other accessibility needs.

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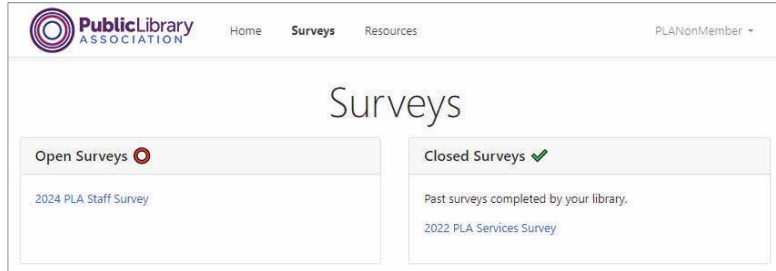
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**Part-time staff** members are those who regularly work less than the number of hours in a standard work week.

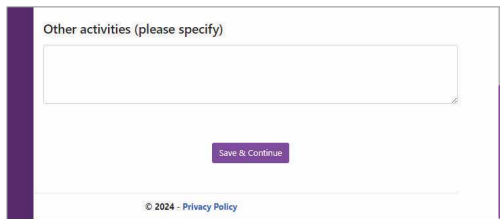
**Volunteers** are unpaid persons under the supervision of library staff.

## Survey Navigation

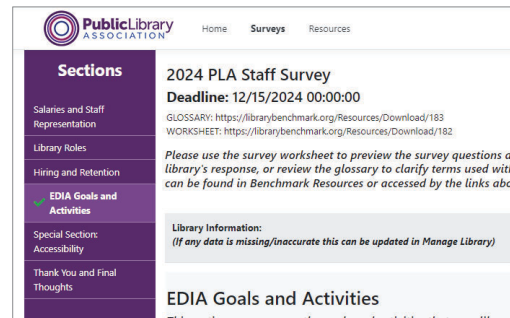
To start the 2024 PLA Staff Survey, log into Benchmark, and click on Surveys at the top. You will find the 2024 survey under Open Surveys on the left.



There is a **Save & Continue** button at the bottom of each section:



Once a section is completed, it will be marked with a **green** checkmark in the survey navigation pane on the left.



There is a **Save and Submit** button at the bottom of the last section of the survey. You also have the option to **Export** your survey once completed.

