

# Analysis of the Plan of Service Survey Results

Tabular results are here:

<https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/14MGasAKNqUGydPT7XHkdqCJt4amOIFZESXYKDwBMkEk/edit?usp=sharing>

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# Trends

## Learning-related trends

- Perhaps unsurprisingly, across all institution types, **Online Education** was highlighted as a top trend for the next few years by 73% of all respondents.
- 86% of school librarians chose **Student Wellbeing** as an issue for upcoming years
- 57% of public librarians and 57% of school librarians chose **Connected Learning** (described as similar to the Montessori approach to learning)
- Looking at the averages of all respondents, the five trends other than Online Education were basically evenly split.

## New technology trends

- **Digital Divide**, **Streaming Media**, and **Evolving ILSes** were the clear top three concerns for all respondents.
- Two-thirds of all respondents highlighted **Digital Divide** as a concern, with 86% of public librarians selecting it and 100% of school librarians selecting it as a trending issue.
- Similarly, **Streaming Media** is a very significant concern for public and school librarians while only 1 hospital librarian selected it and half of academics and historical organizations.
- **Evolving Integrated Library Systems** was a particular concern of hospital librarians. Across all trends, it is the one that hospital librarians most agreed upon as an issue.

## Research-related trends

- These trends showed the greatest variance by library types.
- **Open Access** and **Open Educational Resources** were the most selected topics of this section, both overwhelmingly chosen by academics. School librarians also highlighted **Open Educational Resources**, but very few selected **Open Access**.
- 79% of public librarians highlighted **Privacy Shifting & Data Protection** as a major concern, with a majority of school librarians also choosing this trend (but a minority of academics, historicals, or hospitals chose it).
- Three out of five hospital librarians and half of public librarians highlighted **Design Thinking** as a trend (while very few others did).

## Global social and economic trends

- A majority of all respondents chose **Income Inequality** and **Resilience** as trends of interest.
- 3 of the 4 historical or museum respondents selected **Rethinking Rural**, as did 57% of school librarians.
- In line with the highlighting of the **Digital Divide** trend, **Income Inequality** was selected by a significant percentage of both public librarians and school librarians, at 71% and 86%, respectively.
- **Ageing Advances** was a concern for 57% of public librarians, but few others.

## People-related trends

- A majority of all respondents chose **Social Justice & Critical Librarianship** and **Change Management** as trends of interest.
- **Social Justice** was evenly selected by librarians regardless of their type of institution, while **Change Management** was much more frequently selected by public librarians than others.

## Other thoughts

- Two people commented that all of the global, social and economic trends were worth exploring, and that it was difficult to select only three.
- A historical organization staff member commented that their small, volunteer-driven library did not have the bandwidth to address issues like these.
- A school librarian highlighted the de-professionalization of K-12 teachers and the privatization of schools.
- An academic librarian brought up issues specific to higher education, such as finding incoming students.

# Your Next 3-5 Years

## Challenges

**Budget** concerns were overwhelmingly described as the greatest challenge for every institution type, but especially academics and publics.

- Many respondents specified **staffing cuts** because of budgetary constraints, lack of **training** opportunities because of budgetary constraints, and **lack of resources** for themselves and for their patrons because of budgetary constraints.
- Budget constraints for staffing was most worrisome for school librarians. Budget constraints for training needs was most worrisome for public librarians.
- The ability to **advocate for libraries** within this budget crisis was brought up by six people, with a special mention of proving **value**.
- **Trauma from COVID** and the ability to recover from this year's tumult was mentioned by six respondents.
- A few people brought up larger trends that their institutions needed to address, like social justice, national crises and implementing **DEI values**.
- A few people brought up **technology management** as a struggle for their organization.
- **Resource sharing** was mentioned by three people: two public librarians and one academic.
- Just one respondent mentioned **physical space** for collections as an upcoming challenge.

## Skills Needed

- The answers from 50 respondents were extremely varied. Only two ideas emerged with more than 10 mentions.
- 11 respondents feel their organization needs help **using new technology** for the era of working from home, with Zoom and Microsoft Teams specifically highlighted. In addition to those 11 responses about new technology, two respondents mentioned **web design** and **programming**. Three respondents also mentioned needing new skills for working from home generally, but without referencing technology.
- 4 respondents brought up **teaching technology** as a needed skill set.
- The vast majority of responses were for **soft skills**. **Communication** skills was the second idea to have 11 mentions. Beyond “communication” phrased broadly, other responses were more specific and included **emotional awareness**, **interpersonal** skills, and **customer service**, in addition to **presentation skills**.
- **Supervisory** skills were brought up by 7 respondents, while 3 more highlighted **team building** as something their organization could use help improving.
- **Working remotely**, **time management**, and **project management** were each mentioned by three respondents.
- **Diversity, equity and inclusion values** were mentioned by 7 respondents, and a few other respondents brought up the **digital divide** and **homelessness** as particular topics their organization needed help to address.
- 4 respondents mentioned **resiliency and adaptation** as needed skills in their organization.
- **Marketing** was highlighted by 4 respondents. **Assessment** was brought up by 2.
- Several respondents mentioned library-specific skills like **reference**, **collection development**, and **archival** skills.

## Resources Needed

- The answers from 47 respondents were extremely varied.
- The most common answer, with 7 mentions, was more **databases and streaming subscriptions**.
- Equipment was mentioned by many. 6 respondents wanted **digitization equipment**, and one person specified a **document camera** for online teaching.
- While four people wanted more **computers for staff**, another four wanted more loanable **computers and hotspots for patrons**. Two academics wanted options for public **printing**.
- **Design and media software**, such as Photoshop, was requested by four people. Media creation and **makerspace tools** were requested by two more.
- **Training** was brought up by 13 people, but on a wide variety of topics, including **web design**, **DEI**, and **license negotiation**.
- Three respondents simply need more **staff hours**.

## Pandemic Effects

- Historical organizations and museums have experienced limited service hours. They're serving more research needs online, and expect to remain "by appointment only" for the foreseeable future.
- Academics most often cited new curbside and virtual services that have earned popularity with their users and will probably remain permanent services, even post-pandemic. Most public librarians also mentioned the popularity of curbside services and increased online offerings. Multiple public librarians bemoaned the library's inability to reach isolated and fragile patrons, especially in rural areas.
- One academic respondent noted that there has been an increased consideration of accessibility during this time. Lack of access was brought up by many of the public librarians and school librarians. "The digital divide has been exacerbated and libraries are in danger of being accessible to only those that have the infrastructure and economic means."
- A handful of academic respondents noted that it will be very difficult to re-establish their typical slate of services after the pandemic, sometimes citing staffing cuts. A public librarian commented that they will have to rebuild teen services from scratch. One commenter wrote "It should help us recognize that we can't do everything and ideally embolden us to make the difficult decisions to stop doing some of what we have been doing. Our tendency is to be additive, to keep loading on more and more functions without ever dropping anything. This is an unsustainable model, and by definition, that means it can't keep going forever. Why not stop now if it has to stop eventually?"
- Several respondents from academic institutions were concerned about proving the library's value during the budget crises. One wrote "While budget cuts were necessary, I worry that the pandemic has offered a justification to minimize the support for the library, and that it might not recover." Public librarians and school librarians were also acutely concerned about this, with one school librarian writing "Administrators see the library as obsolete and seek to close the library, reassign or eliminate the library position permanently."
- One respondent commented that "the costs of doing our work safely is way up, and the toll it takes on individuals emotionally as well as in more practical ways is pretty immeasurable."
- A third of the academic respondents mentioned that their professional responsibilities may permanently be more virtual, including remote instruction. One hospital librarian commented that they offer only virtual services but hopes to return to the library.
- Three academic respondents noted that they were cutting database subscriptions, but this went hand-in-hand with multiple comments about an increased reliance on e-resources and CDL in particular.
- Several academic respondents discussed their physical space and the struggle to meet space-use demands. "If anything, it seems to have made people better appreciate our physical spaces and what we used to provide, but are not able to do as easily (comfortable and collaborative spaces)."
- One school librarian brought up a particular concern: less reading. "I am seeing a drastic decline in the number of children reading. I'm concerned that when we return to "normal," many students will forego library visits and borrowing books (especially at the middle and higher grades)."

# SCRLC's Work

Respondents were given a blank text box to write what SCRLC programs, resources and services they are familiar with, and then separately, asked what benefitted them the most.

## Familiarity to SCRLC's offerings

There were five terms that were mentioned by more than 20 (out of 58) respondents:

- Overwhelmingly, member libraries of all types think of **Continuing Education** as one of SCRLC's services and consider the one that benefits them the most. 81% of public librarians wrote in continuing education.
- **Grants** was the second most commonly brought up program, resource or service across all library types, although only 13% of public librarians mentioned grants. "Grants" is the only term that multiple hospital librarians thought to include. (Note: some of these respondents specifically wrote "digitization grants," and those answers have been tabulated here as well as below under **Digitization**).
- **Databases** were the third most referenced term, known especially well by school librarians. Half of the academic respondents thought of databases, as well. Again, only 13% of public librarians mentioned databases.
- **Resource sharing** was mentioned by a third of the respondents, making it the fourth most commonly mentioned program, resource or service. Half of the academic respondents thought of resource sharing, although very few respondents from other library types did.
- **Digitization** was mentioned by 19 respondents (23%), and **NY Heritage** specifically was mentioned by another 4 respondents. None of the four respondents representing historical organizations or museums or the five hospital librarians thought to mention digitization or NY Heritage.

A few other trends are noticeable, but with much smaller numbers of respondents.

- **LibGuides** were mentioned by 3 out of the 7 school librarians, whereas only two other people from other library types mentioned LibGuides.
- **Ask A Lawyer, Advocacy, the Hospital Program, and Professional Networking** were each mentioned by 9 people. Interestingly, only 1 hospital librarian (out of 5) mentioned **the hospital program**, and only 1 hospital librarian mentioned **MISP**.
- **BARC** and **Tech-Talk** were each mentioned by 7 respondents.

## Most Beneficial SCRLC program, service or resource

- When asked what benefitted them the most, the most popular answer by far was **Continuing Education** with 25 out of 58 responses citing it, especially from academic librarians and public librarians.
- **Databases** came in second, with 10 responses, 5 from academics, 1 public librarian, and 4 school librarians.
- **Grants** came in third, with 8 responses, mostly from academics.
- **CCDA, BARC, Resource Sharing, Tech-Talk, and Networking** each had a handful of mentions.

- Hospital librarians cited **Continuing Education, EFTS support (for electronic ILL via DOCLINE), Grants,** and the **Hospital Program** as the most beneficial SCRLC service, program or resource.
- Historical organizations listed **Continuing Education, Digitization, Grants, Networking,** and **Consulting.**
- One school librarian mentioned networking, but otherwise, all school librarian respondents listed databases and/or e-resources as the most beneficial SCRLC program, service or resource.

## Unnecessary SCRLC offerings

- Teacher Reference Center (as it is, because it isn't full text)
- SCRLC's office space

## SCRLC's Directions

- Out of 20 responses, at least six referenced **more advocacy and promotion** for libraries. These responses included requests for messaging tips and advocacy done at every level and for every type of library.
- Eight responses mentioned **collaboration**, some specifically about professional **expertise** and some specifically about **resource sharing**. Many respondents want to see SCRLC bringing different types of libraries and organizations together.

## SCRLC's Communication

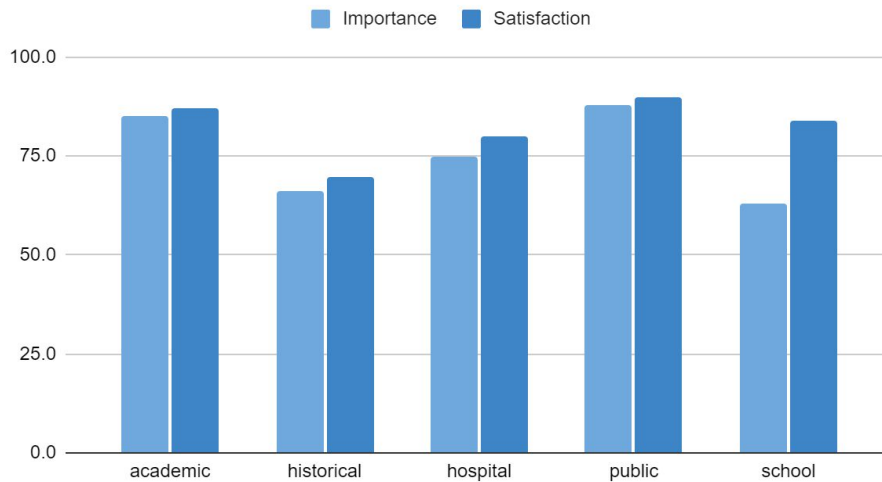
- Most respondents would like to see SCRLC using Facebook.
- Public librarians would like to see SCRLC on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram. A commenter added "we should be wherever our users are."
- All respondents were interested in SCRLC sharing **Library-focused tech tutorials or tips.**
- Academics would most like to see **Professional opportunities**, as would public librarians and school librarians.
- Historical organizations and museum staff members were most interested in **Local history anniversaries**, while most others were not.
- A majority of public librarians would be interested in **Shareable memes** about reading in general, but few others were.
- A majority of academics would be interested in seeing **SCRLC member news.**
- Open comments included suggestions for developing a hashtag such as #SouthCentralNYLibraries, sharing grant opportunities, and cross-promoting library book sales.
- One commenter noted that if SCRLC shares local anniversaries as a professional service, they must be done in advance so that the member librarians are able to re-post in a timely manner.
- Two school librarians specifically commented that they would like to see **advocacy** posts by SCRLC.
- Half of respondents, especially from publics and schools, are interested in facilitation training for leading tough conversations. One commenter recommended CDRC as a resource for this.

# Specific Feedback

## Continuing Education

Many respondents used the words “timely” and “varied” to describe SCRLC’s CE offerings. One academic and one historical organization felt that the CE offerings are too catered to public librarians. Two school librarians commented that the schedule rarely works for them.

Median by Library Type



## NYHeritage

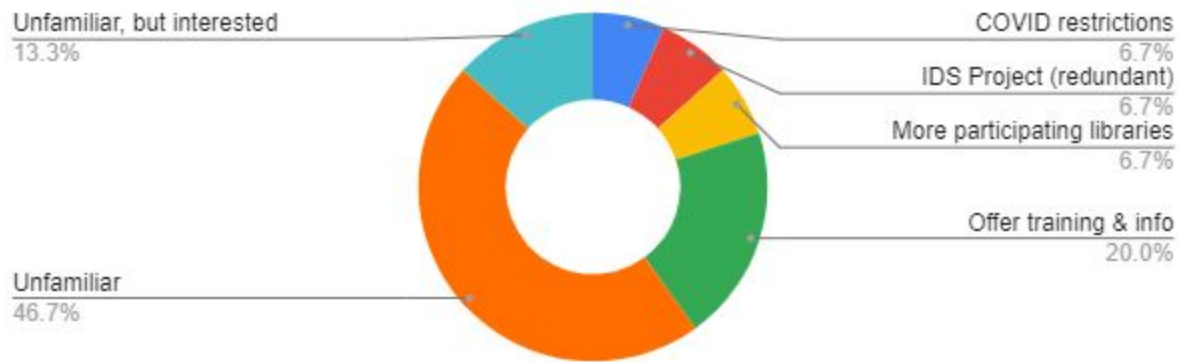


## EmpireADC

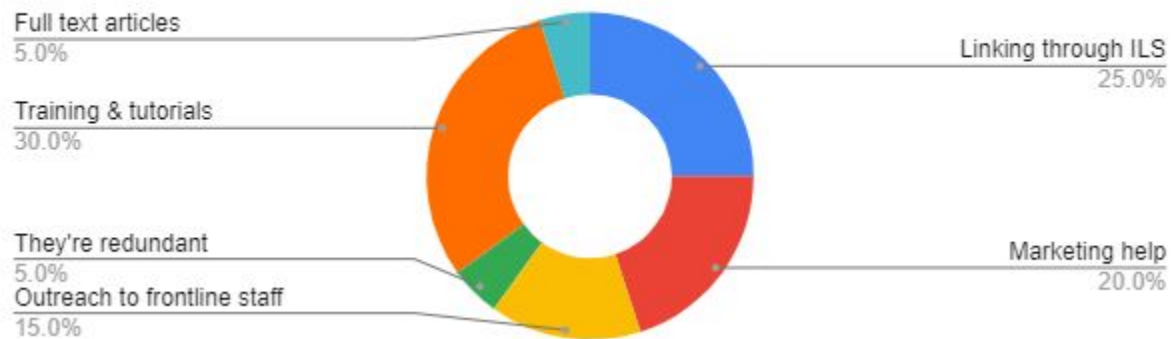




## SCORA



## E-Resources



## CCDA

Several respondents commented that they would like more actual collaboration on collection development.

“CCDA long since ceased to be coordinated, with libraries making ridiculously broad definitions of what materials are "shareable." (Databases? Give me a break). However, in the current circumstances, the money we receive is much, much more important than it ever was before. It used to be a nice little supplement. But now we have zero capital funds, and CCDA along with one small endowment are the only funds we have to buy books (print or electronic). So I would not suggest we make any kind of fuss over how loosely things are being interpreted at this time. Whatever you can do to advocate for the CCDA program to continue is very appreciated.”

“I think outside of the application process, Coordinated Collection Development itself could be a more thoughtful process--with the idea of sharing resources among member libraries before branching out--each library focusing on their own specialty with purchase suggestions to other member libraries when something is outside of the region.”

## Advocacy

Do you participate in advocacy efforts?

4 respondents said “no.” Most responded in the affirmative, with differing levels of participation.

“Yes. Prior to the COVID shutdown, I regularly attended Library Advocacy Day in Albany; the School Library System Association of NYS also supports a legislative lobbyist position through NYLA. I regularly meet with school administrators about how to strengthen their library programs. I and other school librarians in our region present at BOE meetings, local and state conferences, and other events about activities going on in our libraries.”

Half of the respondents would benefit from templates and samples for reaching out to legislators at every level. They would like pre-packaged messaging kits. Several mentioned a desire for training. One person suggested mini-grants to help libraries promote themselves. Three respondents said that staff time is the limiting factor in advocacy efforts.

## Hospital Program

With only three respondents for this section, one of whom wrote “n/a” for all answers, open comments speak for themselves.

“The current resources and services are very helpful. I look forward to continued development of a marketing plan that can promote use of library resources.”

“I appreciate the moral support of the HLSP group during this time while we are reduced in hours but must be physically present and spending half our time doing temperature screening.”

“Yes. I find [funding for ILL] invaluable, especially with the transition to the new EFTS platform. I would also find it nearly impossible to pay the occasional interlibrary loan invoice I receive, simply because of the cumbersome process of adding vendors to our database.”

## Prospective Ideas

### HistoryForge

11 respondents would be interested in collaborating on a HistoryForge collaboration. 6 academics, 1 historical, and 4 publics

### Web-hosting

1 historical organization and 3 public librarians said yes.

### Sharing Public Programming

We asked public librarians if they'd be interested in sharing their programming with other NYS public libraries, and 10 out of 11 said yes.

### NYS Ed Law 2D

Five school librarians answered this question, and three recommended a webinar to break it down and provide clear training.

One librarian commented “There is a lot of duplication of effort around Ed Law 2-D. Finding ways for districts and libraries to share information on vendors so that we are not all doing the same thing with the same vendors would be helpful.”

## Open Call for Ideas

- Academic libraries can learn a lot from public libraries, especially about info lit and misinformation.
- Continue providing resources and training to help librarians navigate the ever-changing landscape.
- Continue to build connections between members (e.g. biweekly member meetups, etc.). Some sort of mentor program?
- Definitely by continuing to support us with great programming. Maybe smaller courses with multiple parts? Something on supervision, presenting, time management...
- Expand on collaborations with the other regional library councils across NYS. Especially with professional development. Perhaps in an increasingly digital world, the combined resources of the entire state might make a big ticket speaker more possible?
- Sharing things like current information, training, etc., is invaluable. Keep it up!
- Partner to provide PD opportunities directly to public and school library staff. But HOW?. It seems like a great idea but how would it play out with school staff that can't 'get' out of their buildings or public library staff who work very limited hours.
- Staff development for both Librarians and support staff is very important.
- Advocate for strong school library programs with certified librarians as a means to develop life long library users.
- Interested in more anti-racist resources.
- Is there a Reference committee? Something like that could be very helpful. Conferences on Reference, Public Services, Outreach, or academic libraries could be very helpful. I feel like the emphasis on teaching technologies is very beneficial for the libraries who need it; conferences/webinars pitched to academic libraries/public services would benefit our library more.
- Host a professional database that actually had articles that teachers could use and access. What you hosted now only provides the abstract and that is really meaningless for teachers and administrators.
- Greater connections between national, state and local organizations that help collaborate and support library missions. This could be with advocacy (legislative awareness), education (conferences and events), or in the development of best practices.
- Maybe have sector meetings? I'm not sure if you do this or have tried it.
- More options for cooperative electronic resources that are good for higher education and not just public libraries.
- More workshops that benefit small rural libraries and in particular school libraries. Resources, planning, workshops, and advocacy that support school libraries and collaboration between school/public and school/ academic. Assistance in advocating in communities the importance of school library programs and the need for school librarians at every school and the staff to support their work. Advocacy to move school library regulations to law and to enforce regulations.

- networking across types of libraries offering committee membership and resources for involvement/career advancement You're already doing these things - thank you!
- Networking, Using ILL services or alternatives in the future
- facilitate more connections between public and school libraries on special projects like the Global Read Aloud, shared author visits, summer reading events that coordinate with the NYS Summer Reading program, etc.
- Creating communities of practice/expand on the meet-ups
- Programs designed for small local historical societies with little budget.
- Foster more partnerships within region; easy for library types to adhere to same rather than open clear collaborative paths (due to constraints, of course)
- sharing of ideas, techniques, and resources
- Some years the programming is a better fit than others. I don't know how to make that magically always be a better fit, but it's an area where the offerings could improve some years.
- Sometimes it feels like the focus of SCRLC is heavily towards the academics
- Speaking up for school librarians at the state level. Our school funding is disappearing and so are our positions.
- Staff trainings remotely, Webinars from other organizations such as Syracuse University, Pew Studies, Demographic studies of rural library services.
- Support group for people in the first years of their library profession.
- The many online offerings during the COVID crisis have made it clear to me and my staff that online and remote access to information and programming is quite effective and quite valuable. Please do what you can to continue this approach post-COVID.
- We struggle every year as we try to deal with database and online statistics as we prepare our annual report. Any help that could be provided in this area that would help us better understand what we are doing would be important for us.
- Would like to see more CE development for public libraries. The only public librarians that take advantage of SCRLC CE in our region are system staff and a few local librarians. There are 150 plus local public library staff in each public system that aren't being reached. That's roughly 450 paid staff.