

PUBLIC LIBRARIES

Nina Collins, Chair — Brooklyn Public Library System

Earl Simons, Ed. D, Chair — Queens Public Library System

Abby S. Milstein, Chair — New York Public Library System



WHAT WE DO

New York City's three independent library systems (the Libraries): Brooklyn Public Library (BPL), the New York Public Library (NYPL), and Queens Public Library (QPL), provide a wide range of free library services for all New Yorkers.

The Libraries oversee 219 local library locations across the five boroughs, including four research library centers. The Libraries offer free and open access to books, periodicals, non-print materials, electronic resources, mobile and streaming technology, and internet access. They also provide reference and career services, professional development, and educational, cultural and recreational programming for adults, young adults, and children. The Libraries' collections include 377 electronic databases and more than 65 million books, periodicals, and other circulating and reference items.

FOCUS ON EQUITY

As part of the City's social infrastructure, the Brooklyn Public Library, New York Public Library, and Queens Public Library prioritize equitable access to resources for patrons across the City. The Libraries' commitment to equity starts with collections. Among homes and communities across the City, there are vast disparities in access and exposure to books, and children in lower-income neighborhoods are less likely to read at their grade level. The City's libraries accordingly invest in robust collections at all locations, as well as in book giveaways, that target children in low-income neighborhoods and book deserts—areas where reading materials are difficult to obtain. In addition, the Libraries focus on offering collections that reflect the interests and needs of the diverse communities they serve. In 2021, late fees were eliminated, which was essential to equitable access to collections as it ensured that the ability to pay would not be a barrier to using the library. At the time of that decision, approximately 400,000 library cards had been blocked because of fine accruals.

Library programs and services, particularly those centered around education, further advance the Libraries' focus on equity. Through programs like storytimes, family literacy workshops, and pre-K partnerships, the Libraries have established themselves as the leading providers of early literacy programs and services in the City. All three systems conduct vital after-school programs which aim to help students in historically marginalized communities keep pace with their more affluent peers, a dire need given widespread but inequitable learning loss as the result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Young adult patrons have access to Teen Centers, college and career readiness counseling, one-on-one tutoring, and other innovative programs to promote learning and development in safe and inclusive spaces.

Equity is an integral focus of the Libraries' adult offerings as well. This includes financial literacy resources, one-on-one career services, and technology classes that help patrons develop professional competencies, such as coding and website development, among others. These services are particularly valuable to those New Yorkers most impacted by the digital divide, job-seekers, and those who are seeking to develop their professional skill set. In addition to our in-person programming and services, the three systems offer virtual classes and online resources which allow them to reach individuals who are unable to visit their local branch. The City's public libraries also provide vital resources for immigrants and undocumented New Yorkers, including English to Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) and civics classes, along with legal services through the [ActionNYC initiative](#). Between the three library systems, programs such as the ones mentioned above as well as book discussions, computer classes, "Know Your Rights" forums, health and wellness programs, and music and arts events are offered in over 20 languages, depending on the service and location. Programs are offered in

Arabic, American Sign Language, Bengali, Cantonese, English, French, Haitian Creole, Hebrew, Italian, Japanese, Korean, Mandarin, Nepali, Portuguese, Russian, Spanish, Tagalog, Urdu and Yiddish.

The Libraries' existing services for immigrants and native New Yorkers alike have made them natural hubs for the tens of thousands of asylum seekers arriving in the City. These patrons have received free and unfettered access to IDNYC locations in branches. The Libraries also provide targeted services to address the asylum seeker crisis, working with a wide range of community partners to distribute resources and information to asylees directly. The three library systems partner with the Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs (MOIA) to supply this information to the City's Asylum Seeker Navigation Center.

The Libraries' commitment to equity yields a credibility and trust that make them strong partners to the public, City agencies, and community-based organizations on a wide range of initiatives. In Fiscal 2021–2023, in partnership with the City, library branches served as COVID-19 vaccination and testing sites. Libraries continue to serve as COVID test-kit distribution hubs, cooling centers, and voting locations. Their credibility, along with their reach, is also why the Libraries are a valuable partner for civic engagement and voter education initiatives, including trainings and panel discussions for low-turnout segments of the population, such as recently incarcerated citizens, older adults, and voters of color. The Libraries are additionally a critical partner to the [NYC Civic Engagement Commission and City Council's Participatory Budgeting initiative](#). Branches serve as spaces where a diverse range of New Yorkers can participate in valuable idea generation sessions and cast their votes for projects.

Key to patrons' engagement with these programs and services is providing trusted, safe and reliable spaces for all New Yorkers. All three systems work diligently, with limited resources, to renovate existing branches and build new locations when possible, balancing the needs of each neighborhood while prioritizing urgent building repairs. The three systems assess the conditions and needs of every branch, particularly regarding critical infrastructure, to ensure buildings are properly cooled, heated, and accessible.

The City's libraries continue to be spaces that are uniquely equipped to advance equity in New York City. Whether as a student taking advantage of a new Teen Centers, an adult building a new professional skill set, a toddler discovering the joys of storytime, or an asylee seeking vital resources, every New Yorker can count on their libraries for access to the tools, resources, and development opportunities they need to find success in their lives.

BROOKLYN PUBLIC LIBRARY

Performance Indicators	Actual			Target		4-Month Actual	
	FY21	FY22	FY23	FY24	FY25	FY23	FY24
★ Average weekly scheduled hours	47.0	47.0	47.0	*	*	47.0	47.0
Libraries open seven days per week (%)	11%	11%	11%	*	*	11%	11%
★ Libraries open six days per week (%)	100%	100%	100%	*	*	100%	100%
★ Circulation (000)	5,004	9,318	9,867	9,600	9,600	2,548	3,360
Reference queries (000)	17	446	71	*	*	6	88
Electronic visits to website (000)	1,702	3,008	3,859	4,000	4,000	1,358	1,866
Computers for public use	2,586	2,586	2,600	*	*	2,586	3,208
Computer sessions (000)	13	331	602	*	*	181	261
Wireless sessions	431,804	NA	NA	*	*	526,560	953,862
Program sessions	15,823	25,383	55,767	*	*	15,895	22,444
★ Program attendance	749,651	387,494	596,753	*	*	158,075	235,990
★ Library card holders (000)	1,364	1,472	1,409	1,500	1,500	528	NA
Active library cards (000)	846	494	591	*	*	533	649
New library card registrations	70,391	143,441	180,069	*	*	59,967	105,876
★ Total library attendance (000)	812	2,979	4,064	*	*	1,322	1,872
★ Critical Indicator ● Equity Indicator "NA" Not Available ↑↓ Directional Target * None							

NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY — BRANCH

Performance Indicators	Actual			Target		4-Month Actual	
	FY21	FY22	FY23	FY24	FY25	FY23	FY24
★ Average weekly scheduled hours	48.0	48.4	48.4	*	*	48.2	48.4
Libraries open seven days per week (%)	0%	8%	8%	*	*	8%	8%
★ Libraries open six days per week (%)	64%	100%	100%	*	*	100%	100%
★ Circulation (000)	9,958	14,310	16,530	14,500	14,500	5,479	5,806
Reference queries (000)	1,023	3,801	4,231	*	*	1,726	1,891
Electronic visits to website (000)	20,212	26,015	23,449	19,000	19,000	6,731	6,621
Computers for public use	4,173	3,748	4,409	*	*	3,748	4,409
Computer sessions (000)	2	929	1,222	*	*	400	467
Wireless sessions	232,185	591,454	1,353,853	*	*	395,219	842,094
Program sessions	24,745	43,103	84,154	*	*	22,566	30,529
★ Program attendance	445,185	505,595	1,031,424	*	*	287,701	369,555
★ Library card holders (000)	2,420	2,111	2,075	2,000	2,000	1,850	NA
Active library cards (000)	522	722	867	*	*	823	1,283
New library card registrations	157,253	295,448	407,167	*	*	142,933	195,897
★ Total library attendance (000)	1,439	5,346	7,341	*	*	2,430	2,665
★ Critical Indicator ● Equity Indicator "NA" Not Available ↑↓ Directional Target * None							

NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY — RESEARCH

Performance Indicators	Actual			Target		4-Month Actual	
	FY21	FY22	FY23	FY24	FY25	FY23	FY24
★ Average weekly scheduled hours	48.0	49.4	51.0	*	*	51.0	51.2
Libraries open seven days per week (%)	0%	33%	33%	*	*	33%	33%
★ Libraries open six days per week (%)	100%	100%	100%	*	*	100%	100%
Reference queries (000)	67	112	180	*	*	88	80
★ Program attendance	291,539	101,663	126,555	*	*	35,796	33,986
★ Total library attendance (000)	4	1,796	3,456	*	*	1,135	1,460
Program sessions	3,775	2,623	3,062	*	*	1,008	975
★ Critical Indicator	● Equity Indicator	"NA" Not Available	↑↓ Directional Target	* None			

QUEENS BOROUGH PUBLIC LIBRARY

Performance Indicators	Actual			Target		4-Month Actual	
	FY21	FY22	FY23	FY24	FY25	FY23	FY24
★ Average weekly scheduled hours	33.5	37.8	44.3	*	*	43.0	45.0
Libraries open seven days per week (%)	0%	1%	3%	*	*	3%	3%
★ Libraries open six days per week (%)	55%	55%	86%	*	*	75%	90%
★ Circulation (000)	3,685	6,738	7,719	7,000	7,000	2,587	2,869
Reference queries (000)	199	714	1,028	*	*	330	388
Electronic visits to website (000)	2,787	3,354	3,248	3,500	3,500	1,079	1,040
Computers for public use	4,054	6,095	5,174	*	*	5,116	4,789
Computer sessions (000)	15	495	732	*	*	240	287
Wireless sessions	378,799	466,572	583,803	*	*	202,910	322,169
Program sessions	14,183	28,735	53,156	*	*	15,896	18,196
★ Program attendance	807,055	540,604	879,173	*	*	263,061	333,825
★ Library card holders (000)	1,491	1,457	1,548	1,500	1,500	1,486	NA
Active library cards (000)	948	869	726	*	*	728	713
New library card registrations	16,107	55,286	92,854	*	*	28,966	36,081
★ Total library attendance (000)	1,563	3,945	5,676	*	*	1,836	2,140
★ Critical Indicator	● Equity Indicator	"NA" Not Available	↑↓ Directional Target	* None			

AGENCY RESOURCES

Resource Indicators	Actual			Sept. 2023 MMR Plan	Updated Plan	Plan	4-Month Actual	
	FY21	FY22	FY23	FY24	FY24 ¹	FY25 ¹	FY23	FY24
Expenditures (\$000,000) ²	\$429.9	\$431.0	\$473.1	\$471.9	\$453.9	\$421.0	\$181.9	\$188.9
Personnel	3,721	3,889	4,108	4,301	4,339	4,236	3,923	4,084
Capital commitments (\$000,000)	\$45.8	\$142.1	\$73.2	\$198.5	\$186.1	\$150.4	\$20.4	\$68.3
¹ January 2024 Financial Plan.		² Expenditures include all funds		"NA" - Not Available				

SPENDING AND BUDGET INFORMATION

Agency expenditures and planned resources by budgetary unit of appropriation.

Unit of Appropriation	Expenditures FY23 ¹ (\$000,000)	January 2024 Financial Plan FY24 ² (\$000,000)
Brooklyn Public Library, 001 - Lump Sum Appropriation (OTPS) ¹	\$130.9	\$125.0
New York Public Library - Branch, Agency Total ¹	\$174.6	\$166.8
003 - Lump Sum - Borough of Manhattan (OTPS)	\$26.1	\$26.1
004 - Lump Sum - Borough of the Bronx (OTPS)	\$24.5	\$24.5
005 - Lump Sum - Borough of Staten Island (OTPS)	\$11.0	\$11.0
006 - Systemwide Services (OTPS)	\$111.6	\$103.9
007 - Consultant and Advisory Services (OTPS)	\$1.4	\$1.4
New York Public Library - Research, 001 - Lump Sum Appropriation (OTPS) ¹	\$33.0	\$32.4
Queens Public Library, 001 - Lump Sum Appropriation (OTPS) ¹	\$134.5	\$129.6

¹These figures are limited to the City's contribution and planned contribution respectively. ²Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR) for the Fiscal Year ended June 30, 2023. Includes all funds. "NA" Not Available * None

NOTEWORTHY CHANGES, ADDITIONS OR DELETIONS

- The previously published 4-month actual Fiscal 2023 figure for Brooklyn Public Library ‘Program Attendance’ was changed to 158,075 from 1,581 due to a rounding error—program attendance is not rounded to the thousands, as it was in the 4-month actual Fiscal 2023 original figure, and should be reported as a whole number.
- 4-month actual Fiscal 2024 data for Brooklyn Public Library ‘Library card holders (000),’ New York Public Library ‘Library card holders (000),’ and Queens Borough Public Library ‘Library card holders (000)’ are all NA-ed because this data is reported annually and will be reported in the Fiscal 2024 Mayor’s Management Report.
- The Libraries adjusted the Fiscal 2024 targets for the following indicators due to budgetary constraints: Brooklyn Public Library ‘Circulation (000)’ was adjusted from 10.3 million to 9.6 million, New York Public Library ‘Circulation (000)’ was adjusted from 15 million to 14.5 million, New York Public Library ‘Electronic visits to website (000)’ was adjusted from 20 million to 19 million, and Queens Borough Public Library ‘Circulation (000)’ was adjusted from 7.5 million to 7 million.
- Preceding the Fiscal 2024 Preliminary Mayor’s Management Report, the Mayor’s Office of Operations implemented updated standards for indicator names. Minimal stylistic changes, such as the use of em-dashes, percent symbols and acronyms, were made to the names of previously published indicators here.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

For additional information on items referenced in the narrative, go to:

- ActionNYC: <https://access.nyc.gov/programs/actionnyc/>
- NYC Civic Engagement Commission and City Council’s Participatory Budgeting initiative: <https://council.nyc.gov/pb/>

For more information on these libraries, please visit:

- Brooklyn Public Library: www.bklynlibrary.org
- New York Public Library: www.nypl.org
- Queens Borough Public Library: www.queenslibrary.org

