

2023 Technology Survey



Survey: librarybenchmark.org | Deadline: December 16, 2023

The Public Library Association (PLA), a division of the American Library Association (ALA), is conducting this survey to better understand current and emerging technology in public libraries nationwide. The 2023 Public Library Technology Survey gathers information about the public access technology infrastructure, technology-related programming, and technology-related funding streams.

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.). Additionally, unless otherwise stated, your responses should reflect the **current situation** within your library at the point in time when you are completing this survey. A glossary of terms is available with the survey instructions.

Your input will help to ensure that the findings from the survey reflect the unique characteristics of your library as well as similar libraries across the country. In addition, your responses will enable PLA to provide nationally representative data to inform elected officials, the media, and funders about public library assets and needs. Findings from the survey will be analyzed and reported in aggregate across all public libraries and in groups of similar libraries. PLA will use results from the survey to advocate on behalf of public libraries at the national level. In addition, PLA will make a summary of aggregate results freely available [on its website](#) to share the results widely. Results will be incorporated into the *Benchmark: Library Metrics and Trends* data tool.

The survey does not request your name or the names of any staff members, and your library's survey responses will remain private. To read ALA's privacy policy, please visit <http://www.ala.org/privacypolicy>.

It should take 30 to 45 minutes to complete this 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. If you have any questions about the survey, please contact the project team at plabenchmark@ala.org.

Additional Survey Information

What type of information does this survey collect?

The main sections on the 2023 Public Library Technology Survey are: Public Access Technology, Digital Literacy and Training, Infrastructure, and Staff Support and Budget for Technology. The survey questions are primarily multiple-choice, select-all-that-apply, and open-ended. No survey questions ask you to report any annual output measures.

Who should complete the 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. However, you may need to work with other staff or library departments, such as IT, to complete some of these questions.

How do I enter my library's responses?

Log into your library's account at <https://librarybenchmark.org/>. Click on "Surveys" in the menu, and then you will see this survey listed under "Open Surveys." The survey will remain open through Saturday, December 16, 2023.

Why should my library complete the survey?

Your participation will help make the results powerful and actionable for your library and libraries across the country. Your input enables PLA to provide nationally representative data to engage and inform elected officials, the media, and funders about public library assets and needs. PLA will also share aggregate results widely with the field, develop tools for peer comparison, and plan relevant professional development opportunities. In addition, the survey questions may inspire new ideas for your library. As this is the second iteration of this survey, the 2023 results will show how the field has evolved. You can read the [report from the 2020 Technology Survey](#) on the PLA website.

How long will it take?

We estimate the survey will take 30 to 45 minutes to complete. However, you may need to gather some information from colleagues before or during the process. We recommend reviewing all the questions beforehand to help you prepare.

How will the survey results be used?

The survey results will be incorporated into the Benchmark data dashboards, so your library will be able to see how you compare to your peers and to other libraries in the United States. PLA will publish a report summarizing the aggregate results on the PLA website and will use the survey results to advocate on behalf of public libraries at the national level. For example, in the past 3 years, the results from the 2020 Technology Survey have been used to advocate for libraries in the E-Rate program, digital literacy initiatives, and to raise awareness about the value of public library services at the local level in states like Texas and New York and beyond.

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Instructions

Log into your library's Benchmark account (librarybenchmark.org) to enter your responses for the 2023 Public Library Technology Survey. Please submit your responses by Saturday, **December 16, 2023**.

Click on "Surveys" in the menu at the top and select "2023 PLA Technology Survey" under "Open Surveys." 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. We estimate it will take 30 to 45 minutes to complete this survey.

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

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A glossary of terms can be found below.

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