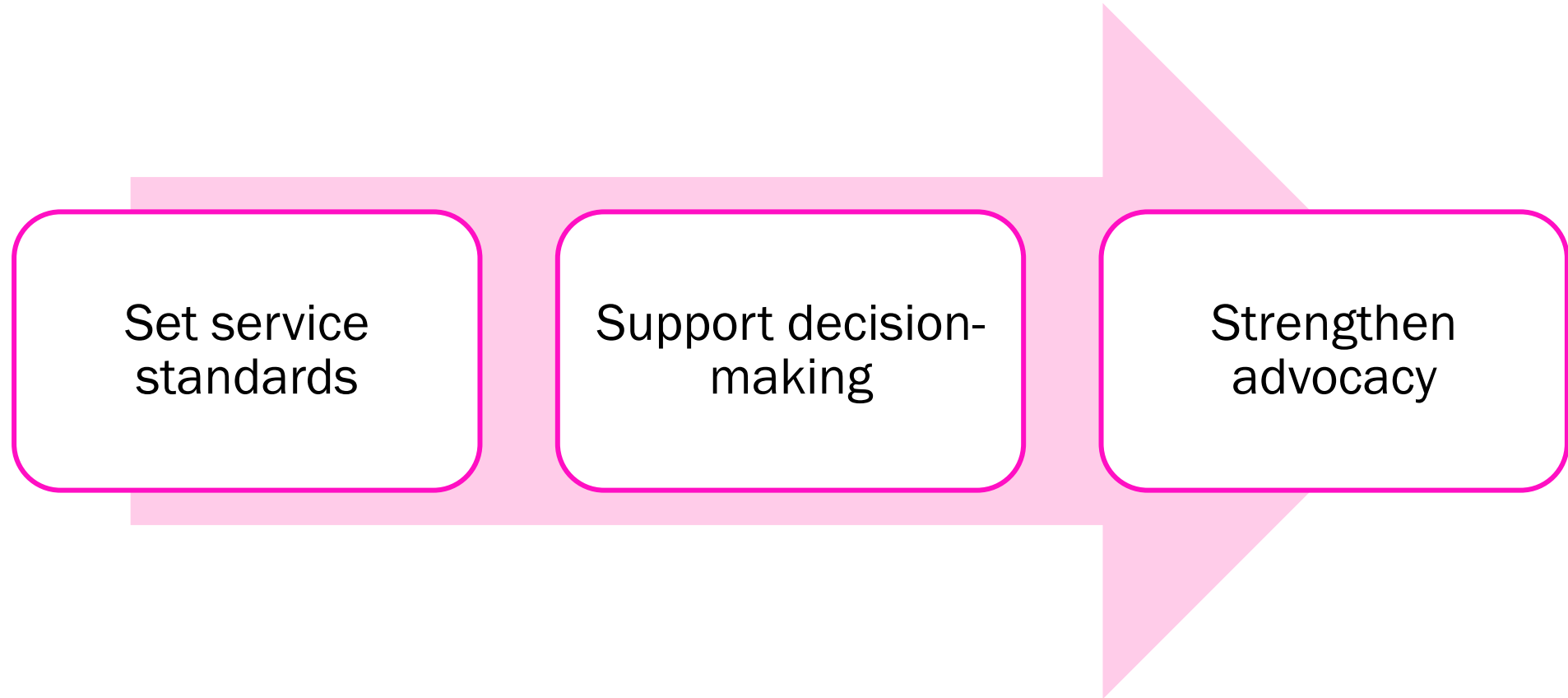

Manitoba Libraries Conference 2025

Developments in Library Provision Guidelines or: When “per capita” doesn’t cut it anymore

May 7, 2025

Provision Guidelines: What & Why



Snapshot of the Provision Guidelines Landscape

Manitoba: Municipal and Regional Public Library Standards and Guidelines (2012), Manitoba Public Library Services

Alberta: Best Practices for Public Libraries in Alberta (2018), Government of Alberta

Ontario: ARUPLO Guidelines – 4th Edition (2023), Administrators of Rural and Urban Public Libraries of Ontario

International: IFLA Standards, International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions



Guidelines in Manitoba

Sample of Areas Covered	Notable Features
Facility Size & Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ One square foot per capita guideline (pop. over 2,500)▪ Space needs assessments required before facility development
Space by Function	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Guidelines for collection space, user space, staff areas, programming, and more
Hours of Operation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Tiered service levels by population
Accessibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Principle of Universal Design▪ Accessibility considerations throughout all areas
Sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Green audits and sustainable purchasing encouraged
Services and Programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ High-level guidance for programming, literacy, community input, tech training

Source: Manitoba Public Library Services, Municipal and Regional Public Library Standards and Guidelines (2012)



The Changing Context for Provision Planning

Provision guidelines must keep pace with changes across **demographics, technology, community expectations, and accessibility, equity, and sustainability.**



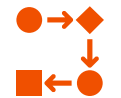
Growing newcomer, Indigenous, and aging populations
→ Different needs across rural and urban areas



High-speed Wi-Fi, lending devices, digital literacy support
→ Essential, not optional



Desire for 24/7 access + human connection
→ Hybrid service models and flexible spaces



Must go beyond compliance
→ Proactive planning for inclusive, resilient libraries



From Static to Dynamic Thinking

Then and Now

Traditionally	Today's Evolving Approach
Square footage per capita	Square footage per capita <u>and</u> flexible space types: hubs, quiet zones, maker spaces
Books per capita	Physical collections, digital resources, Library of Things
Staff per population	Outreach, programming, community-specific service roles
Physical infrastructure focus	Integrated service planning: tech, access, equity, inclusion
One-size-fits-all benchmarks	Community-specific targets based on demographics and geography

Sources: Government of Alberta, Best Practices for Public Libraries in Alberta (2018); Administrators of Rural and Urban Public Libraries of Ontario, ARUPLO Guidelines – 4th Edition (2023); International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions, various IFLA Standards



From Static to Dynamic Thinking

New Areas of Emphasis



Sources: Government of Alberta, Best Practices for Public Libraries in Alberta (2018); Administrators of Rural and Urban Public Libraries of Ontario, ARUPLO Guidelines – 4th Edition (2023); International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions, various IFLA Standards



Local Context Matters More Than Ever

Consider...

- **Demographics:** Who lives in your community? How is that changing?
- **Socio-Economic Realities:** What barriers exist to access? How wide is the digital divide?
- **Geography:** Is the population concentrated or dispersed? What transportation challenges exist?
- **Community Aspirations:** What do people want from the library now – and in the future?
- **Indigenous Engagement:** Reconciliation must be embedded in space and service planning.



Building a Stronger Local Profile

 Review Community Profiles

 Benchmark Wisely

 Gather Usage Data

 Ask the Community

 Collaborate Regionally

 Prioritize

Practical strategies
to ground your
provision planning in
community realities



Not everyone knows how much libraries do – and need – but your provision planning can help tell that story.




Key Takeaways

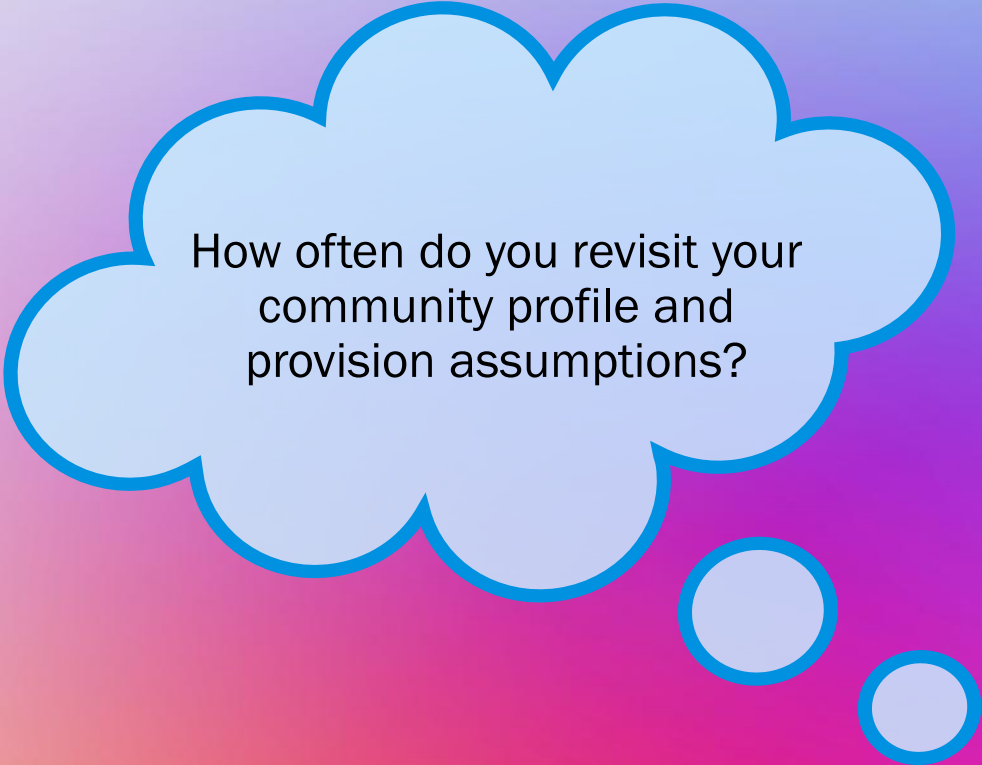
- ✓ Standards are starting points.
- ✓ Communities are unique – and evolving.
- ✓ Evidence strengthens strategy.
- ✓ Local insights drive impact.



Questions?



Are there emerging needs where new kinds of provision standards could help?



How often do you revisit your community profile and provision assumptions?

Manitoba Libraries Conference 2025 – Lightning Round May 6

Telling Your Library's Story: Measuring and Communicating Impact that Matters

Telling your Library's Story

- Public libraries collect data on circulation, space and technology usage, program attendance, language, etc.
- You can access collective data through [Manitoba Public Library Services](#)
- Your staff are busy; make every data point count.

Focus on the purpose

Use existing data as a foundation.

Identify priorities and gaps in data.

Think beyond the numbers.

Enhance the data with testimonials, photos, video.

Refocus the data to outcome-oriented indicators.

Plan for consistency.



Telling your Library's Story

Tailor the information to your audience

For funders:

50 participants, 20% were over 65 years of age, 10% identified as new to Canada, and 35% as women.

For funders:

Enhance data with before/after outcomes, "I know how to access my newspaper online."

For advocacy:

Enhance data with a testimonial, "I can FaceTime with my grandchildren now."

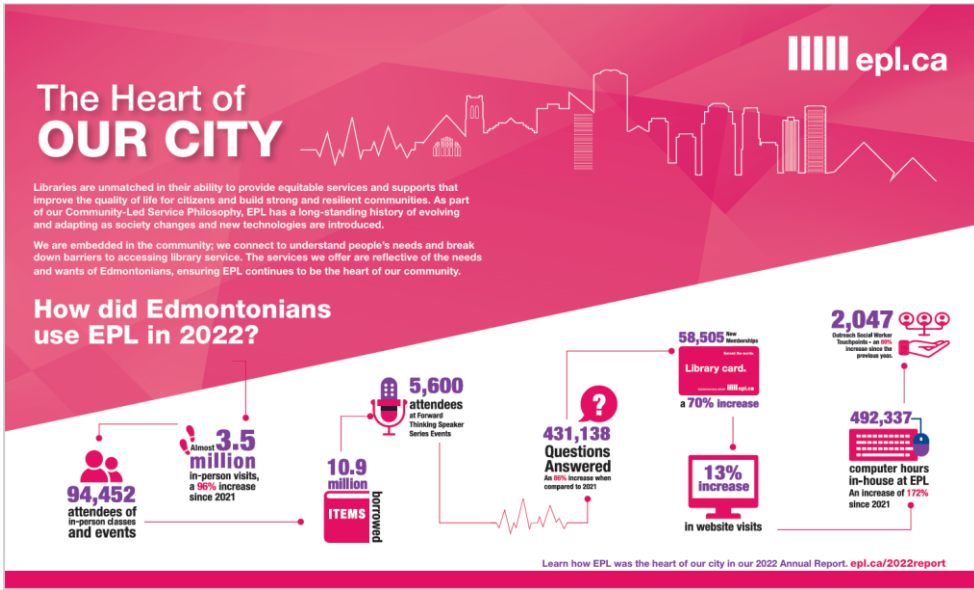
For Board & Staff:

Use a combination of data, outcomes, and testimonials with extra detail for staff.

Core Data Used Differently – Example digital literacy for adults programming



Edmonton Public Library



Community Report

Measuring the Impact of the Edmonton Public Library

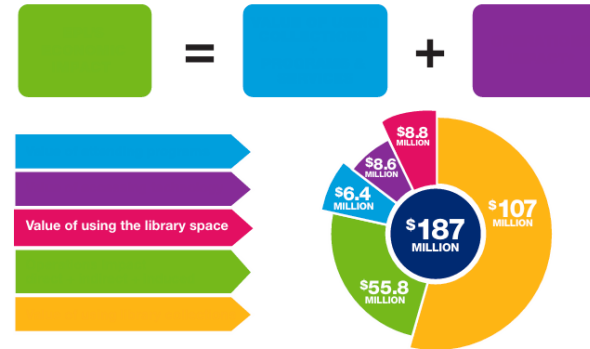
EPL's mission is to share and our vision is to be a gathering place for people and ideas, enabling a lifetime of learning, engagement and possibility for every Edmontonian. Our strategic plan creates a framework for bringing this mission and vision to life and our business plan operationalizes these goals, ensuring accountability to our stakeholders – Edmonton residents. EPL is proud of how our strategic plan embodies our vision and mission and how our business plan has helped EPL continue to deliver innovative new services for all Edmontonians.

The great services EPL provides are only one part of the story. EPL continues to provide tremendous economic impact on Edmonton and Edmontonians through the value derived by using the library and the services and resources we make available.

In order to understand the economic value that EPL provides to Edmonton, EPL commissioned Nordicity - a company specializing in economic analysis - to conduct an economic impact study of EPL. Nordicity calculated both the total economic impact EPL has on Edmonton and also the value that customers accrue by using the library (use value).

EPL's Total Economic Impact

Nordicity values EPL's total economic impact at \$187 million dollars annually.



*Questions Impact = direct impact + indirect & induced impact. Direct impact: the impact generated in the economy as a result of the library's direct spending related to its activities. Indirect impact: the impact generated in the economy as a result of the increase in economic activity that occurs at businesses that supply goods and services to EPL. Induced impact: impact generated as a result of the re-spending of labour income earned by Edmonton households from both direct and indirect employment generated by the library and supplier industries. As the library is publicly funded, operational impact is a value that would be transferred to any other publicly funded organizations, if funding were to be shifted to them from the library.

EDMONTON PUBLIC LIBRARY epl.ca

EIA Infographics

Use Value

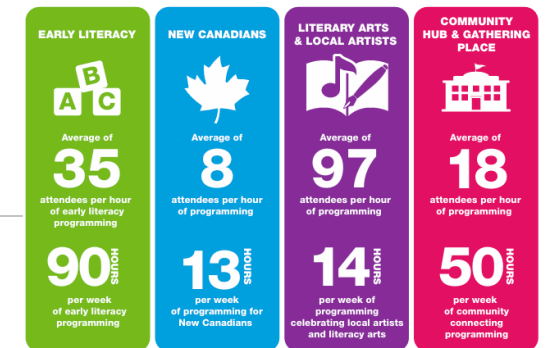
Use Value is the value library customers derive from using EPL's programs, services and collections. Nordicity calculates that EPL generates a total of \$131.5 million in value for Edmonton residents. In other words **Edmontonians save at least \$131.5 million per year by using the library**, which is equivalent to:



What does this really mean? What does the library do to produce this value?

\$107 million, the largest value generated by EPL is for the use of physical and electronic collections. The library is so much more, offering unparalleled access to educational, cultural technology, and immunity programs and services to Edmontonians both inside and outside its walls.

4.4 million generated annually through participation in programming inside and outside the library



Ontario Public Library Service



Ontario Library Service / Resources Home / Valuing Ontario Libraries Toolkit (VOLT) / Valuing Ontario Libraries Toolkit (VOLT) Materials

Valuing Ontario Libraries Toolkit (VOLT)

Search Words | Termes Search | Rechercher

- News and Updates
- Overview
- Valuing Ontario Libraries Toolkit (VOLT)
- Materials
 - Getting Started and Using the Toolkit
 - Calculations Spreadsheet
 - Building the Library Value Report
 - Further Resources
- Testimonials and Samples
- Contact and Support
- Other Library Value Projects
- Français

Getting Started and Using the Toolkit

- 📄 **Executive Summary and Introduction**
 An overview document to introduce the toolkit and outline its purpose and application for public libraries in Ontario. Users are strongly encouraged to review this material prior to using the toolkit to gain a full understanding of what it is designed to achieve.
- 📄 **Using the Toolkit**
 An instructional guide to outline the use and completion of the SROI Calculations Spreadsheet and other, optional, elements of the toolkit such as the Community Profile, Surveys, Focus Groups, and the Library Value Report.

The OLS is excited to hear about your experience working with the Valuing Ontario Libraries Toolkit (VOLT). Please share your results with us for future reference and adding samples of reports, graphics, creative applications, or testimonials to this professional resource guide.

Calculations Spreadsheet

- 📄 **SROI Calculations Spreadsheet**
 The primary functional element of the Valuing Ontario Libraries Toolkit. Filing out the SROI Calculations Spreadsheet will produce benefit value figures for the public library service provided in your community. Note: for best results, refer to the full ASPL submission data from your library. Last updated: March 28, 2025.

The OLS is excited to hear about your experience working with the Valuing Ontario Libraries Toolkit (VOLT). Please share your results with us for future reference and adding samples of reports, graphics, creative applications, or testimonials to this professional resource guide.

Valuing Ontario Libraries Toolkit (VOLT)

Huron County Library

Valuing Ontario Libraries

Public libraries are critical cultural and social infrastructure for the communities they serve. They are integral for building personal, entrepreneurial, and social capacity through access to information, programs, and opportunities for community engagement. To measure the Social Return on Investment (SROI) of library services, the Huron County Library completed the Valuing Ontario Libraries Toolkit which looked at the impact on education, culture, inclusion & well-being, entertainment & leisure, economic development, civic engagement, and space.

The results demonstrate the significant value the library has in the community and supports the library's continued work to bring people, information and ideas together to enrich lives and support a thriving community.

EDUCATION	CULTURE	INCLUSION & WELL-BEING	ENTERTAINMENT & LEISURE	ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT	CIVIC ENGAGEMENT	SPACE	
Libraries play a critical role in providing access to literacy and educational opportunities.	Libraries contribute to increasing cultural vitality and cultivating a sense of local identity.	Libraries foster social inclusion and well-being by providing equitable access to services.	Libraries expand horizons and build social connections through programs and services.	Libraries advance local economic growth through employment, programs and resources.	Libraries strengthen community bonds by building social capital and fostering relationships.	Libraries provide space for community activities and connections.	
<i>"I homeschooled my children and always found the materials I needed. Staff were super helpful and welcoming to my children."</i>	<i>"The Trash Theatre performances are amazing! They are so great with the kids!"</i>	<i>"I'm thankful that youth in Huron County can be offered a safe space to connect with others who are part of the LGBTQ2S+ community."</i>	<i>"The library was absolutely critical to me as a child and has remained so. Good staff and interlibrary loans are the most important to me."</i>	<i>"I love the partnerships the library has with community groups, like the Community Volunteer Income Tax Program."</i>	<i>"I am so thankful my son and I have the library to come to. We are new to the country and are trying to meet new people."</i>	<i>"We love the library. We lo the little noo in Clinton, the tags in Brass and the space and activities Seafarth."</i>	
The benefit of education services is valued at: \$1,360,502	The benefit of culture services is valued at: \$346,459	The benefit of inclusion & well-being services is valued at: \$529,672	The benefit of entertainment & leisure services is valued at: \$10,003,283	The benefit of economic development services is valued at: \$3,373,143	The benefit of civic engagement is valued at: \$26,916	The benefit of space provided by the library is valued at: \$1,916,003	
Overall economic benefit to the community: \$17,555,981		Overall economic benefit per resident: \$286		Overall economic benefit per household: \$596		Every \$1 invested in the library generates: \$4.66 or 465% SROI	
Economic benefit for every hour open to the public: \$413							

Social Return on Investment

Snapshot for Red Rock Public Library



PUBLIC LIBRARY

CULTURAL INFRASTRUCTURE

SOCIAL INFRASTRUCTURE

EDUCATION
\$20,443.89

CULTURE
\$16,666.02

INCLUSION & WELL-BEING
\$21,086.63

ENTERTAINMENT & LEISURE
\$73,353.38

BENEFITS

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
\$129,880.65

Education

Red Rock Public Library contributions to EDUCATION by the numbers

In 2023, the benefit of education services provided by the Red Rock Public Library is valued at:

\$13,731.22

Of benefit from non-fiction circulation of adult and junior books (both digital and physical format), including DVDs (documentaries) and Subscription cost of Britannica Encyclopedia and Novelist Junior databases

\$379.44

of benefit from non-fiction inter-library loan within postal code P and outside of postal code, and

\$2,512.97

of benefit from information requests: including standard and electronic reference transactions, reader's advisory, tech assistance and history collection requests.

\$3,820.26

of benefit from youth programming including programs attendance for children including Literacy Day, EarlyON visits, TD Summer reading program, Northshore books before 6, Story hour, Halloween family fun night, Candy count, Teddy Bear picnic, Easter colouring contest and March break activities.

The above figures were derived from a Social Return on Investment (SROI) analysis specific to this public library with support from the Ontario Library Service.

Red Rock Library



Library Impact Ontario

The Role of Ontario Public Libraries

For many Ontarians, public libraries are the primary, and often only, access point for a variety of technology resources. With their unique mandate and reach, physical and technical infrastructure, staff expertise and local community presence, public libraries play a critical role in addressing the digital divide. As shown in the figure below, public libraries across the province are providing essential technology services to millions of Ontarians each year:

Public libraries excel in providing information and skills to diverse individuals of all ages and backgrounds. They play a crucial role in addressing digital inclusion and literacy within their communities. Libraries offer access to the Internet, as well as to a wide range of basic and emerging equipment and technologies. Through these services, libraries foster digital comfort and skills development, and support social connections, civic engagement and democracy. Public libraries also drive economic growth and innovation by offering emerging technology services, entrepreneurial support, and market insights. They enable lifelong learning through digital platforms and technology training courses, benefiting both businesses and individuals.



© Government of Ontario. (2021) Ontario Public Library Statistics. Retrieved from <https://www.ontario.ca/info/ontario-public-libraries>

■ Impact of Technology Services in Ontario Public Libraries 2021-2022

The Challenge and Opportunity

Bridge has the potential to position the public library sector in Ontario as a leader in the advancement of standardized comparable outcome measurement practices across geographic boundaries within the digital landscape.

In today's society, digital proficiency and access to technology are vital for social and economic advancement. Without these resources and skills, individuals risk exclusion from essential opportunities and achievements, creating a digital divide. Digital inclusion and literacy are now fundamental prerequisites for active participation in various aspects of life, whether personal, civic, social, or professional. Despite widespread broadband and mobile availability, connectivity gaps persist due to affordability and limited options, particularly affecting rural, remote, and low-income communities, including First Nations. Although libraries have made great progress in advancing digital inclusion and literacy, there is still a long way to go before digital equity can be achieved, and everyone is included in the digital world. As digital technology increasingly influences personal and professional growth, the challenge facing Ontario communities lies in providing equitable access to connectivity, up-to-date technologies, and training and support for full societal and economic integration.



Digital Divide

The digital divide is the gap between those who have affordable access, skills, and support to effectively engage online and those who do not. As technology constantly evolves, the digital divide prevents equal participation and opportunity in all parts of life, disproportionately affecting people of color, Indigenous peoples, households with low income, people with disabilities, people in rural areas, and older adults.²

Digital Inclusion

Digital inclusion refers to the activities necessary to ensure that all individuals and communities, including the most disadvantaged, have access to and use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT). Digital inclusion must involve technology advances. Digital inclusion requires intentional strategies and investments to reduce and eliminate historical, institutional and structural barriers to access and use technology.³

² National Digital Inclusion Alliance (n.d.). Definition. Retrieved from <https://www.digitalinclusion.org/definition/>

³ Ibid.

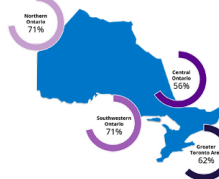
Library Outcomes

Libraries are essential to building digitally inclusive communities, bridging inequities to technology access.

Digital Inclusion & Equitable Access

The preliminary results suggest that most people who use library technology services would not otherwise have had access to at least some of that technology. More strikingly, a vast majority of the patrons who use technology services use them to access the Internet at or through the library, when they would not otherwise have been able to do so. Therefore, it appears that public libraries in Ontario make a significant contribution to bridging inequities of access to technology.

Regional representation of respondents who used technology at their library and would not have otherwise had access to that technology.



Overall top technology reported used

- 77% WiFi
- 32% library workstation
- 12% laptop or tablet

Respondents who would not have otherwise had access to technology:

- 61% used technology at the library
- 75% among Indigenous patrons
- 73% among low-income households
- 71% among patrons in Northern and Southwestern Ontario
- 81% accessed the Internet at or through the library

20 | Impact of Technology Services in Ontario Public Libraries 2021-2022

Bridge Toolkit Evaluation Report

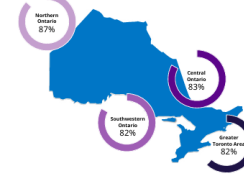
Primary Outcomes

Libraries are responsive in supporting digital literacy in their communities.

Digital Literacy & Adoption

Public libraries facilitate the development of digital literacy that is critical to living and working in the digital age, especially for those most vulnerable. Ontario public libraries not only play a role in introducing patrons to new technologies, but the high rate of longer-term adoption indicates that these new technologies continue to be relevant to patrons even after their initial introduction.

Regional representation of respondents who reported increased digital comfort after using one or more technology services.



- 82% of respondents reported increased digital comfort after using one or more services
- 90% among Indigenous patrons
- 87% among immigrant patrons
- 87% among patrons in Northern Ontario

- 29% of respondents who used technology services were introduced to new technology
- 90% of those introduced to new technology continued to use it

Impact of Technology Services in Ontario Public Libraries 2021-2022 | 21



Telling your Library's Story

Libraries can do more by working together and by collaborating with community partners.

Collaborate to extend your impact

Other Libraries

- Coordinate resources and communications campaigns
- Align data
- Show impact across a region

Community Partners

- Fill in data gaps
- Connect with volunteer/post-secondary resources
- Support and enhance communications reach



Telling your Library's Story

Impact storytelling isn't about collecting more data – it's about using your data better.

Key Takeaways

- ✓ Build on existing data
- ✓ Focus on the purpose
- ✓ Tailor to your audience
- ✓ Plan for consistency
- ✓ Collaborate to extend your impact



Thank you!

Nicole Matiation nmatiation@nordicity.com