



Library Freedom Project Access for All Task Force Report: Digital Inclusion in Libraries During COVID-19

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Section 1: Introduction

Background

After many discussions about the role of libraries as free providers of internet and computer access during the COVID-19 pandemic, Library Freedom Project's Access for All (LFPFAFA) task force, formed in the early months of 2021, sought feedback from library workers from across the United States and beyond about how libraries have adapted services to meet the digital access needs of their communities. LFPFAFA advocates for affordable and reliable internet access to be made available to every person who wants and needs it on an equitable basis. Libraries have broad experience with the need for expanded broadband coverage and publicly accessible internet, computers, and other consumer technologies, and are deeply invested in providing equitable access to the internet for all.

Methodology

Members of the LFPFAFA group wrote the questions in the survey together at a series of meetings and via email. LFPFAFA members included academic and public library workers in a range of different roles, including staff members with positions that specifically focus on technology and/or digital outreach. The questions were selected to help us understand the service population demographics of the respondents and to learn more about what measures had been taken to increase internet access during COVID-19.

The survey was built in Google Forms and ran from March 1 until April 14, 2021 with distribution to many listservs and social media groups throughout the month of March (see Appendix B). We asked that only libraries currently serving the public in some capacity answer this survey. Most responses came from public libraries and networks, consortia, or other cooperative groups of public libraries; we separated responses from other types of libraries (academic, school, etc.) and included those in Section 3 of this report. Question types included multiple choice (one possible answer), checkboxes (multiple possible answers), and a free-text field at the end to ask for additional comments.

Respondents that identified their libraries or systems as “public” numbered approximately 423. None of the questions on the survey were required, so there is an inconsistent “total” amount for responses to each question. We received 68 responses from libraries that identified themselves as academic, school, tribal, or other. Because some of the checkbox/multiple answer questions included a free-text option (e.g., Question 4 about services used to increase internet access in communities), we lumped similar responses into broader categories. The raw response data is available upon request.

Noteworthy Findings

One of the biggest points of divergence between public and non-public respondents was the response to Question 3, “Has your library taken steps to increase internet access due to COVID-19?” 84% of public respondents said “no” to this question and 16% said yes, compared to 66% and 34% respectively for the non-public group. Interestingly, 60% of public library responses to Question 7, “Have the measures that your library has taken met the digital access needs in your community?” were “Yes” or “Somewhat.” For Question 12, “Were you offering any of [the services mentioned in the survey] before March 2020?”, 86% of public respondents said “Yes” or “Some.” However, the comments received in Question 13 indicate that many public libraries felt they were struggling to keep up with demand.

For public respondents, the main services increased or changed to keep up with demand related to internet access (lending of hotspots, increasing Wi-Fi access to parking lots or extending hours, etc.). Most of these respondents spent less than \$20,000 on their measures to increase access. Many were dependent on their operating budgets or national grants such as CARES Act funding (see page x). For academic, school, and other respondents, these responses looked similar; a noticeably larger proportion of non-public libraries indicated they did not know how much had been spent on additional access. Another difference between the two types is that 62% of public respondents said they do **not** have someone on staff who specifically works on digital inclusion/access efforts compared with 45% of the non-public group.

Recommendations

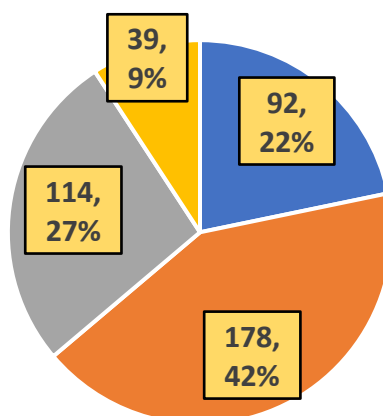
Based on the data collected in the survey, the LFPFA task force has a few key recommendations to offer the library community:

- Public libraries, networks, and/or consortia should try to create dedicated positions for digital access and inclusion. At the very least, internal task forces or committees could be created to help staff members collaborate on this important work.
- Continuing services that began or accelerated during the pandemic can be a way to continue bridging the digital divide in a library's community. Libraries should continue their laptop and hotspot lending programs (provided local usage justifies the means). Virtual services provide accessibility and outreach to traditionally underserved groups. Individual communities should assess need and usage on a local level in deciding what services to keep and which ones to end as libraries begin to shift back to "normal operations."
- Library workers should follow developments at the local and national level to create infrastructure for and provide universal broadband. They should have a seat at the table in these discussions as they often have a closer relationship to patrons and a clearer picture of digital access challenges than politicians do.
- Libraries cannot solve digital inclusion and access issues alone. Other community resources and non-profits can help in the near term. As a part of addressing these efforts, library workers should establish partnerships with other groups and entities that offer "social infrastructure" assistance (councils on aging, accessibility coordinators, public schools, afterschool programs, etc.) and think about marketing/outreach efforts that aren't digitally exclusive themselves.

Section 2: Public Library Responses

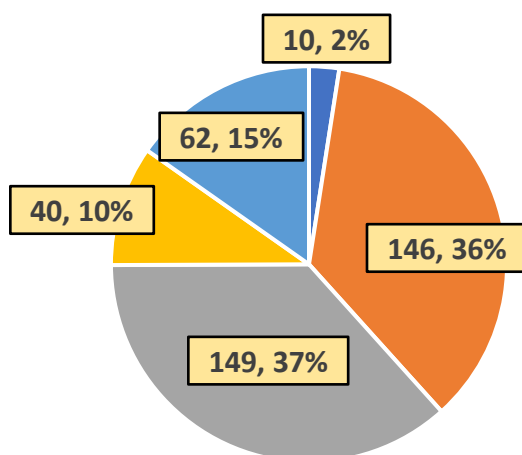
Q1 and Q2: Demographics – This segment of the survey data was exclusively collected from 423 libraries that identified themselves as “public.” They include consortia, networks, and other cooperative groups. Rural and suburban libraries accounted for 69% of responses. Most respondents indicated their service area is between 10,000 and 100,000 residents.

Q1. Which of these best describes your library or library system’s service area?



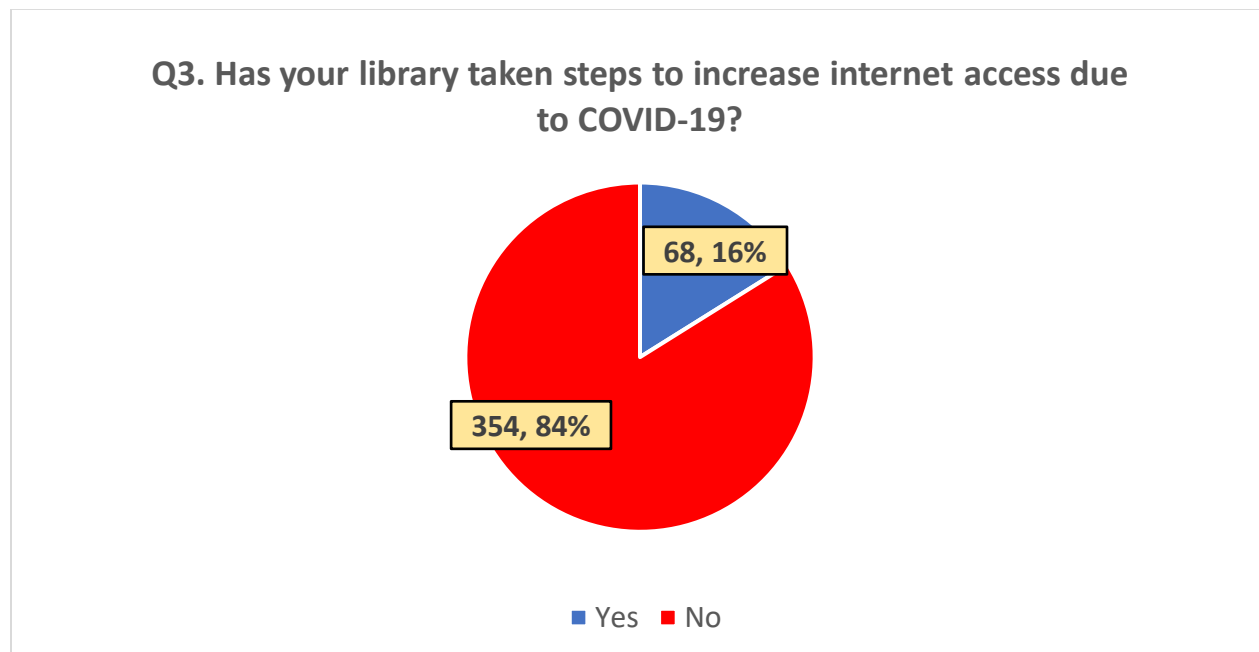
■ A mix of one or more of these ■ Rural ■ Suburban ■ Urban

Q2. Roughly what is the size of your service population?

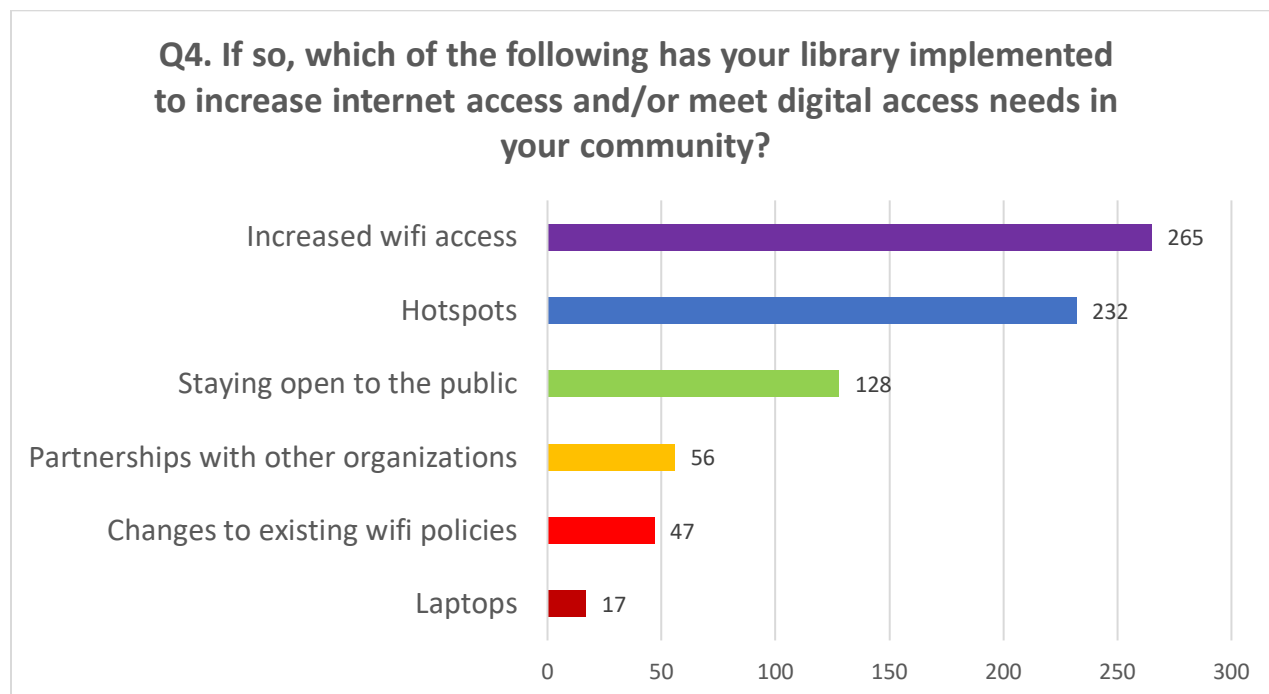


■ 200-999 ■ 1000-9999 ■ 10,000-49,999 ■ 50,000-99,999 ■ 100,000+

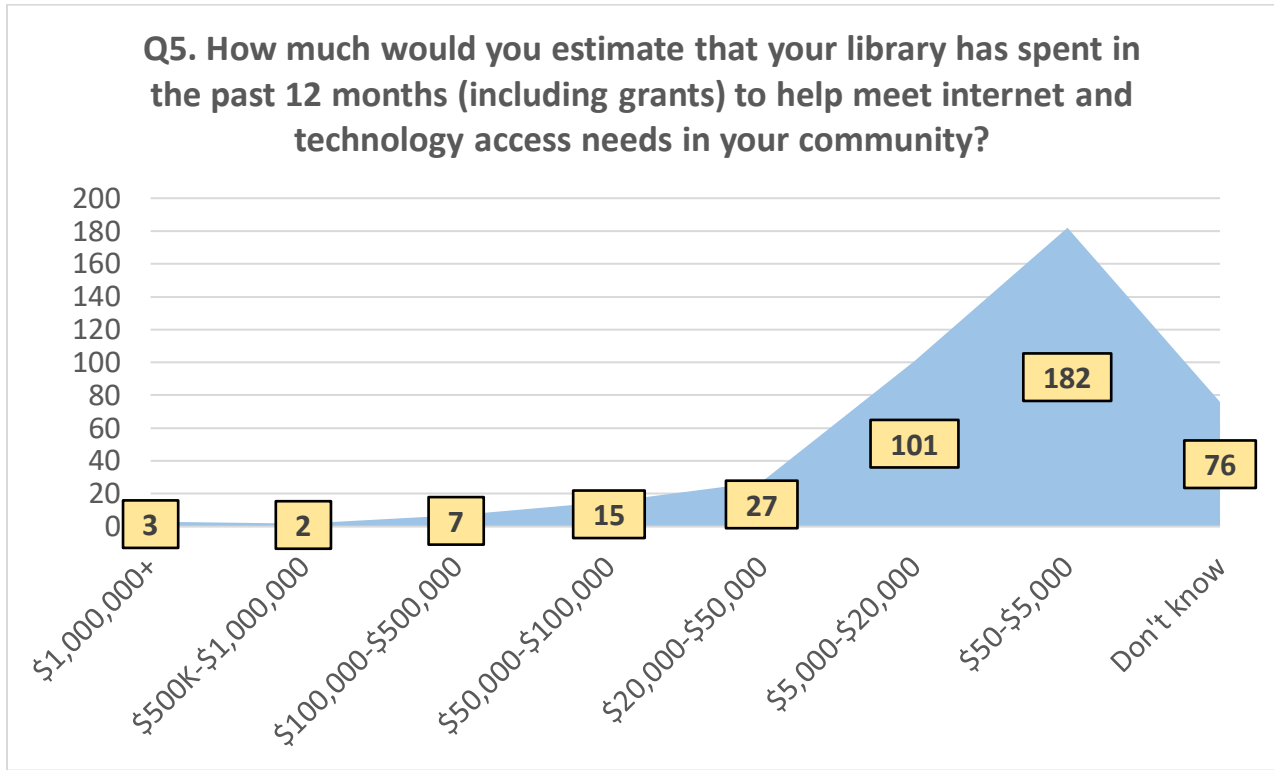
Q3: Increasing Internet Access – 422 libraries responded to question 3 and the majority (354 vs. 68) said they did *not* take steps to increase internet access due to COVID-19. A recommended question for further investigation would be whether this is because the libraries felt they were already doing enough (or as much as they could), or if they were limited in their efforts to try to do more.



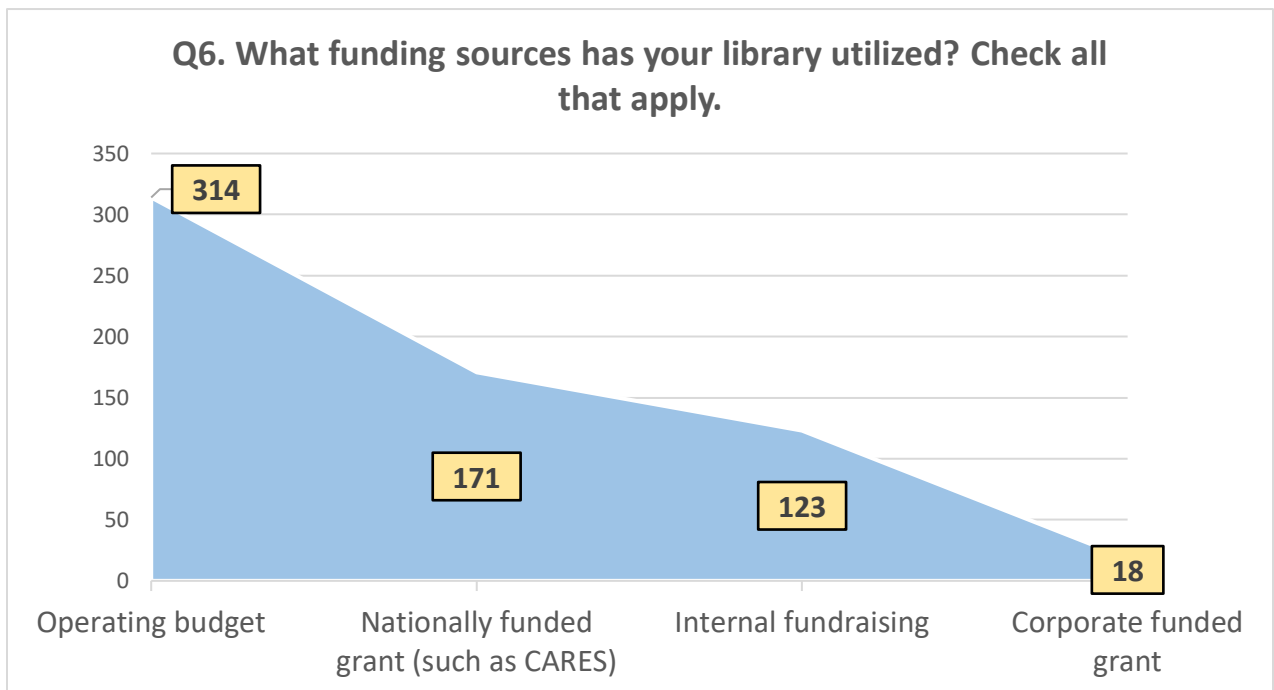
Q4: Services Implemented – As noted in the introduction, most libraries increased Wi-Fi access and loaned hotspots to meet demand during the pandemic. Other responses included lending laptops, staying open, and partnering with other organizations.



Q5: Estimating Expenses – Most libraries fell in the \$5,000-\$20,000 range for their expenses in attempting to meet increased internet and technology needs.

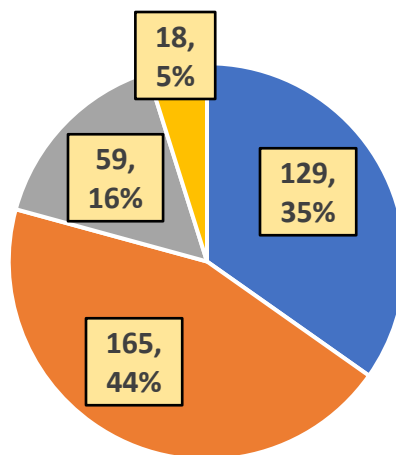


Q6: Funding Sources – Most libraries were reliant on their operating budget and nationally funded grants, such as CARES Act funding. “Internal fundraising” here encompassed friends of the library groups, library foundations, and trustees (trust or gift funds).



Q7: Assessing Impact – Though many of the comments on responses indicated that respondents were struggling to keep up with demand for digital access, 60% said they had either met needs or had somewhat met them.

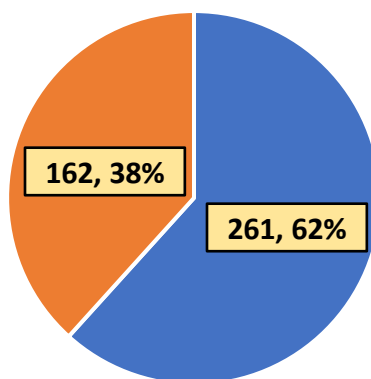
Q7. Have the measures that your library has taken met the digital access needs in your community?



■ No ■ Yes ■ Somewhat ■ Not sure

Q8: Staff Focused on Digital Access – In the opinion of LFPFAFA, this is one of the key areas for improvement in public libraries. Positions with an access on digital inclusion and access should be created, or task forces/committees within libraries, networks, or consortia should be considered.

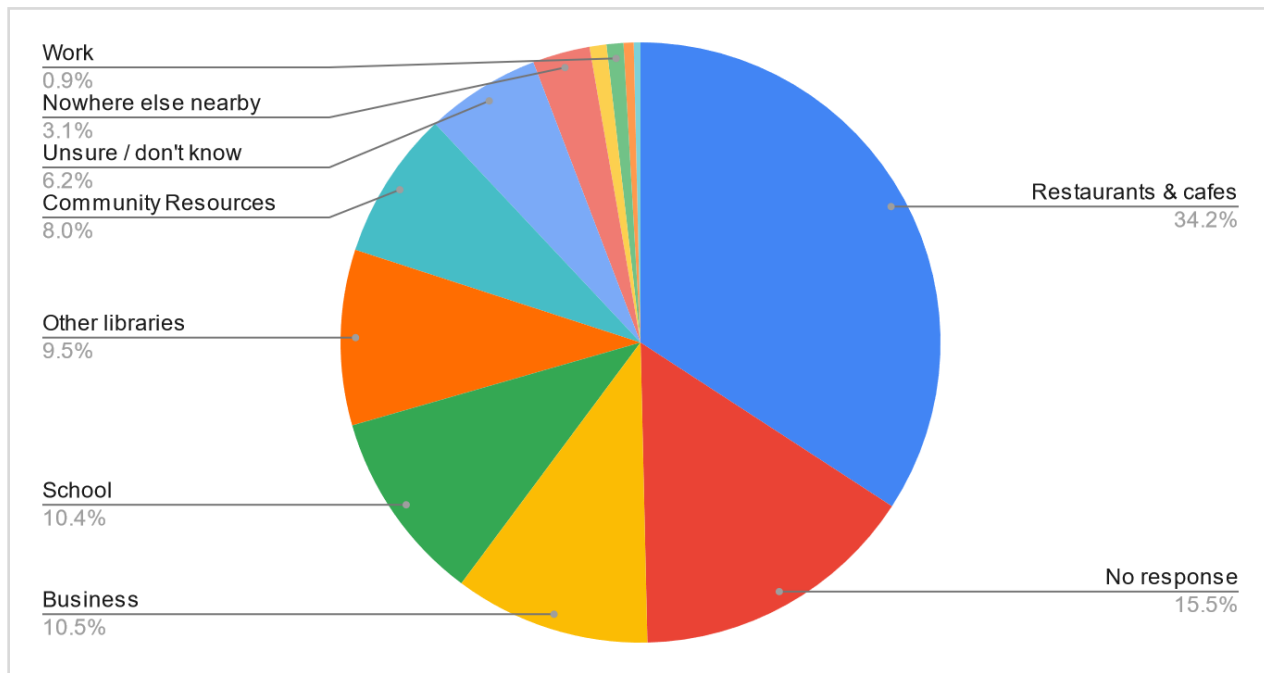
Q8. Does your library have staff whose job duties specifically include digital access?



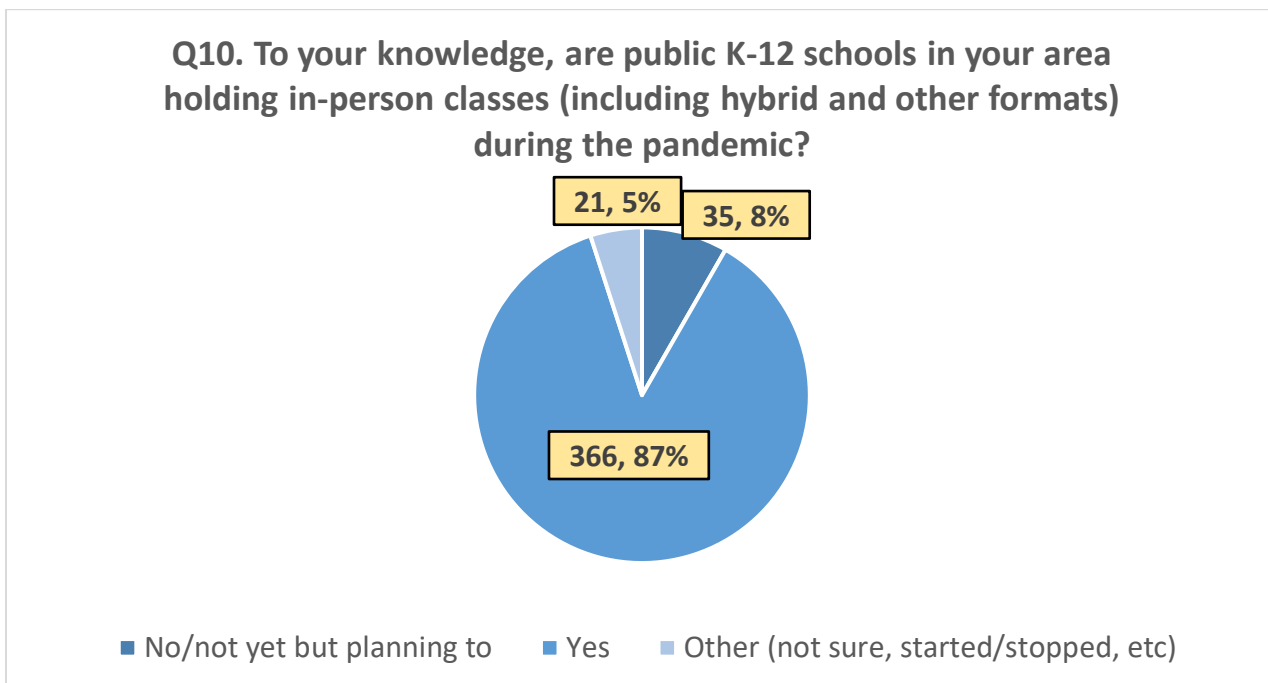
■ No ■ Yes

Q9: Other Places to Access Wi-Fi – The most common answer to this was “restaurants and cafes.” It was interesting to see that 9.5% of respondents said patrons to go other libraries; this could be due to proximity to their homes/workplaces or to better infrastructure.

Q9. Where do your patrons tend to go for Wi-Fi access outside of their homes?

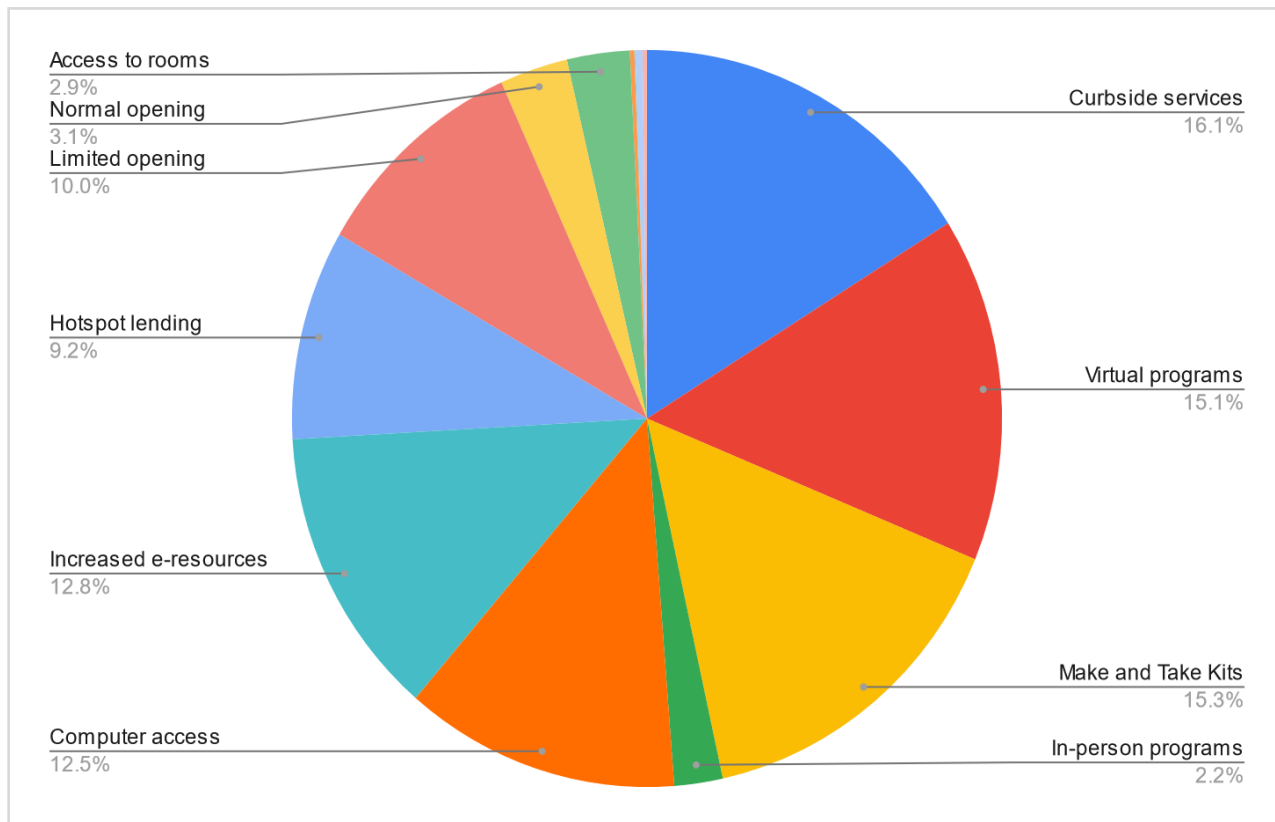


Q10: K-12 Schools Open – We asked this to attempt to understand how libraries were impacted by the status of K-12 schools in their areas, but it may have been a little too late to get too much meaningful information from the question as more schools were likely closed in the spring/fall of 2020.

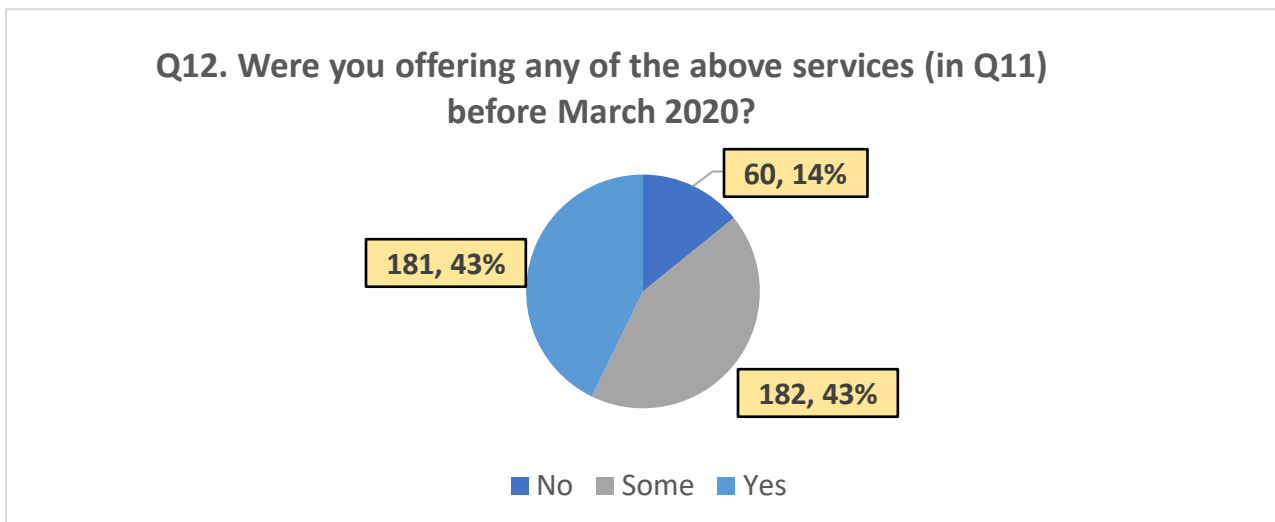


Q11: Services Currently Offered – The most common responses to this included curbside services, make & take kits, virtual programs, increased e-resources, and computer access. We did not specifically ask about e-resource access in the survey.

Q11. What services are you currently offering? Check all that apply.



Q12: Services Offered Before COVID – 86% of respondents indicated they had provided at least some of the above services before the beginning of the pandemic. Based on the comments received, it appears that some of these libraries will continue to offer these services going forward.



Q13: Additional comments – This was a free-text field offered to respondents to add other information or thoughts not covered by the survey questions. They are organized into two broad categories using the Plus/Delta framework (plus indicates a positive outcome or piece of feedback; delta indicates a pain point or place of improvement). Within plus and delta, there are subcategorizations of specific topics, including internet access and changes in service models. They have largely been left unedited; please excuse grammar or spelling mistakes.

Plus

Changes in Service Models & Philosophy

- One of the best things about this situation is that it forced our library system to stop fretting about trying new modes of service, and to go ahead and experiment. It has given us a whole new toolkit of services to expand our reach into the communities we are serving.
- Library work in this area has been focused on defining a niche (primarily around first level digital access and development of digital literacies) within a larger ecosystem. Building on this understanding, our organization is using its role to identify need and opportunity for other partner groups.
- The pandemic has allowed us to take a look at different methods of providing library services to our patrons and consider whether or not it would be feasible to continue some of these practices as "regular" services going forward.
- We are providing lots of programs for local business owners to help them reinvent themselves and adapt to the new normal.
- The pandemic caused us to lean on our City IT more than usual to get staff tech they needed to work remotely and better the patron-facing technology where applicable.

Chromebooks, Laptops, and Hotspots

- Our grant funds were used to provide Chromebooks and 150 hotspots to help close the digital divide in our area. Targeted but not limited to students needing access from home, we also shared our technology with older adults and neighbors in immigrant communities. Some of the funds also supported the purchase of plexiglass dividers to be used in the library to enhance safety for persons accessing computer stations, though our branches currently remain closed to the public.
- Can't wait to start circulating laptops with hotspots!
- Hotspots are surprisingly popular and efficient now that access can be turned off if not returned.

Enhanced Wi-Fi & Internet Access

- In 2021, we are using e-Rate funds to put an access point in our courtyard to boost outdoor Wi-Fi. I would also like to implement a TV whitespace project to push the library's Wi-Fi out into the community, but this project is not currently funded.

- Our Wi-Fi access points at each branch are on 24/7 and usually require a log-in with library-issued username / password. Between March and October of 2020, we left the network open to help provide internet access to more people during reduced library hours.
- Over the summer of 2020 we hosted 229 tutoring sessions with 28 children. Fall session has 22. All utilize our laptops/Wi-Fi at the library. We have our school district's software curriculum and are able to download student assignments. NO COVID ISSUES !!!
- Pushed county officials to start a broadband committee, and I am a member of that, as well as a tri-county committee sponsored by our regional Council of Governments. With COG, the tri-county group is working with ConnectTexas to survey residents to get good data.
- The CARES Act funding was essential in upgrading our Wi-Fi.
- This library system (6 branches) strengthened our Wi-Fi signals to make it more accessible to the public outside the buildings. The Wi-Fi is available 24/7. We reopened for public access computer use by appointment in June and opened for full walk-in use for computer access and browsing on Sept. 7. Our Wi-Fi services are currently being used heavily for school and personal business within the buildings and anecdotal reports of exterior use when the buildings are closed. Our public access computers are also being used, though not as heavily as before the pandemic. Many people are using the public access computers to apply for employment, unemployment benefits and tax returns.
- We have always had our Wi-Fi on 24/7 so it was nice our community already knew that was a service we provided.
- We have purchased laptops for checkout with funds from LSTA grants and a Grow with Google grant
- We purchased 12 Hotspots in April 2020, to mount in our local parks. That drastically assisted our community members with the transition to virtual learning and remote work models.
- We had hotspots prior to Covid. We have worked to make them as easily available as possible in the last year.

Virtual Programming & Electronic Resources

- Virtual programming and curbside service began in March of 2020 and will now become regular services. We are developing plans to allow patrons to checkout laptops, tablets and video equipment.
- We had already increased electronic resources by purchasing Hoopla. During the pandemic we increased loan amounts and purchased more titles from Overdrive.
- We have added services like Tutor.com and JobNow VetNow which offer live help for school, jobs, and veteran's benefits.

- During the initial closure in March 2020, we had IT staff implement a voicemail to email solution so designated library staff could troubleshoot tech issues for patrons. People were anxious to use the digital collections, many for the first time, and there were a number of tech questions as well as accounts being blocked for fines, etc. that needed to be resolved. The public could call our main number, leave a message and get a call back. Workload was split between 2 staff, one for tech issues, how to download e-books, etc., the other for "my account" questions. Worked really well.

Plans to Continue New Services

- We have really been impressed by the reaction to our increased eResources. We will continue this. Plus digital programming (even in the "after" times). We also have seen a huge uptick cards being issued just for curbside. People are reading more. Both ebooks and hard copies. It thrills us. Our finance committee just reviewed our budget and said we are doing a great job. I was very heartened by that.
- We have changed the way we do business in many ways. We expect that many of the new services that we offered digitally will become permanent additions to our programming and services to patrons.
- We had hotspot lending, but we added more. We didn't have virtual programming, and I know some of that is going to stick around after Covid.
- The only one of these services that we offered to the degree we do now before March 2020 was computer access.
- Virtual programming has been such a hit we will continue it post covid. Many people in our area find it difficult to travel to the library for events because VA has terrible public transit
- We did not offer Curbside (pre COVID-19) but will consider making it a regular service. We had not done virtual programs either. Not sure that will continue - time will tell.

Delta

Library Workers Need More Support & Understanding

- Library workers should be considered as essential workers if we are open to the public
- I would love to go back to the way it was before Covid-19. Very stressful at work
- We are all trying to figure out the landscape in this period of pandemic. It isn't easy for small, rural libraries.
- "Curbside" isn't a great shorthand for "you can get your holds but little else." These are two distinct service offerings; some libraries that are closed to browsing still have not done "curbside" delivery out to cars. our state collapsed this into one question, and it resulted in us being counted as completely closed, while we're actually doing over 70% of our pre-covid circulation, with no "curbside" service at all. Also, our pickup lobbies are staffed via Zoom which has actually worked way better than we were expecting. Thanks for doing this!

Struggling to Keep Up with the Digital Divide

- Our area doesn't have coverage to support lending Wi-Fi hotspots.
- The biggest thing our patrons really want is access to browse the books. We opened in May and immediately allowed patrons back, albeit limited number in the building at a time. Now we do not have any restrictions except you must wear a mask.
- I have had conversations with the county and with the town about this issue. I wanted to get hot spots two years ago but discussions with some tech people led me to believe that access was iffy in the places I was concerned about. The town board is supposed to be putting me in touch with the town IT guy. Will see what happens with that. We currently have Wi-Fi access outside the building with no password and do loan out a laptop for use outside. The county received a grant a couple of years ago to increase broadband in some capacity. I thought it might be used for increasing access, instead, as I understand it, it was used to increase the speed for those who already had access. Broadband is such a critical issue.
- Just that digital access is so important, we really hear the need from patrons, especially now that we are closed.
- Lack of reliable Wi-Fi across our county is creating a real digital divide.
- I feel like we've done what we are able to, but it's a drop in the bucket compared to the need.
- Libraries are the stop gap for the digital divide which I don't think politicians realize. This divide is created by a monopoly racket dominated by telecom corporations and needs to be seriously addressed with libraries central to the solutions going forward.
- It will be interesting to see consumer behavior change post-pandemic. For example, we've already heard from some parents they would like us to continue a virtual preschool storytime option. We remain concerned about the digital divide and those without access to broadband at home due to lack of coverage or low income, and will continue to work with other agencies to address it.
- The digital divide remains incredibly powerful in limiting equal access to everything from job searching to schooling to vaccinations.
- We are doing computer (including print, faxing, and copying) access - theoretically by appointment, but we do take many walk-ins. I'm concerned we could be serving the patrons who need the services in a more safe and controlled way, and that our current structures of promotion and marketing mean we are not reaching potential patrons who are most in need, both re: computer access and other services e.g. hotspot and laptop lending. Prior to the pandemic, our hotspots always had lengthy waitlists. We bought more and now there is little wait, which would suggest the need is being met, but I hesitate to suggest we have been hugely successful in all this.

- Our staff are almost exclusively at or beyond retirement age (myself exempted), so issues of technology are largely ignored. I am not sure what the level of need is for the town overall because it is a pretty affluent town anyway.
- We had some difficulty with completely open (non-password protected) Wi-Fi outside of the building: someone repeatedly used our Wi-Fi to illegally torrent stream copyright protected movies and we received cease and desist letters from Comcast. We have been forced to password protect all Wi-Fi access and are afraid our torrent streamer will get the password and start up again...
- The pandemic has focused a spotlight on the digital divide in our community. Others now recognize what we in the public library have been saying for years: there is undeniably a divide between those with and without access to technology and the community needs to address it.
- Comcast is a sole internet supplier for broadband here on Cape Cod and it's almost impossible for anyone here to qualify for their 'internet essentials' program - someone needs to put pressure on them to HELP more
- We really need hotspots but can't get coverage in our area. I'm getting laptops for checkout, but without hotspots and better internet in our area, I'm not optimistic about it helping.
- We tried to provide WI-FI access via our Bookmobile, but no matter what we did the equipment couldn't connect to the mobile network then the bookmobile had serious mechanical repairs that took it off the road.
- Excellent Wi-Fi should be a public utility and available to all. Several providers have only gone to certain parts of town and the last mile connections are often too expensive for people. Also, they say Wi-Fi is "available" at minimum speeds, even if it rarely reaches rural areas and is very often not the speeds advertised.
- I am in a very rural area of Missouri with very expensive, yet poor internet access. It is very hard to have on-line activities such as on-line summer reading or story time because only a quarter of our kids can use internet at home. It is hard to host anything on-line due to the poor internet here. Also, the area is very poor and few households have invested in a computer only to have poor, expensive internet. Some areas here still have dial up. Very hard to work with when most programs are created for fast, inexpensive internet in a city. My daughter is in St. Louis and she is streaming Netflix, working from home with two computer screens and on the phone with co-workers. I on the other hand, have 3G internet on a good day and have to turn the Wi-Fi off every device in the house to watch a movie on Netflix or Hulu. I am not in a wooded rural area and the cost for my internet is more than the internet in a city. A frustration that people do not understand unless they also live under a rock or in the woods or in a "no signal zone".
- Hotspots would be very helpful but the budget of the library is not sufficient to pay for the monthly fees to allow the use of them.

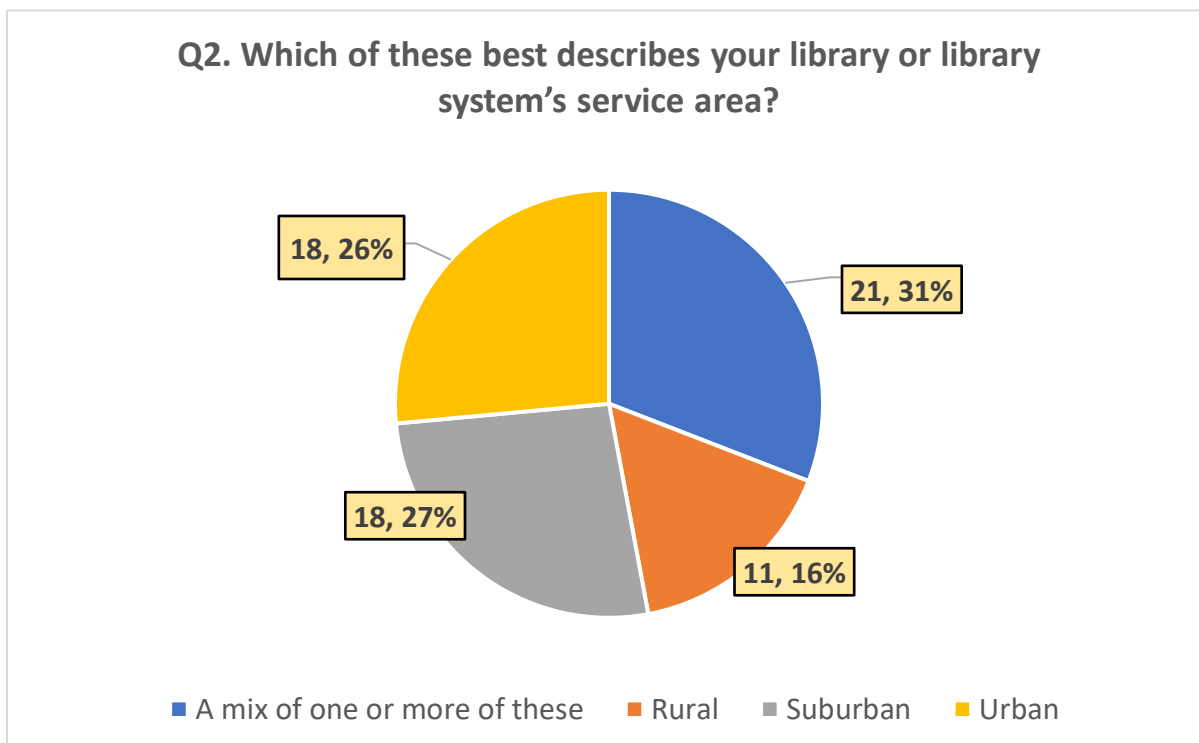
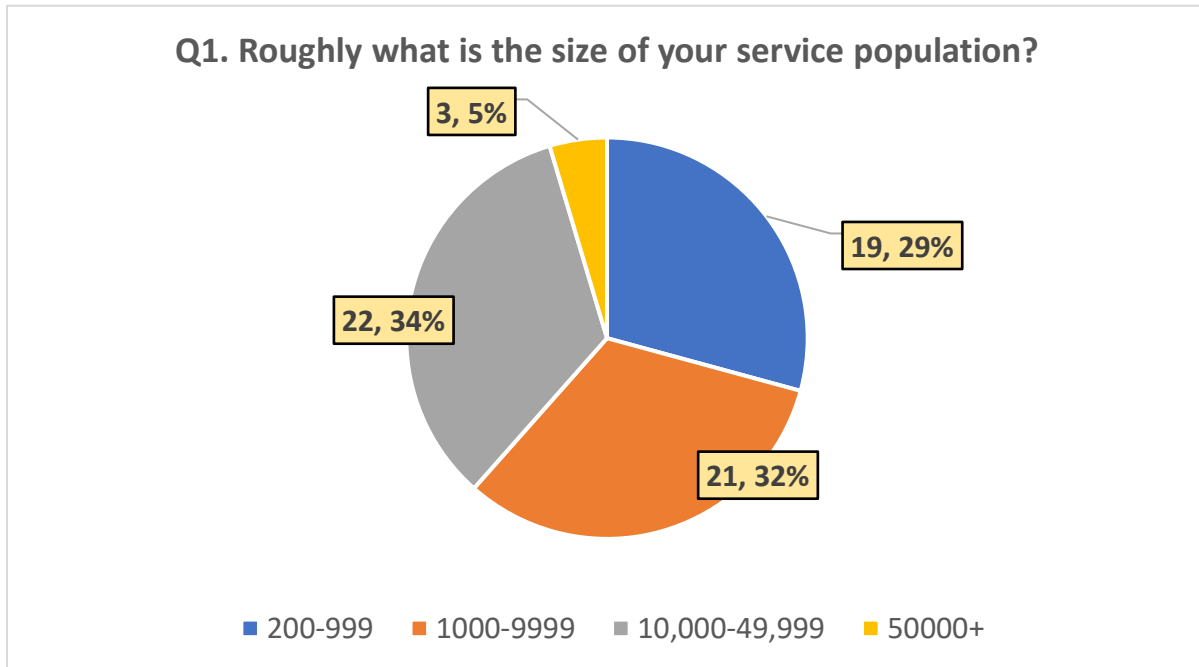
- Wi-Fi is a utility and libraries cannot feasibly fill the gap that school closures, work from home, and unemployment (meaning cancellation of home Internet access) have created. We need municipal Wi-Fi.
- Wi-Fi/Internet access is the biggest unmet need in our community. Even the hotspots we have available aren't adequate because there are inactive cell towers in the community.
- Would have liked to have funding for more portable hotspots and computers. Used available funds to install a powerful hotspot on site and increased electronic resources.
- We were closed from March till June, so we didn't have much of a chance to respond to the pandemic. We've had our computers available in a limited capacity since June for Internet usage and printing. We've just had abuse of the Wi-Fi in the past, so we had a policy that it was for staff only. We opened up to students who signed their name down in December of 2020, and we're soon going to open up the Wi-Fi more generally now that we have staff who can manage it and a new router that is more secure.
- We have placed permanent outdoor hotspots at our libraries so people can get access when the library is not closed, but we are told we have to shut them down overnight so as not to "compete" with paid providers. If there is one rule that has to change, that is the one. We do not shut down our internal Wi-Fi that usually bleeds over into the parking lots.

Access to Physical vs. Digital Materials

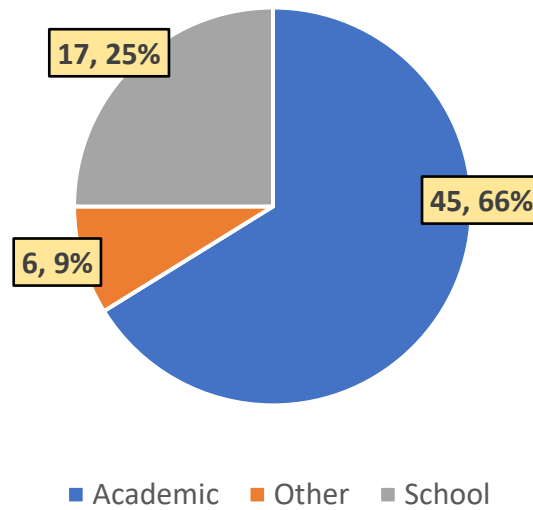
- It has been our experience that increases in usage of digital services have been very modest, only around 20% comparing 2020 to 2019. When digital circulation accounts for around 10% of total circulation, a 20% increase is not much at all and barely makes a dent in the massive decrease in circulation of physical materials. The greatest increases in digital circulation happened when we were completely closed and those increases have not been sustained once we were able to open for limited services. Usage of digital services is currently about where we were pre-pandemic. I'm skeptical of the public's interest in digital services, at least in our community.

Section 3: Academic, School, and Other Library Responses

Q1-2a: Demographics – This segment of the survey data was exclusively collected from 68 libraries that listed their library type as something other than “public.” Note that Question 2a was omitted from Section 2; the data from Section 2 was from libraries that identified themselves as “public.”

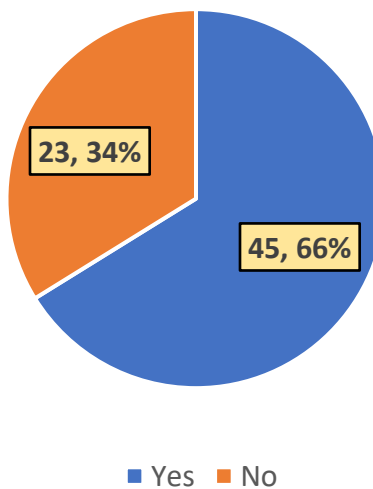


Q2a. How would you classify your library?

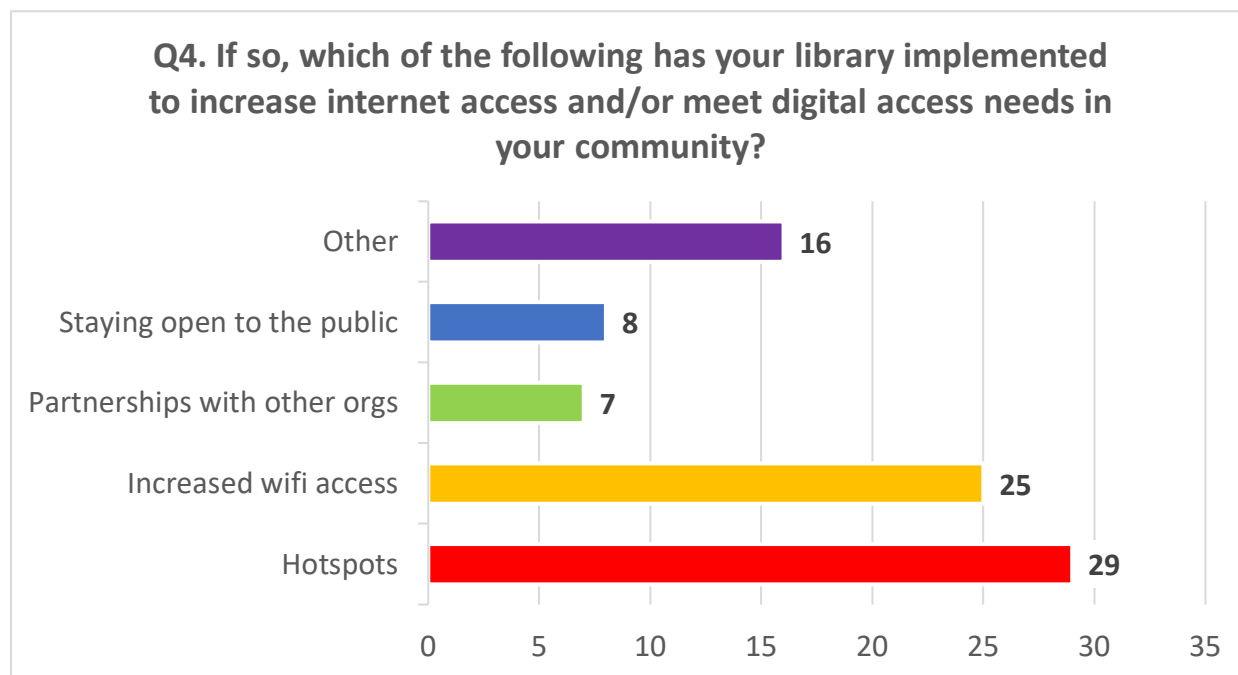


Q3: Increasing Internet Access – It is noteworthy that 66% of the non-public respondents indicated they had increased internet access and 34% indicated they had not. In contrast, 84% of public respondents said they had not increased access while just 16% responded that they had.

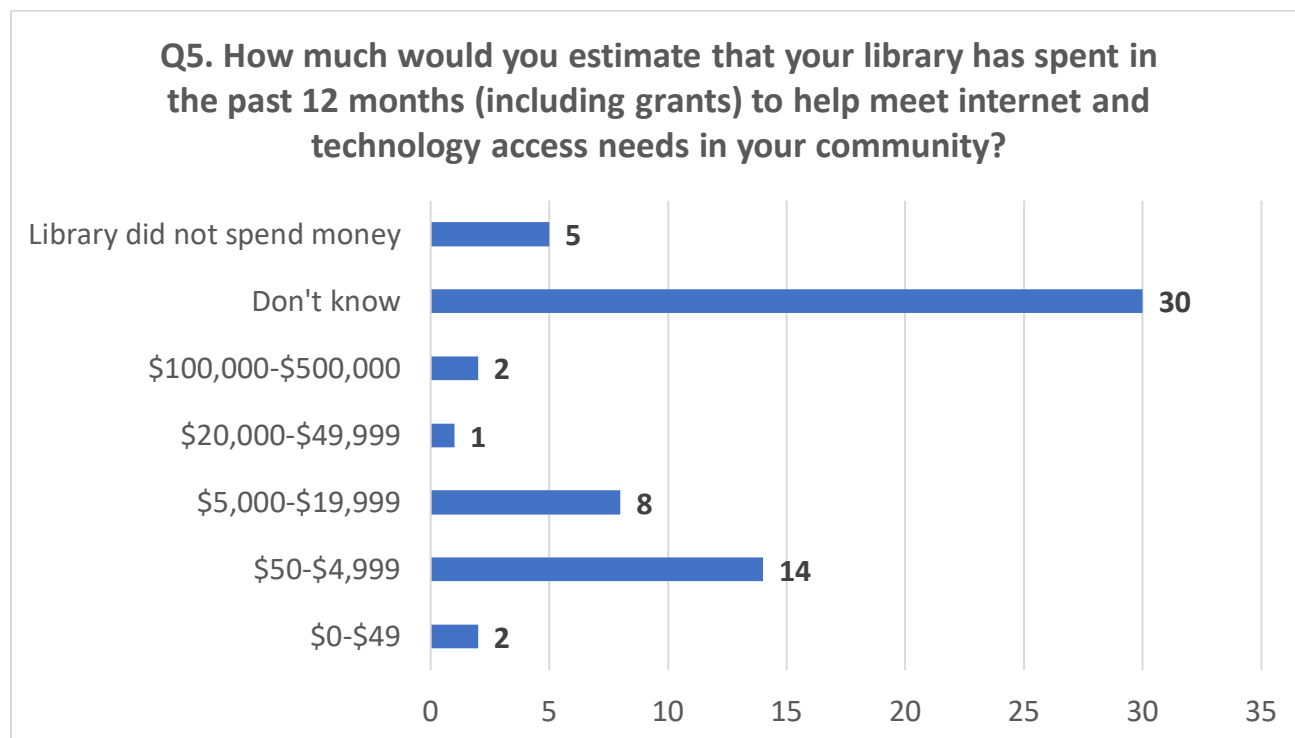
Q3. Has your library taken steps to increase internet access due to COVID-19?



Q4: Services Implemented – The “other” services implemented for these types of libraries may have been increased access to electronic content, which was an area we did not focus on while writing the survey questions.

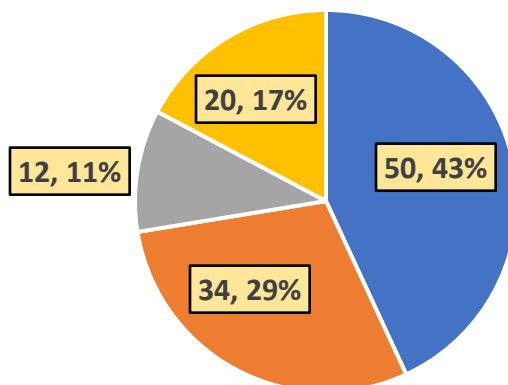


Q5: Estimating Expenses – Many respondents in this library category did not know how much was spent on increased tech access, but like public respondents, a fair amount indicated they had spent between \$50-\$20,000.



Q6: Funding Sources – Similar to public respondents, many in this group indicated they had utilized their operating budgets, CARES Act funding, or internal fundraising to meet demands.

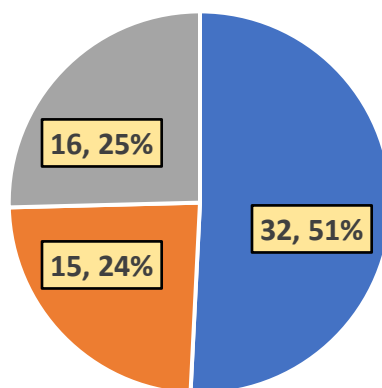
Q6. What funding sources has your library utilized?



- Operating budget
- Nationally funded grant (such as CARES)
- Locally funded grant
- Internal fundraising (e.g., Friends, Foundations, Trustees)

Q7: Assessing Impact – 51% of respondents in this group said they had met the digital access needs of their communities (compared with 44% in the public group).

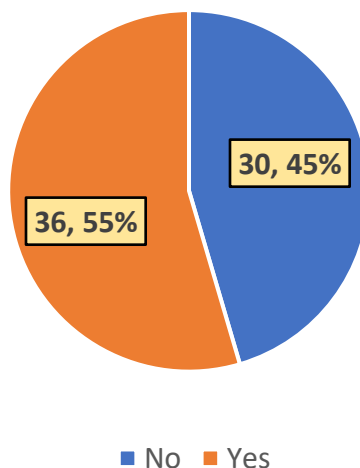
Q7. Have the measures that your library has taken met the digital access needs in your community?



- Yes
- No
- Maybe/Unsure

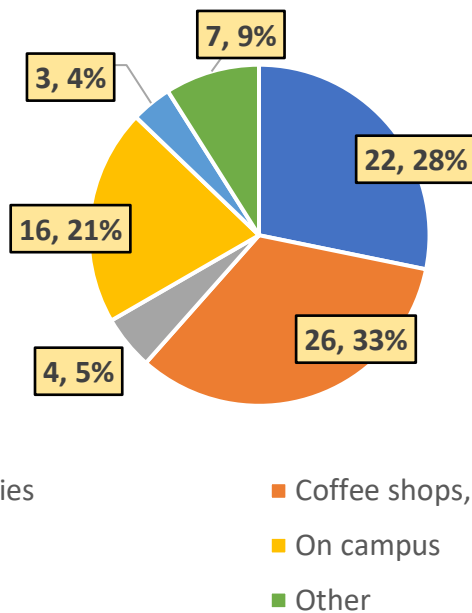
Q8: Staff Focused on Digital Access – Staff members with a focus on digital access appear to be more common in academic, school, and other libraries vs. publics.

Q8. Does your library have staff whose job duties specifically include digital access?



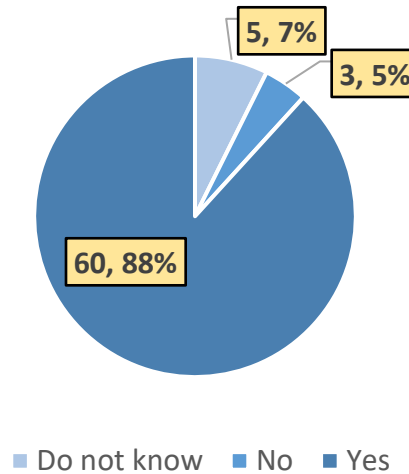
Q9: Other Places to Access Wi-Fi – Notably, 28% of responses indicated patrons go to public libraries for Wi-Fi access. Similar to public respondents, the most common place is coffee shops and restaurants. Slightly more than a fifth of these respondents indicated that patrons use other places on campus than the library for access as well.

Q9. Where else do your patrons tend to go for wifi access outside of their homes?



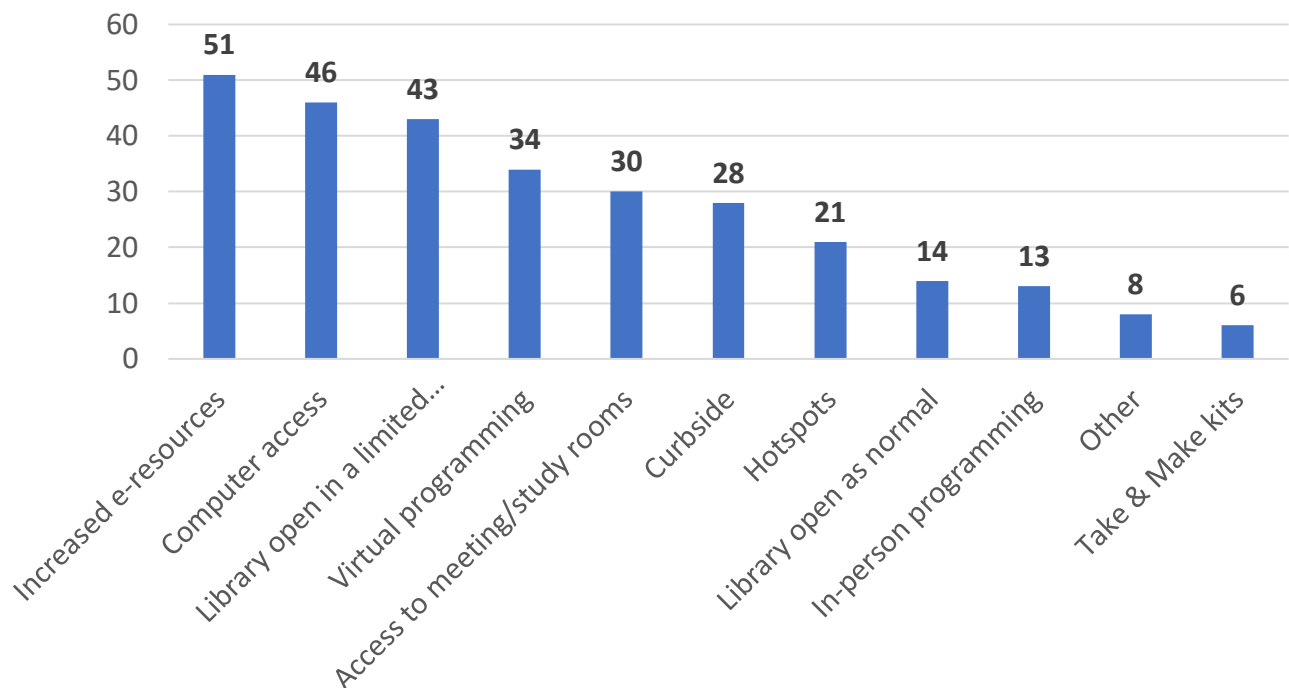
Q10: K-12 Schools Open – We asked this to attempt to understand how libraries were impacted by the status of K-12 schools in their areas, but it may have been a little too late to get too much meaningful information from the question as more schools were likely closed in the spring/fall of 2020.

Q10. To your knowledge, are public K-12 schools in your area holding in-person classes (including hybrid and other formats) during the pandemic?

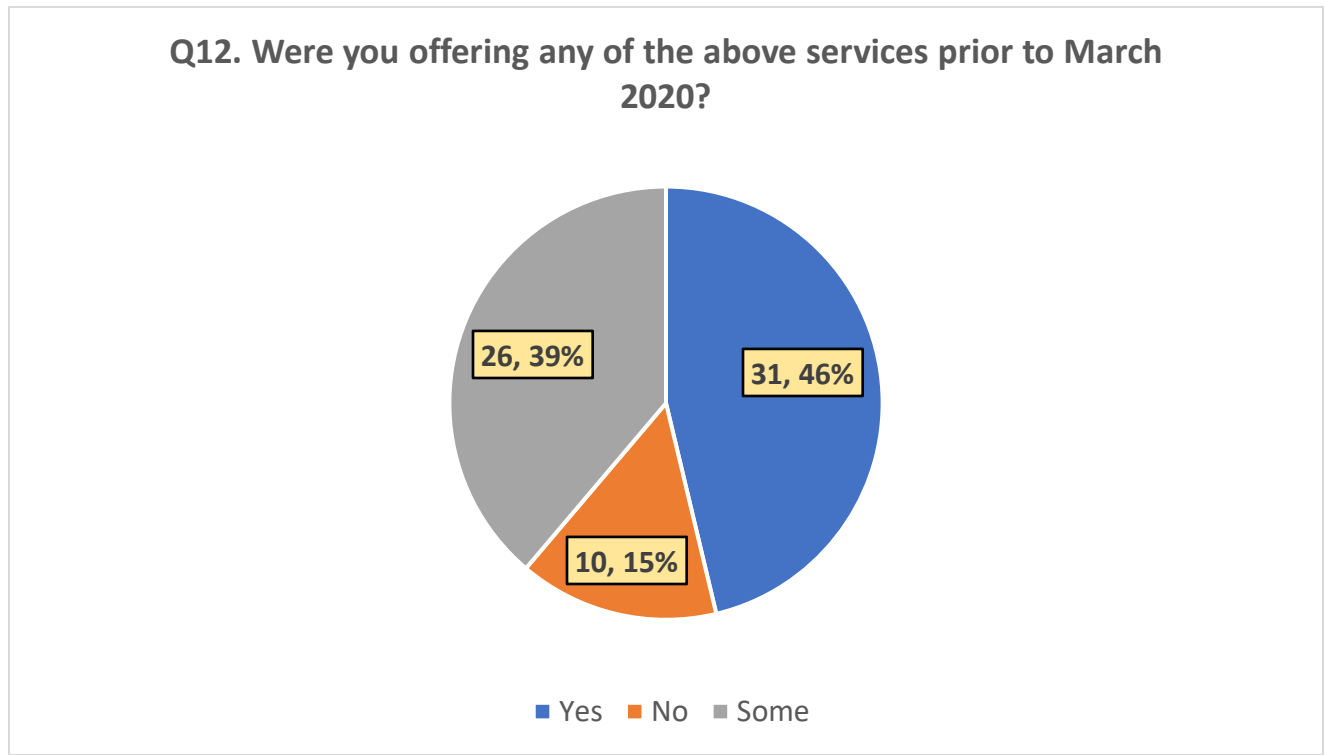


Q11: Services Currently Offered – Increased access to e-resources, remaining open, or offering access to certain library areas on campus were the most common responses, along with virtual programming.

Q11. What services are you currently offering? Check all that apply.



Q12: Services Offered Before COVID – Similar to the public responses, 85% of the answers here indicated that the services mentioned in the survey were at least partially offered before March 2020.



Q13: Additional Comments – Most of the respondents in the non-public library types did not offer additional comments, but we did see some similarities between these responses and those of public library workers. The “plus” comments mostly focus on libraries’ success in providing additional access, and the “delta” comments indicate that natural disasters complicated COVID response as well as the library’s exclusion from an institution’s attempts to bridge the “digital divide.”

Plus

- Life goes on. This has been harder on university enrollment than on access to library resources.
- Our libraries were the only buildings on the campuses that were open between March 2020-July 2020 and the purpose was to provide computer access for students. Many students said they were grateful because their internet access was not stable or they did not have a device to complete their classwork.
- The library plans to keep some of these features during full open.
- The university provided Wi-Fi access via select campus parking lots to provide the community with internet access when most buildings were closed.
- I appreciate that y'all are studying/tracking this - we will need as much information as possible about how libraries and patrons were affected and how libraries responded during COVID and lockdown.
- We started adding more LibGuides, Chat, and mini- webinars for information literacy

- Our university made the number one goal during the Pandemic to provide as many services as possible while keeping faculty, staff, and students safe.
- We began circulating laptops in July 2020; funding for laptops came from Board of Regents.

Delta

- I wish our Seminary could have offered or paid for students Internet access since they pay for residential housing TV but admin is ignorant about technology.
- Only a few were selected to do all this work. Others were excluded. The dean chose her heroes.
- I wish we could be able to extend our contract to keep the mobile hotspots operational past August 4, 2021.
- Closure for hurricane damage proved more of an impact on our services than COVID. We were closed for four months (entire fall 2020 semester) due to hurricanes and only two months (mid-March through mid-May 2020) for COVID.
- IT on our campus provides devices and Wi-Fi hotspots, but sadly the library is not a part of it.
- In addition to Covid-19, we have also been impacted by two hurricanes.

Appendix A: Survey Questions

LFP Digital Access survey

Library Freedom Project's Access for All task force is seeking feedback from library workers about how libraries have adapted services to meet the digital access needs of communities over the past 12 months. The responses to our survey will be compiled and a final report will be shared on our website for public access and use. We ask that only libraries currently serving the public in some capacity answer this survey. We estimate that our 13 question survey will take no longer than 10 minutes to complete. If you cannot complete the survey at this time, it will be available until April 14, 2021. Thank you!

1. Roughly what is the size of your service population?

2. Which of these best describes your library or library system's service area?

Mark only one oval.

- Urban
- Suburban
- Rural
- A mix of one or more of these

2a. How would you classify your library?

Mark only one oval.

- Public
- Academic
- School
- Special
- Other

3. Has your library taken steps to increase internet access due to COVID-19?

Mark only one oval.

Yes

No

4. If so, which of the following has your library implemented to increase internet access and/or meet digital access needs in your community? Check all that apply.

Check all that apply.

Hotspots

Increased Wi-Fi access

Changes to existing Wi-Fi policies

Staying open to the public

Partnerships with other organizations

Other: _____

5. How much would you estimate that your library has spent in the past 12 months (including grants) to help meet internet and technology access needs in your community?

Mark only one oval.

\$50-\$5,000

\$5,000-\$20,000

\$20,000-\$50,000

\$50,000-\$100,000

\$100,000-\$500,000

\$500,000-\$1,000,000

\$1,000,000+

I do not know

Other: _____

6. What funding sources has your library utilized? Check all that apply.

Check all that apply.

- Locally funded grant
- Nationally funded grant (such as CARES)Corporate
- funded grant
- Internal fundraising (e.g., Friends, Foundations, Trustees)
- Operating budget

7. Have the measures that your library has taken met the digital access needs in your community?

Mark only one oval.

- Yes
- No
- Other: _____

8. Does your library have staff whose job duties specifically include digital access?

Mark only one oval.

- Yes
- No
- Other: _____

9. Where else do your patrons tend to go for Wi-Fi access outside of their homes?

10. To your knowledge, are public K-12 schools in your area holding in-person classes (including hybrid and other formats) during the pandemic?

Mark only one oval.

- Yes
- No
- Do not know
- Other: _____

11. What services are you currently offering? Check all that apply.

Check all that apply.

- Curbside services
- Virtual programming
- In-person programming
- Make & Take kits
- Increased e-resource materialsHotspot
- lending
- Computer access
- Access to meeting & study rooms
- Library open in a limited capacity
- Library open as normal
- Other: _____

12. Were you offering any of the above services prior to March 2020?

Mark only one oval.

- Yes
- No
- Some

13. Do you have any additional comments or information?

Appendix B: Groups & Listservs Targeted for Survey Distribution

Group/Listserv	Initial Send
ARSL	3/1/2021
Massachusetts statewide listserv	3/1/2021
Connecticut statewide listserv - Conntech	3/1/2021
NYLINE	3/1/2021
Mid Hudson Library System	3/3/2021
ALA Connect Core Technology	3/3/2021
ALA RUSA	3/3/2021
Vermont Library Association	3/3/2021
PUBLIBS / oclc	3/3/2021
LITA (ALA List)	3/22/2021
Oregon Library Association	3/22/2021
Montana ListServ	3/22/2021
SUNYLA (New York SUNY Academic Libs Association)	3/22/2021
Southeastern NY Library Resources Council	3/22/2021
Pennsylvania Public Libraries list	3/23/2021
Nebraska Library Commission TRIAL List	3/22/2021
ALA Connect: All Members	3/22/2021

ALA Connect: Maker Tech Interest Group	3/22/2021
Slack: Nation of Makers > General Channel	3/22/2021
Facebook: I love Libraries	3/22/2021
Facebook: Pacific Northwest Library Association	3/22/2021
Facebook: ALA Think Tank	3/22/2021
Facebook: Deeper Think Tank	3/22/2021
Facebook: Libraries & Social Media	3/22/2021
Facebook: ACRL Library Marketing & Outreach Interest Group	3/22/2021
Facebook: Future Ready Librarians	3/23/2021
LinkedIn: NELA	3/23/2021
LinkedIn: Urban Libraries Council	3/23/2021
LinkedIn: Marketing Public Libraries Think Tank	3/23/2021
LinkedIn: Electronic Resources & Libraries	3/23/2021
LinkedIn: Digital Content in Libraries	3/23/2021
LinkedIn: Social Media for Libraries, Library Friends & Foundations	3/23/2021
LinkedIn: Computers in Libraries	3/23/2021
LinkedIn: Internet Librarian	3/23/2021
LinkedIn: American Library Association	3/23/2021
LinkedIn: ALA Joblist/Library Workers Job Search	3/23/2021

LinkedIn: ALA	3/23/2021
Twitter: as NELA #DigitalDivide #LibrariesLead #LibrariesTransform	3/23/2021
Twitter: as Mass Lib Assoc #LibraryLife #LibrariesLead #MALibraries	3/23/2021
Twitter: as ALA IFRT #LibrariesStrong #LibrariesBuild #libraries	3/23/2021
North Dakota Library Association	3/3/2021
NDIA listserv	3/3/2021
Libnet(CO libraries listserv)	3/3/2021
Georgia Library Association	3/12/21
Maryland statewide listserv (Marylib)	3/13/21
Alabama Library Association President	3/22
South Carolina Library Association President	3/22
Tennessee Library Association President	3/22
Hawai'i Library Association	3/22
Twitter: Alaska Library Network	3/22
LOUIS: The Louisiana Library Network	3/23
Libraries South West (Louisiana, consortium)	3/23

Email blurb sent to most listservs:

The [Library Freedom Project](#)'s new Access for All task force is seeking feedback from library workers about how libraries have adapted services to meet the digital access needs of communities over the past 12 months. If you have worked on efforts to provide bolstered Wi-Fi access, hotspots, circulating laptops, etc. during the pandemic, I hope you'll consider filling out [this 13-question survey](#).

The responses to our survey will be compiled and a final report will be shared on our website for public access and use. We ask that only libraries currently serving the public in some capacity answer this survey. It should take about 10-15 minutes to complete, and if you can't fill it out at this time, it will be available until April 1, 2021. Thank you!

Link to survey:

<https://forms.gle/V4sAg9M8wLANCDxU8>

Tweet:

.@LibraryFreedom's "Access for All" task force is seeking your feedback about how libraries have adapted to meet the digital access needs of communities since Covid. Please share your feedback on our survey: <https://forms.gle/V4sAg9M8wLANCDxU8>