



Strategic Planning Survey Results  
July 23, 2021

# Four Pillars: Strategic Implications

- Digital transformation
- Role of MCLS/libraries in community
- Diversity, Equity and Inclusion
- Library system structure



# About the survey...

An online survey distributed to:  
MCLS and library staff, including Directors  
Library users from all branches  
Library non-users (purchased panel)

June 24, 2021 - July 15, 2021

3,262 respondents

Design & tabulation by Causewave Community Partners

NOTE: Percentages may add to more or less than 100 due to multiple responses or response categorization by tabulator.

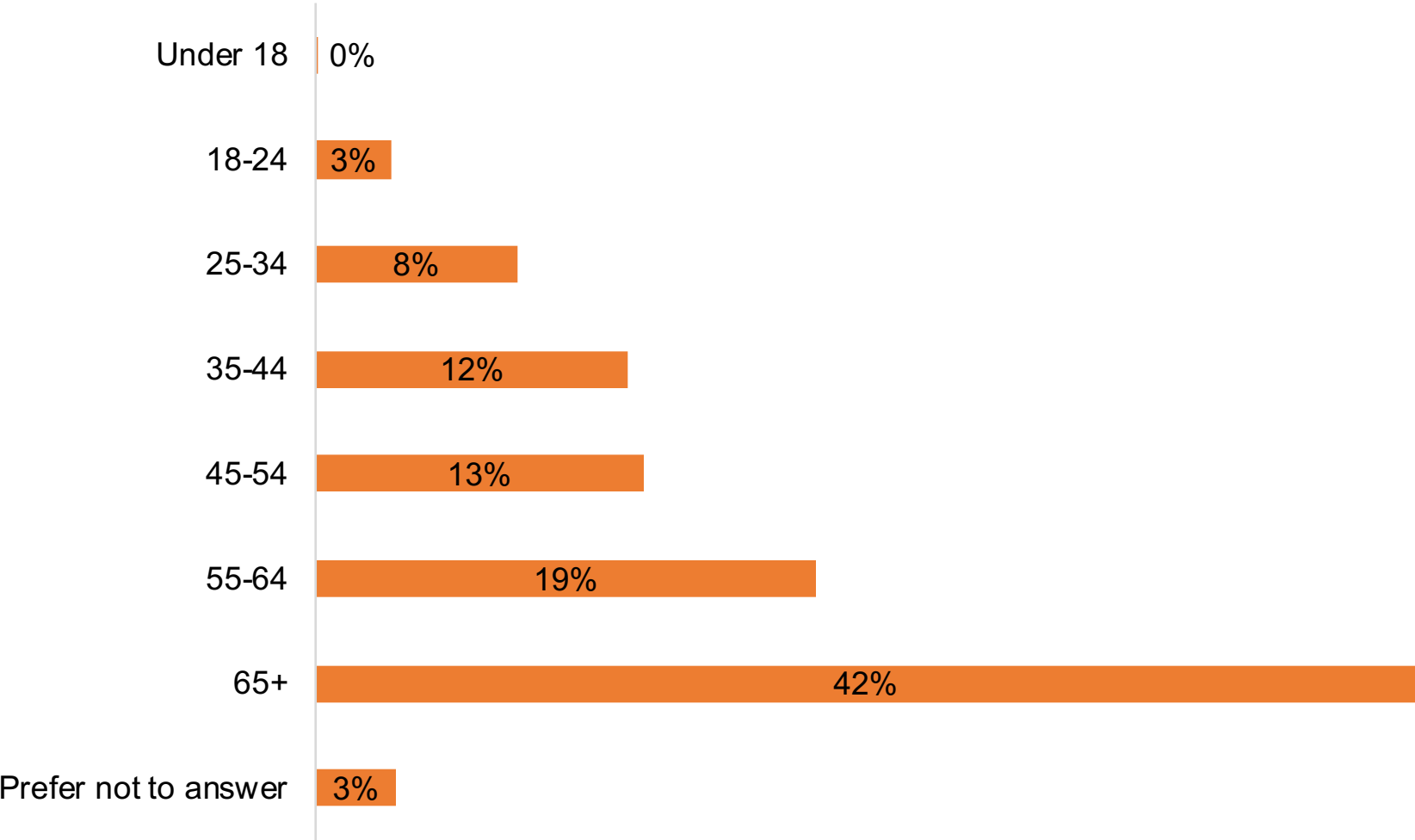


Who took the survey?



Q: Please select your age range.

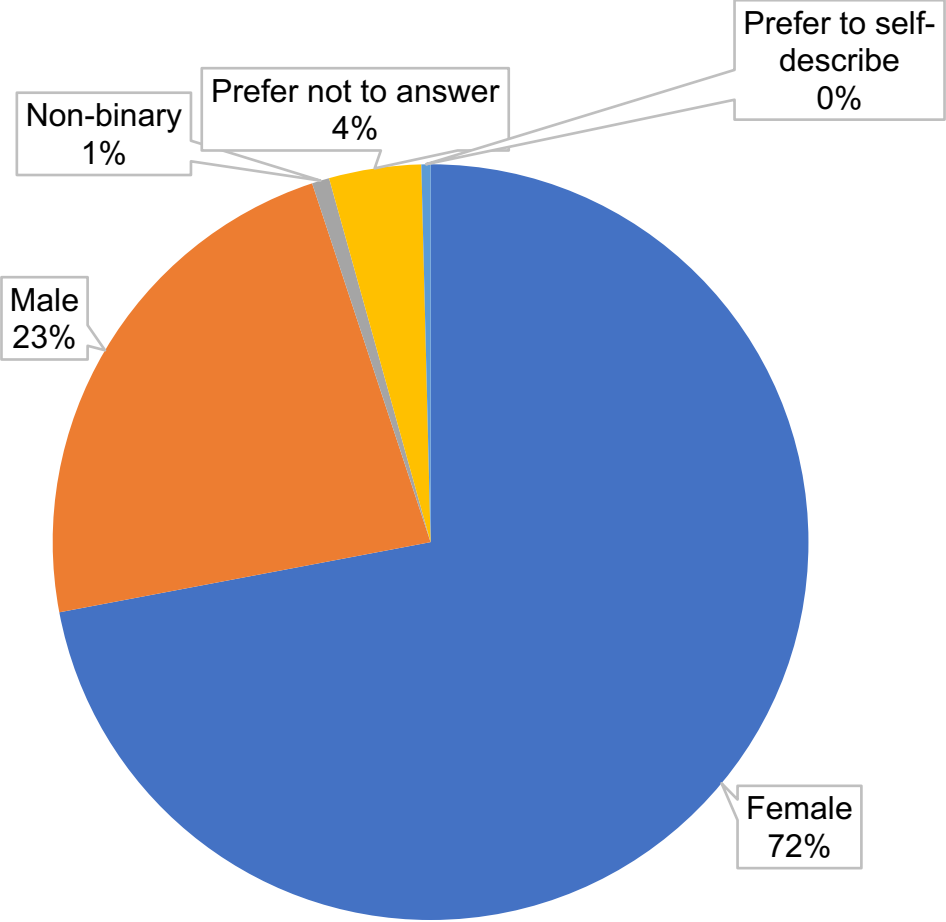
Answered: 2843



# Q: What is your gender identity?

Answered: 2842

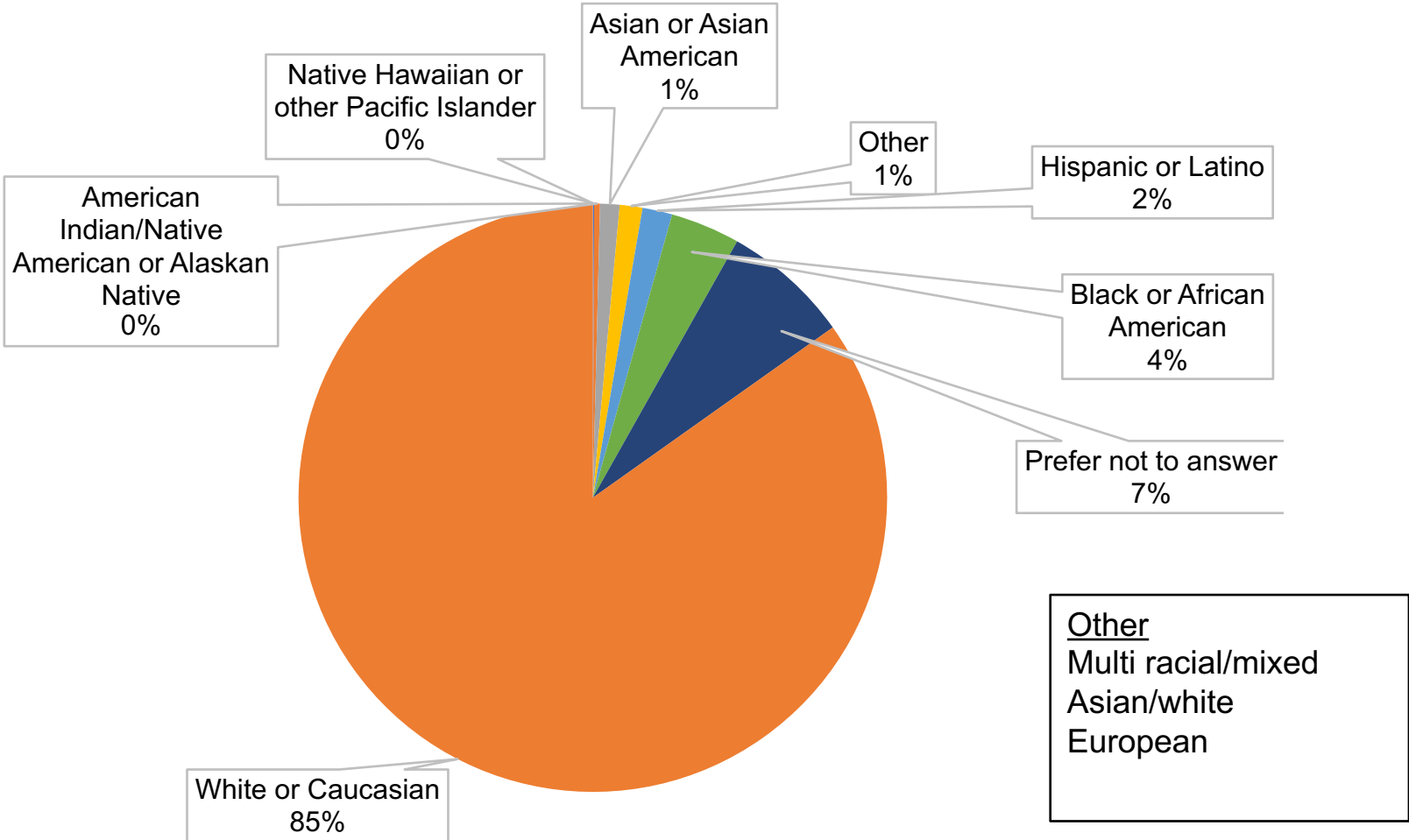
■ Female ■ Male ■ Non-binary ■ Prefer not to answer ■ Prefer to self-describe



# Q: What best describes your ethnicity?

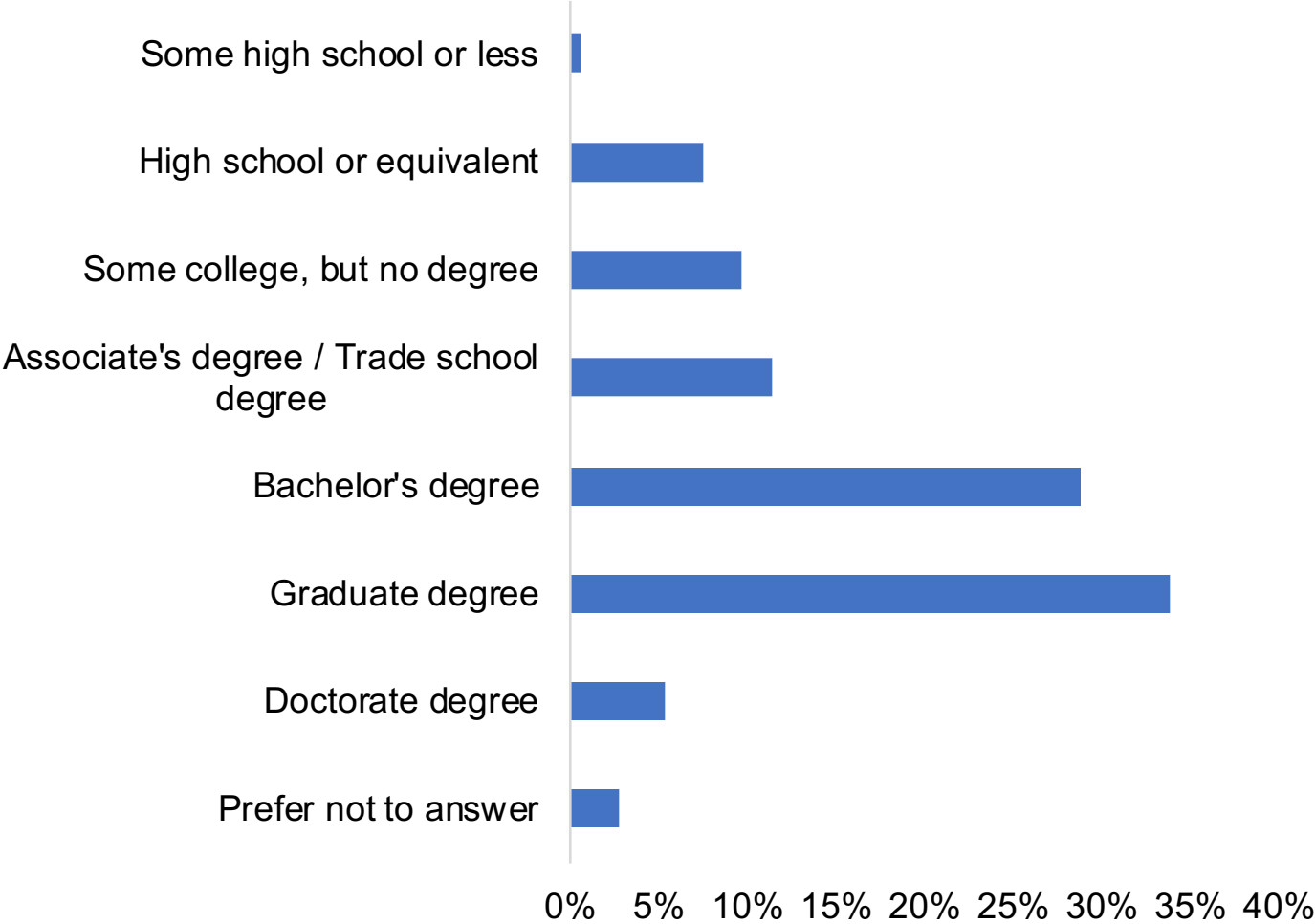
Answered: 2825

- Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander
- American Indian/Native American or Alaskan Native
- Asian or Asian American
- Other



# Q: What is the highest level of education you've completed?

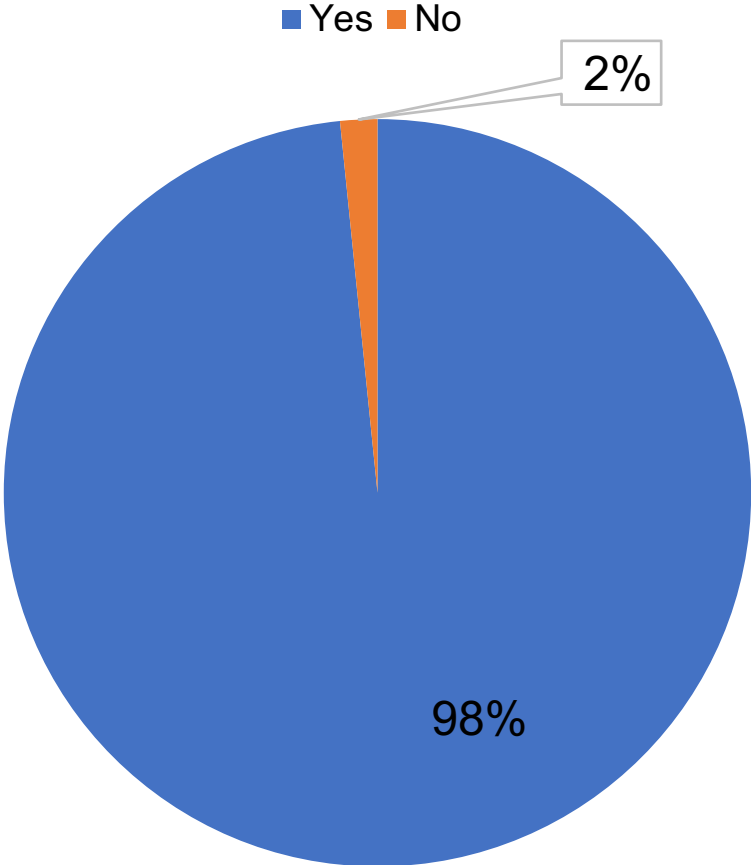
Answered: 2835





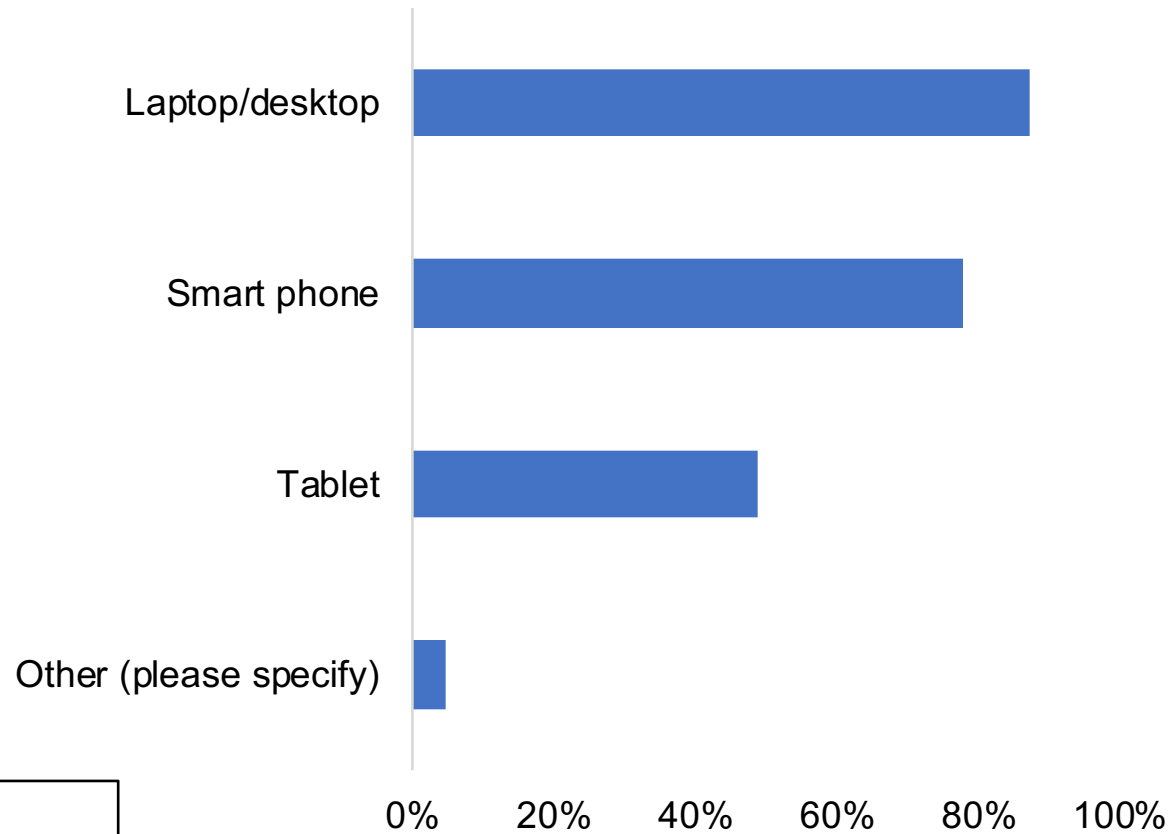
# Q: Do you have access to the internet at home?

Answered: 2852



# Q: What devices do you use to access the internet?

Answered: 2848

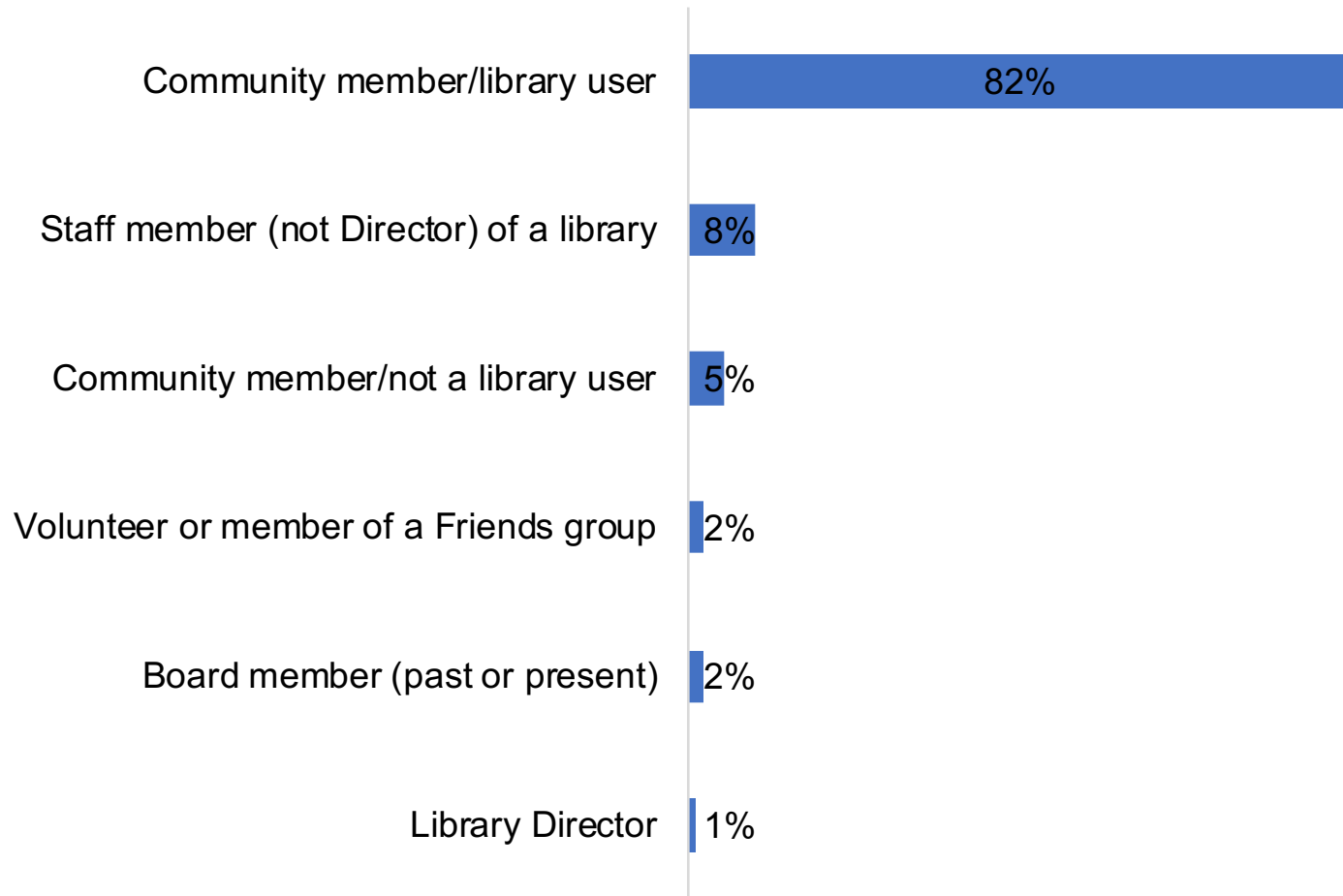


- Other
- Kindle
- iPad
- Smart tv
- Amazon echo

Q: Please select the description that best describes your primary affiliation with the Monroe County Library System.

---

Answered: 3168





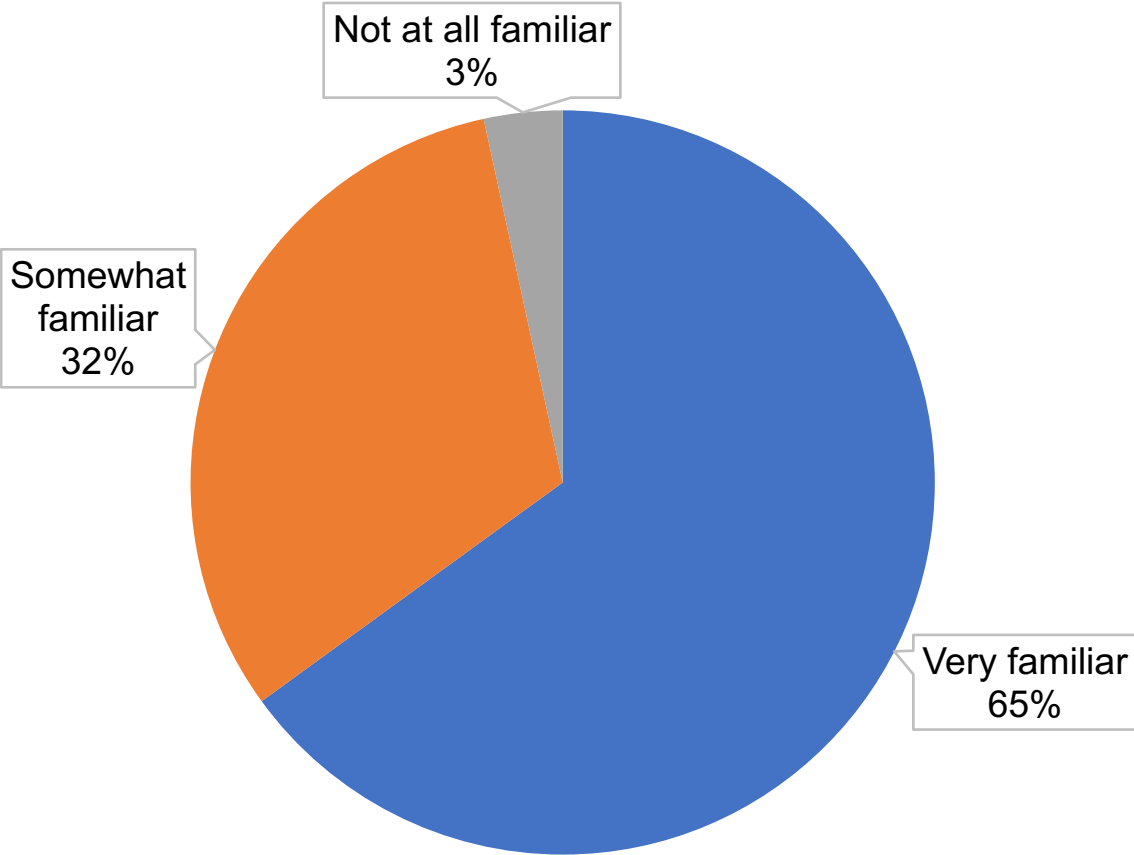
Awareness of MCLS



# Q: How familiar are you with the Monroe County Library System?

Answered: 3262

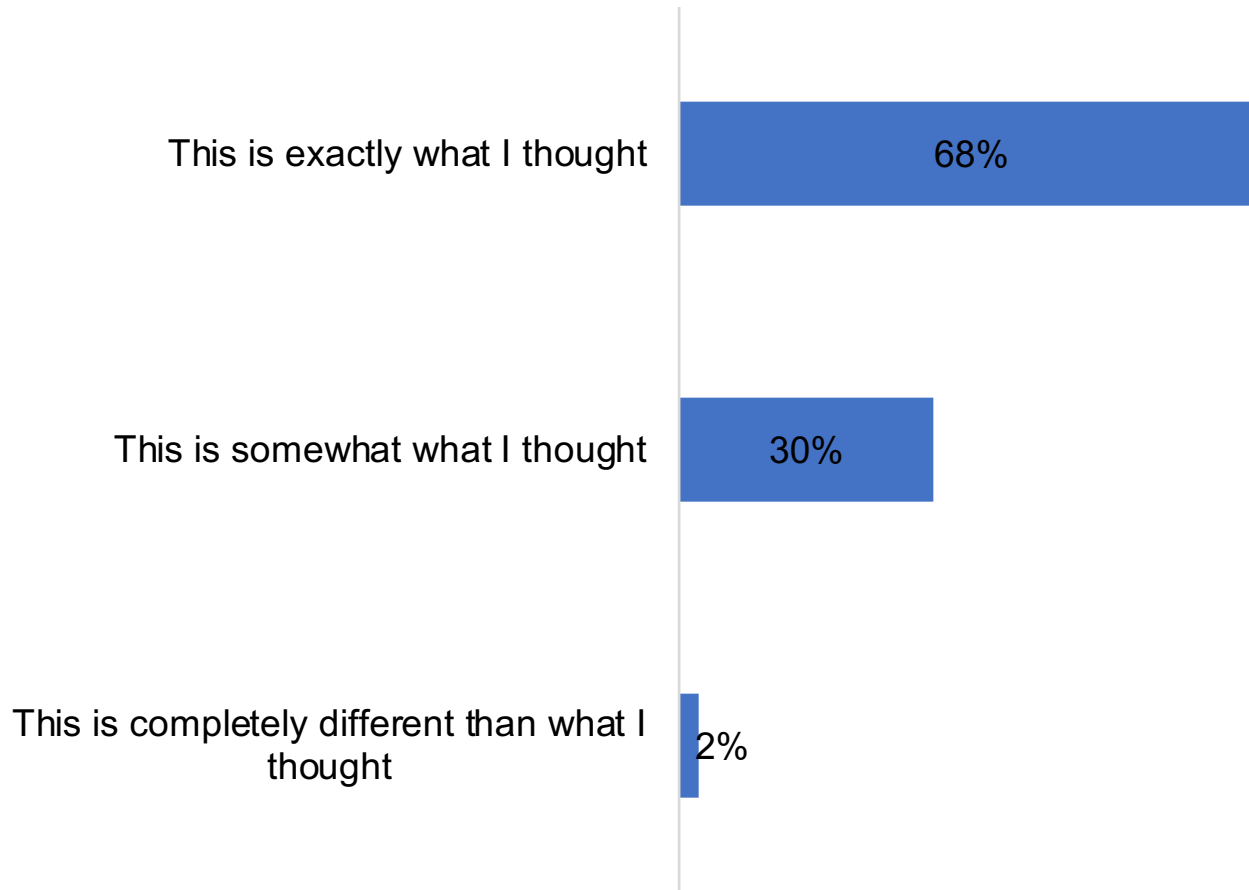
■ Very familiar ■ Somewhat familiar ■ Not at all familiar



Q: The Monroe County Library System (MCLS) is an association of independent public libraries working together to improve library services for residents of Monroe County. The mission of the MCLS is to ensure its member libraries can thrive and make the best use of tax dollars by providing centralized technologies, shared resources, and promotion of best practices.

---

Answered: 3088





Questions for MCLS and  
library staff, Directors, and  
Board of Trustees members



Q: How likely is it that you would recommend engaging with the Monroe County Library System to someone who works in library services?

---

Answered: 340

<b>Primary Affiliation</b>	<b>NET PROMOTER SCORE</b>
Staff ( n=255)	62
Directors (n= 25)	56
Board (n= 60)	58
<b>OVERALL</b>	<b>61</b>



Q: Please tell us why you might not recommend the Monroe County Library System.

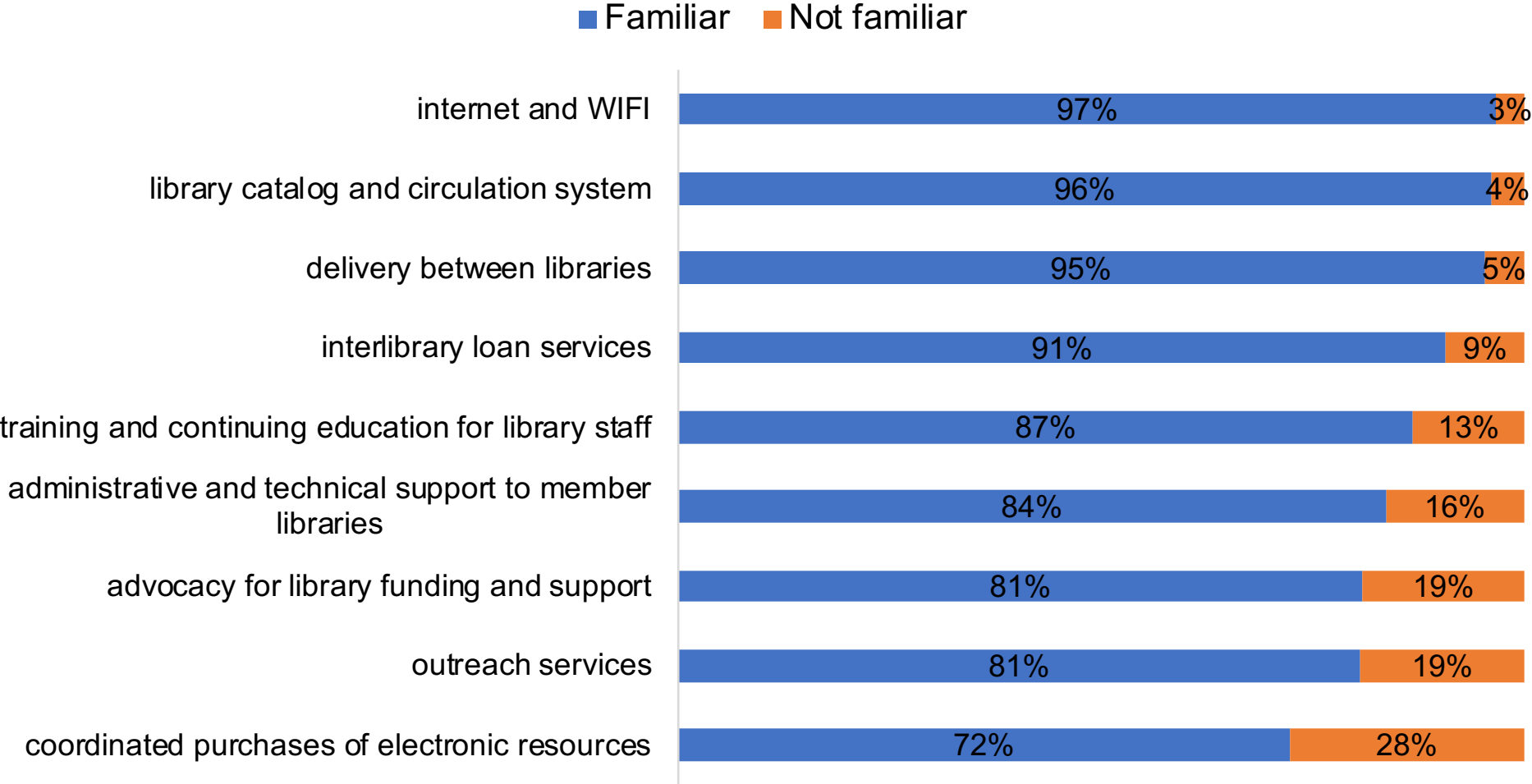
---

Answered: 28

- MCLS as an entity does not always move swiftly, and is not always super flexible.
- I didn't even know they were a group of administrators (I thought MCLS was literally like ALL the libraries.)
- There is too much variation in operations and policies from branch to branch and we desperately need a greater role to be played by the centralized entity... for the betterment of our effectiveness.
- The MCLS website is hard to navigate and always seems to have some sort of issue happening.

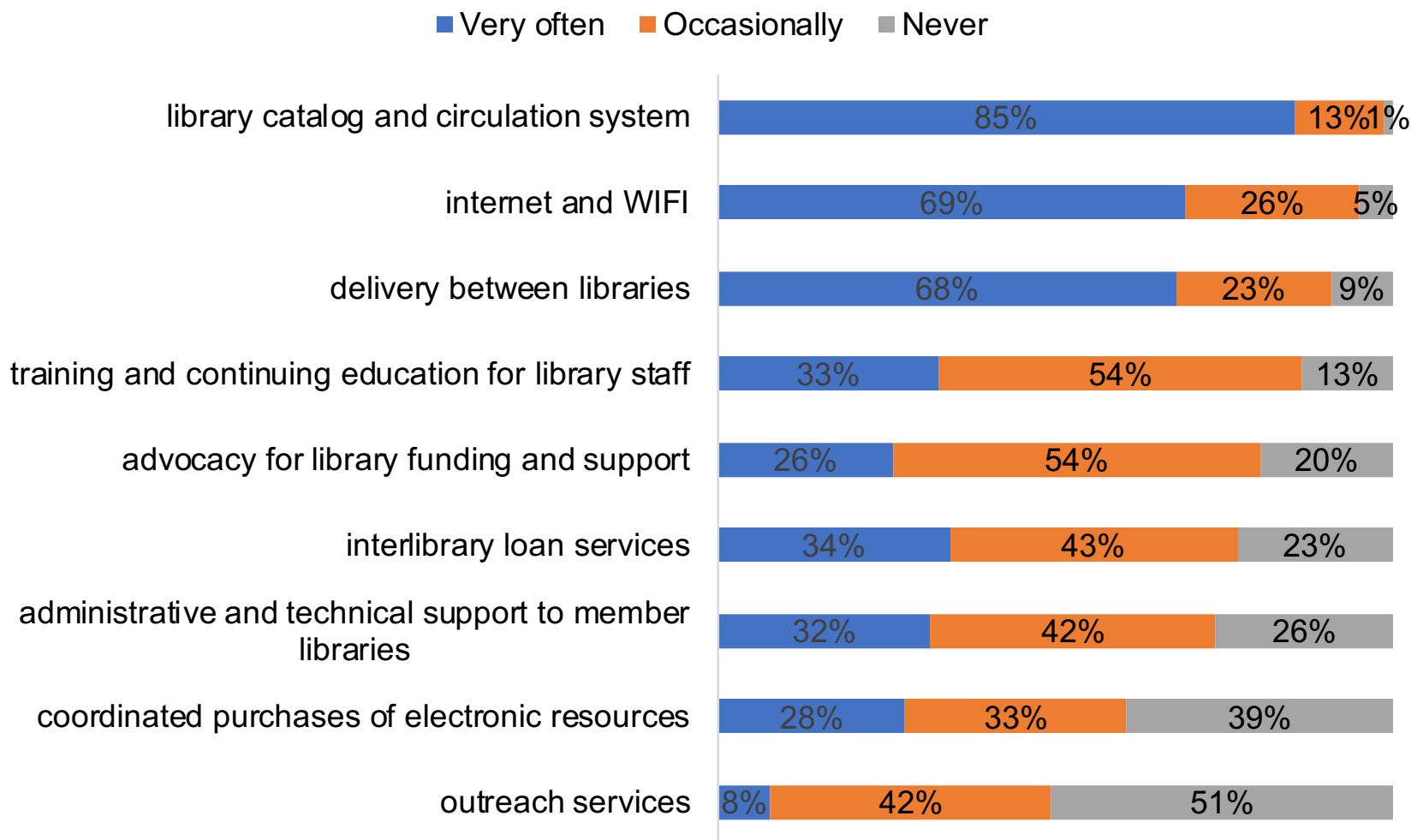
# Q: Below is a list of services provided by the Monroe County Library System.

Answered: 338



# Below is a list of the Monroe County Library System services you said you were familiar with. How often do you use the services?

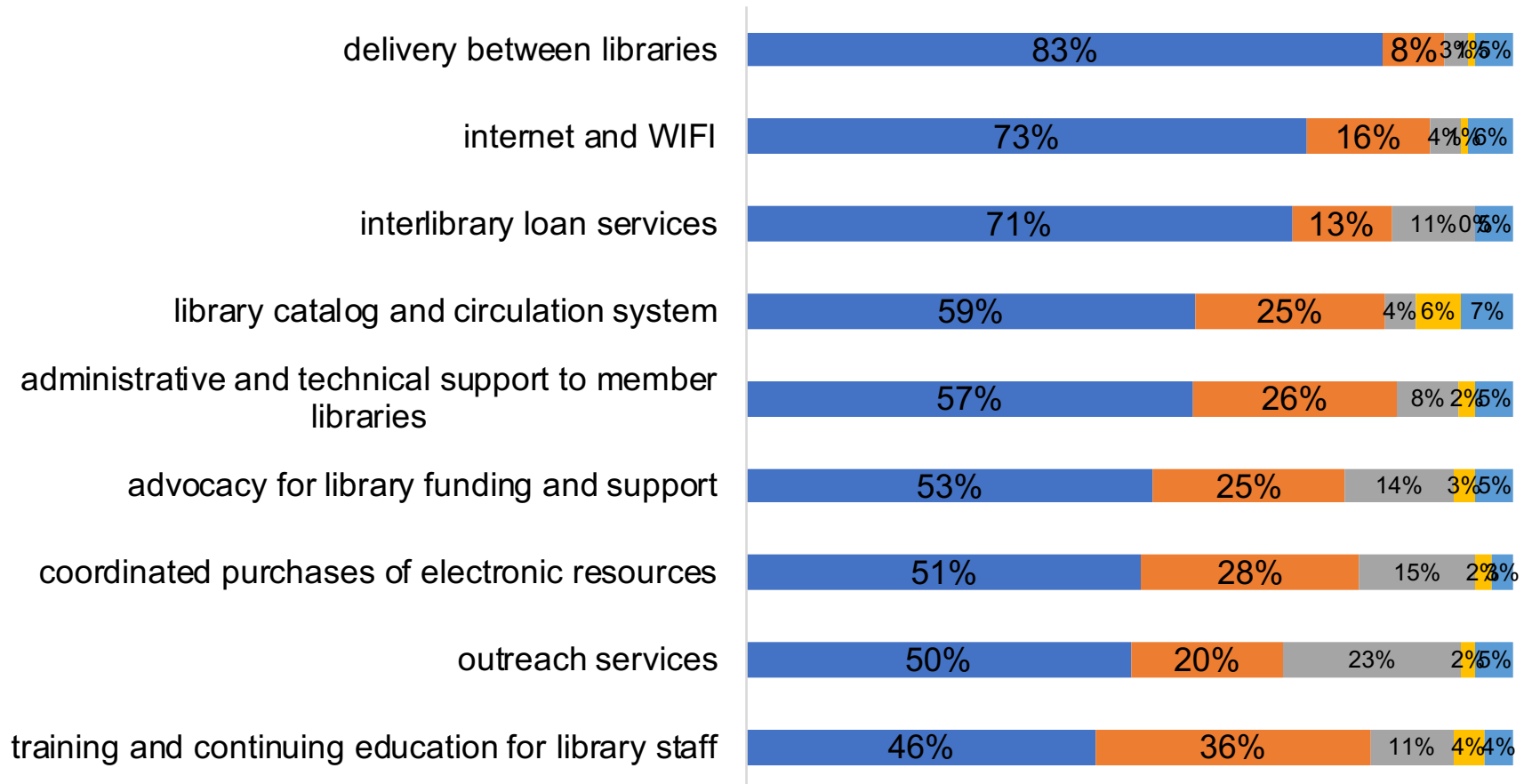
Answered: 323



# Please rate your satisfaction with the Monroe County Library System services you have used.

Answered: 311

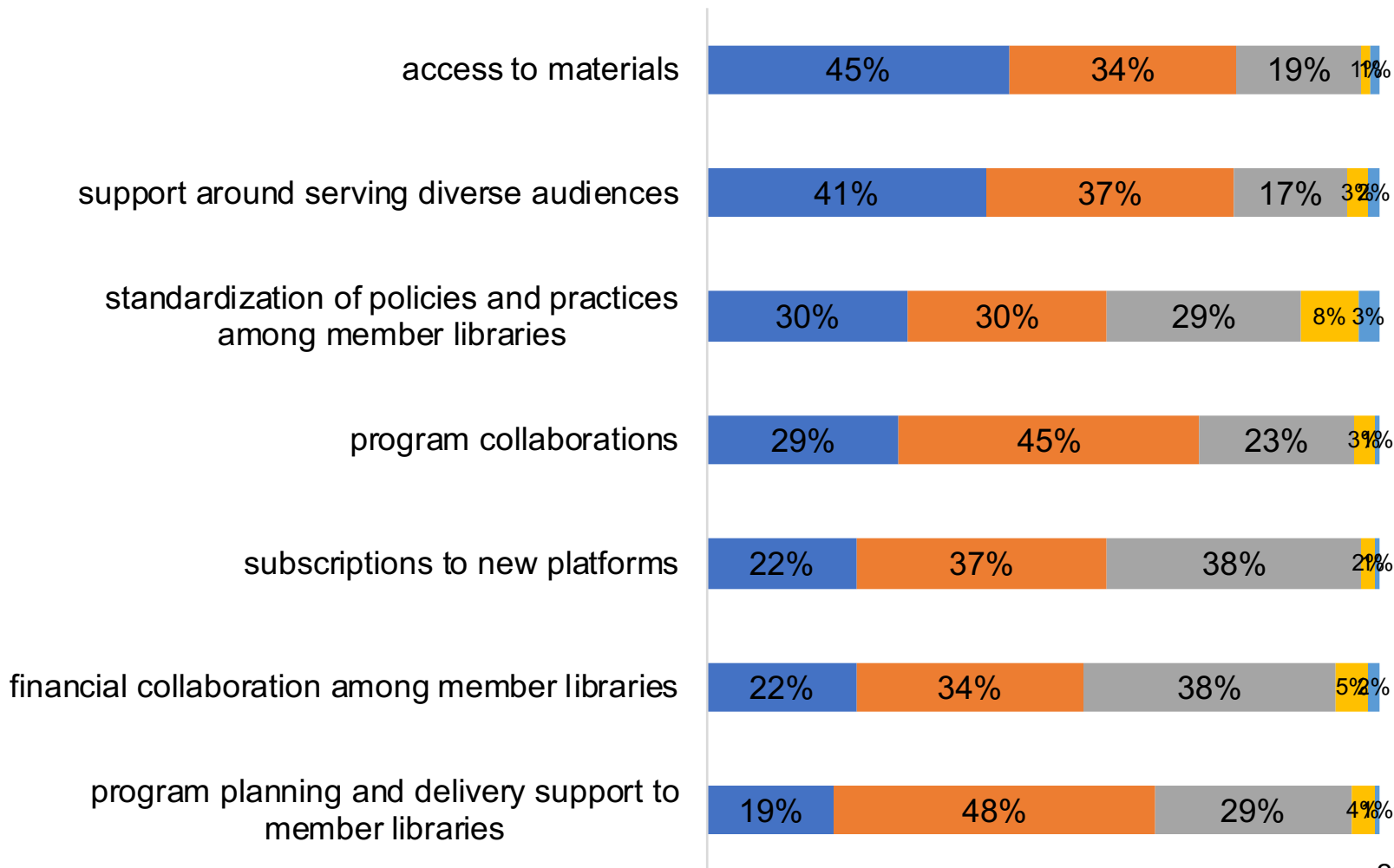
- Very satisfied
- Somewhat satisfied
- Neither satisfied nor unsatisfied
- Somewhat unsatisfied
- Very unsatisfied



# Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements. Our library could serve our patrons better if the Monroe County Library System improved or enhanced...

Answered: 311

■ Agree strongly ■ Agree ■ Neither agree nor disagree ■ Disagree ■ Disagree strongly



# Which platforms would you like to see the Monroe County Library System subscribe to?

---

Answered: 147

- Hoopla
- Kanopy
- Ancestry.com
- Hulu
- Newspapers: Democrat and Chronicle, NYTimes, Washington Post, WSJ
- LinkedIn Learning

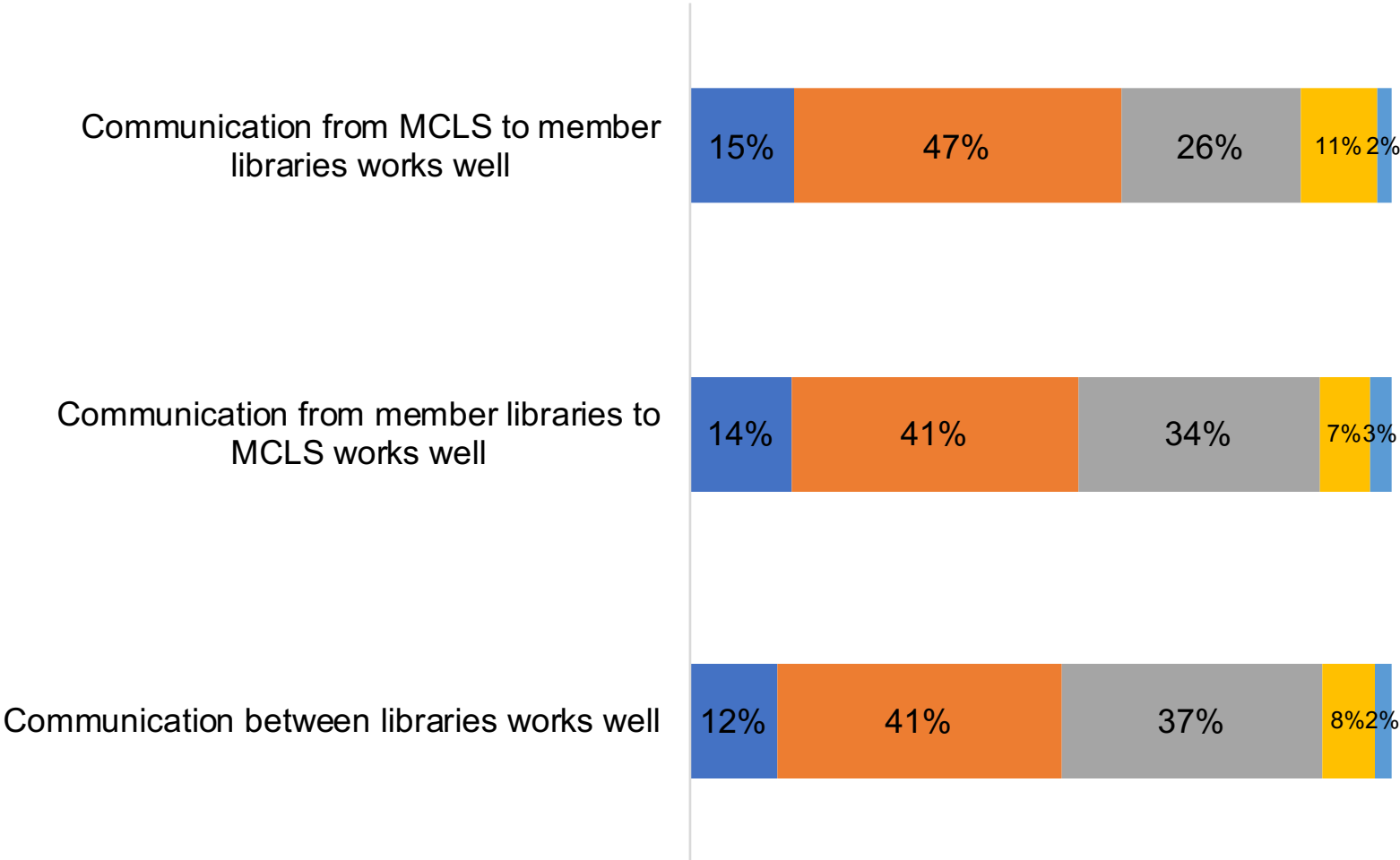
Black Lives Matter, Black History  
Languages: Mango, Rosetto Stone  
Oral history collection tool  
Other streaming: HBO, Amazon, Netflix,  
Spotify  
Better scheduling software  
GALE literary databases  
Shutterstock for marketing images  
YouTube

Digital asset management system  
More children's platforms  
Abobe editors  
Architectural software  
Hathitrust  
Genealogy databases  
JobNow: for jobseekers

# Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements.

Answered: 293

■ Agree strongly ■ Agree ■ Neither agree nor disagree ■ Disagree ■ Disagree strongly



## Libraries within the Monroe County Library System could be better connected to each other if...

---

Answered: 250

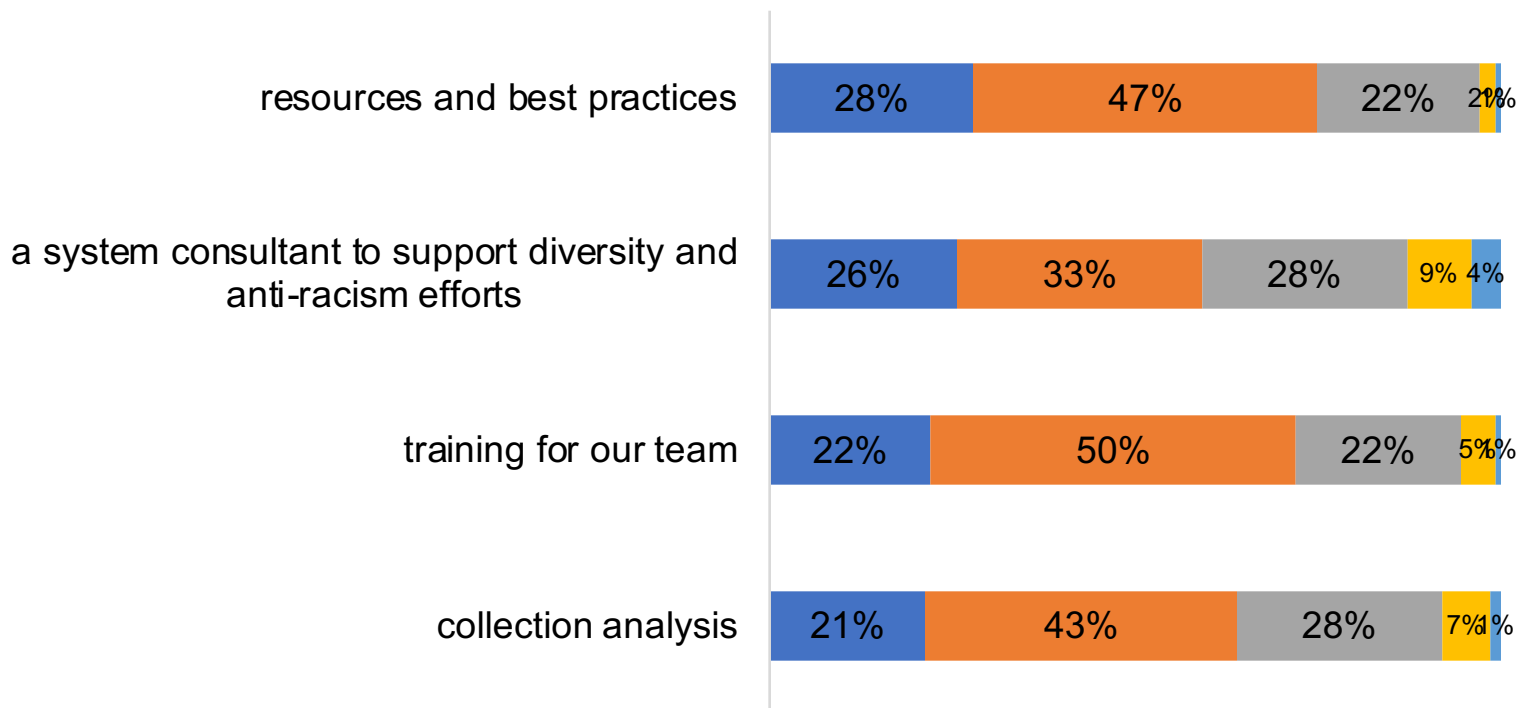
- More staff interaction: such as a MCLS staff day, occasional all system Zoom meetings, professional development events
- Conscious effort by all to read emails, communicate respectfully
- Standardized policies and procedures, standardized access to materials for patrons
- Alignment around a common mission and brand
- Clear communication that we are all one system
- More programming collaborations, "Road Shows"
- More friendliness, collegiality
- System wide committees like Emerging Tech Committee
- More system-wide communication beyond Directors; email addresses for all employees
- Contact lists for functional departments
- Email blasts, newsletter, blog
- the e portal was updated more frequently



# We could better serve a diverse community if the Monroe County Library System provided more assistance with...

Answered: 272

■ Agree strongly ■ Agree ■ Neither agree nor disagree ■ Disagree ■ Disagree strongly



# What could the Monroe County Library System do to make your job easier?

---

Answered: 250

## Human Resources

- More professional development for all staff; train and support younger staff members with info on career paths
- Hire more diverse staff
- Create more full time positions
- Help with civil service system

## Technology and Resources

- Better scheduling tool
- Continue tech support
- PCs with mics and cameras for virtual meetings
- Improve CARL functionality for searches
- Provide more system-wide digital services

## System-wide Communication and Alignment

- Create system wide uniformity with fines and other policies
- Share what MCLS can provide
- More collaborative programs
- Better, more communication
- Hands-off approach to operations (minority opinion)

# If you could change one thing about the Monroe County Library System, what would it be?

---

Answered: 245

## Structure and Systems

- More collaboration and sharing, including best practices
- More unity between town and city branches
- Better, more frequent communication
- Consistency with hours/align hours with needs of the neighborhood library users
- Standardization of policies such as hold fees
- Get rid of late fees/distribute online fees
- More county-wide support for DEI and anti-racism initiatives
- Increase leadership's openness to change
- Listen to voices of staff
- Reorganize the administration
- Separate RPL from MCLS
- Distribute funding more evenly/provide more resources for communities with greater needs

# If you could change one thing about the Monroe County Library System, what would it be?

---

Answered: 245

## People/Human Resources

- More diverse staff
- New librarian networking
- More full time positions; increase pay; pay benefits for part time employees
- Resources for conflict resolution

## Technology

- Equal access to databases and streaming services
- Make the e portal more user friendly
- Improve CARL
- More realistic budgeting around technology needs

## Services

- Bring back the Bookmobile
- Increase accessibility for people with disabilities
- More resources for patrons such as MiFis for borrowing

## Marketing

- Help the community realize we are all one library; increase community awareness of programs

If there is anything else you'd like to tell us about your experience with the Monroe County Library System, please add it below. Again, your responses are anonymous.

---

Answered: 351 Staff/Directors, Board

- I LOVE my library and I love what I do... 95% of the people I met in the system are great and amazing. My frustration is that sometimes...people are not great workers and there aren't any consequences and/or changed behavior.
- MCLS is a valuable asset to our community and I would love to see more outreach initiatives for us to reach more people who may not know all that we have to offer.
- We are stronger as a system. We need to promote a common message. Sharing and consistency makes things more convenient and appealing to our users.
- When I have contacted MCLS they have been helpful and attentive to my needs.
- Just needs to keep up with the times. Things are changing constantly.

If there is anything else you'd like to tell us about your experience with the Monroe County Library System, please add it below. Again, your responses are anonymous.

---

Answered: 351 Staff/Directors, Board

- Staff is...overworked, underappreciated, and stretched very thin.
- If staff knew that their complaints were heard, ...I think it would go a long way to improving morale, improving cooperation amongst the system, and then would trickle down to better patron services.
- I think it is a very high quality system and provides a lot of great services to both the member libraries and their patrons.
- I have worked for the library for many years and I am proud of the strides we have taken to remain relevant to our patrons. The pandemic seemed to bring out the best in our staff as we found ways to reach our patrons virtually.

# Four Pillars: Strategic Implications

## Library system structure

How can we standardize policies to increase system-wide consistency?

How can we facilitate communication and connections across the system?

Human resource issues (staff feeling overworked/not heard/not appreciated, as well as lack of FT positions) can affect staff retention and service delivery

What are ways we can increase access to materials for branch libraries?

## Digital transformation

Feedback on issues with website, CARL and other tools: need for technology improvements so staff can do their job well

## DEI

Staff asking for training and resources to support branches in serving diverse communities:

How can MCLS support that?

Hire more diverse staff: Is there a need for strategic recruitment and retention plan?

## Role of MCLS/libraries in community

Staff not necessarily aware of MCLS: Is there a need to raise its profile?

Consider ways to make services more accessible (Bookmobile, etc.)



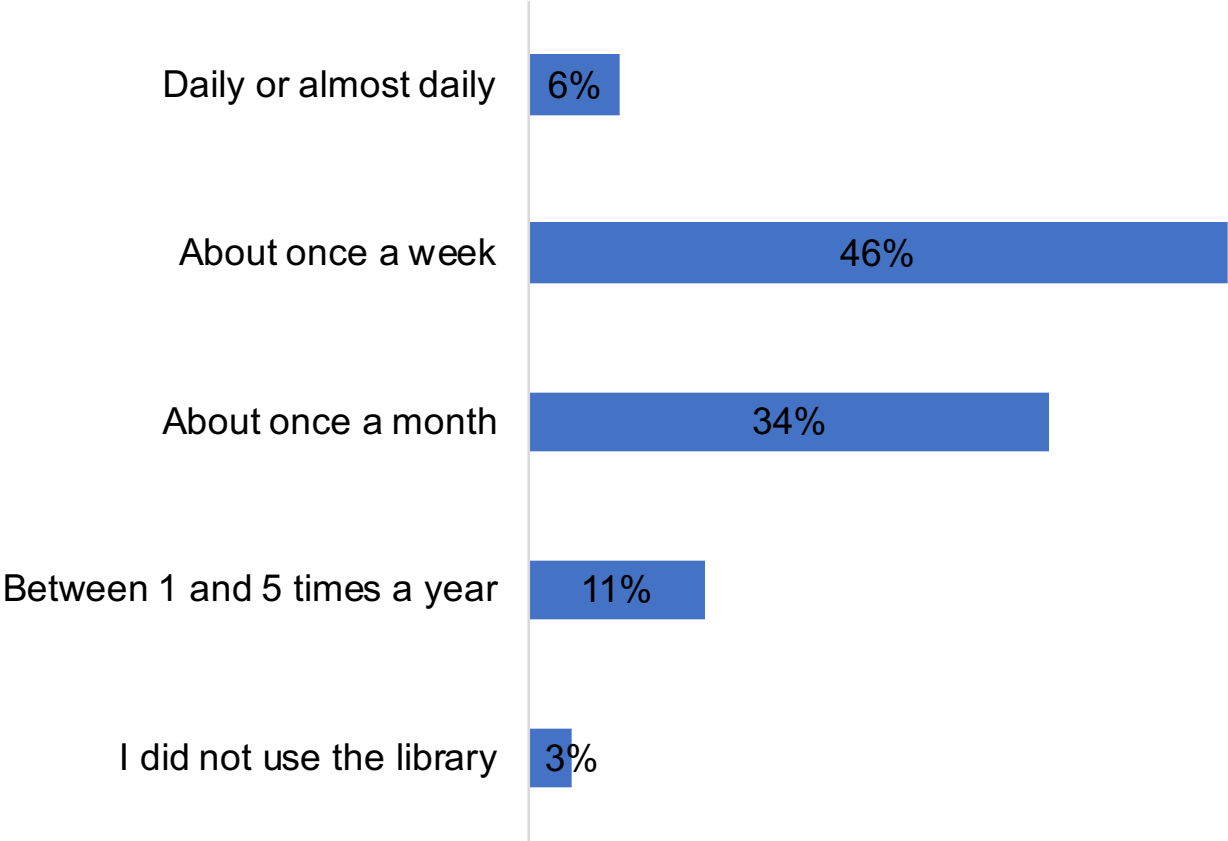
Questions for library users





# Before the pandemic, how often did you use a library's services?

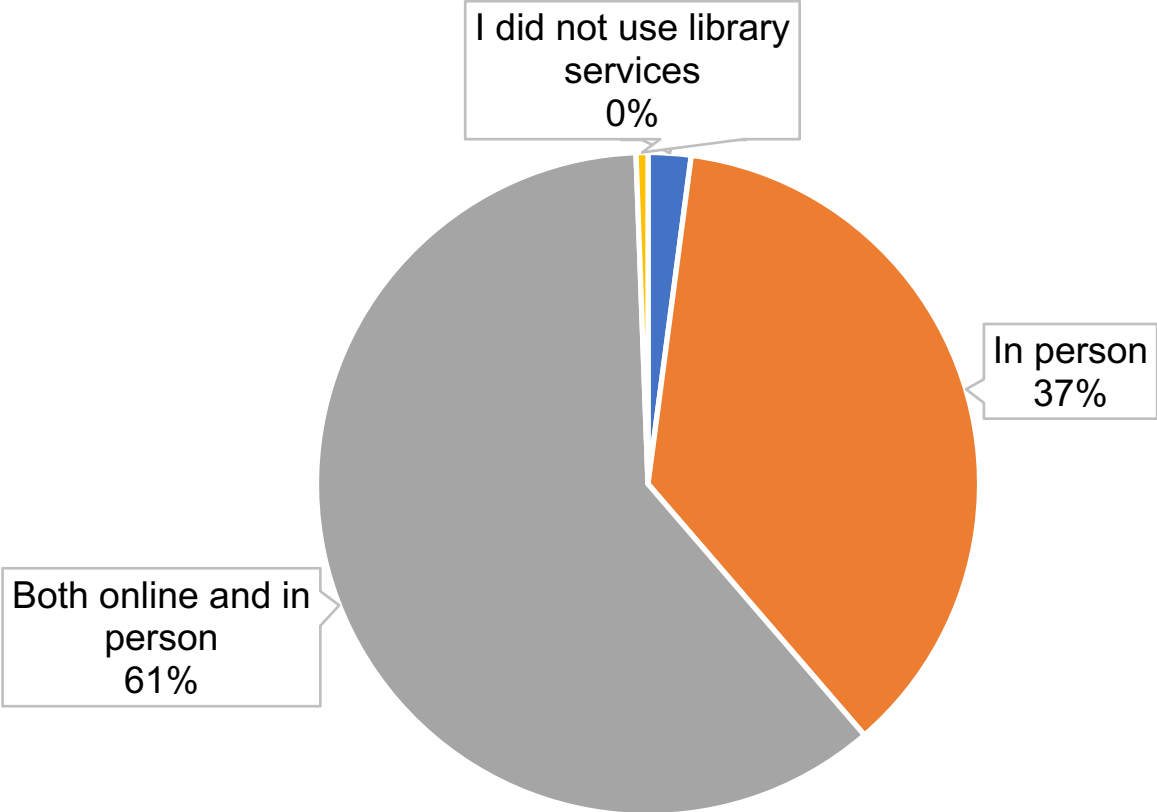
Answered: 2669



# Before the pandemic, how did you use library services?

Answered: 2588

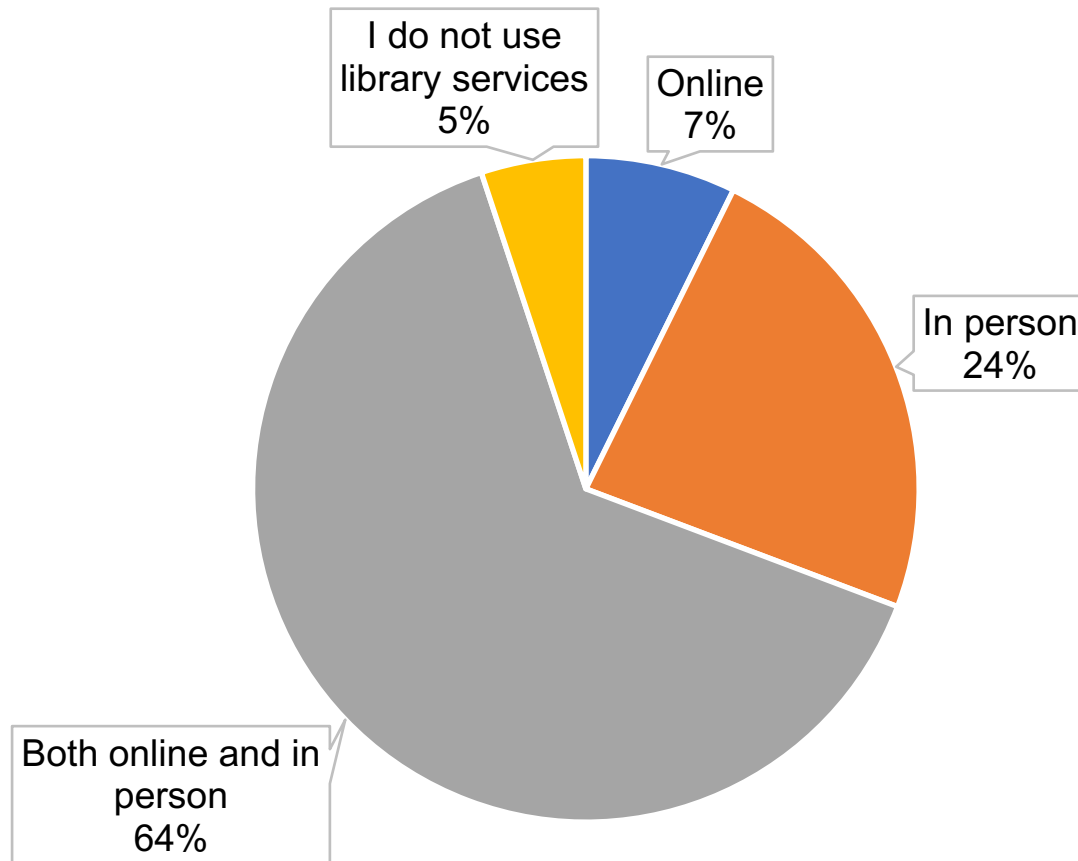
- Online
- In person
- Both online and in person
- I did not use library services



# How do you currently use library services?

Answered: 2657

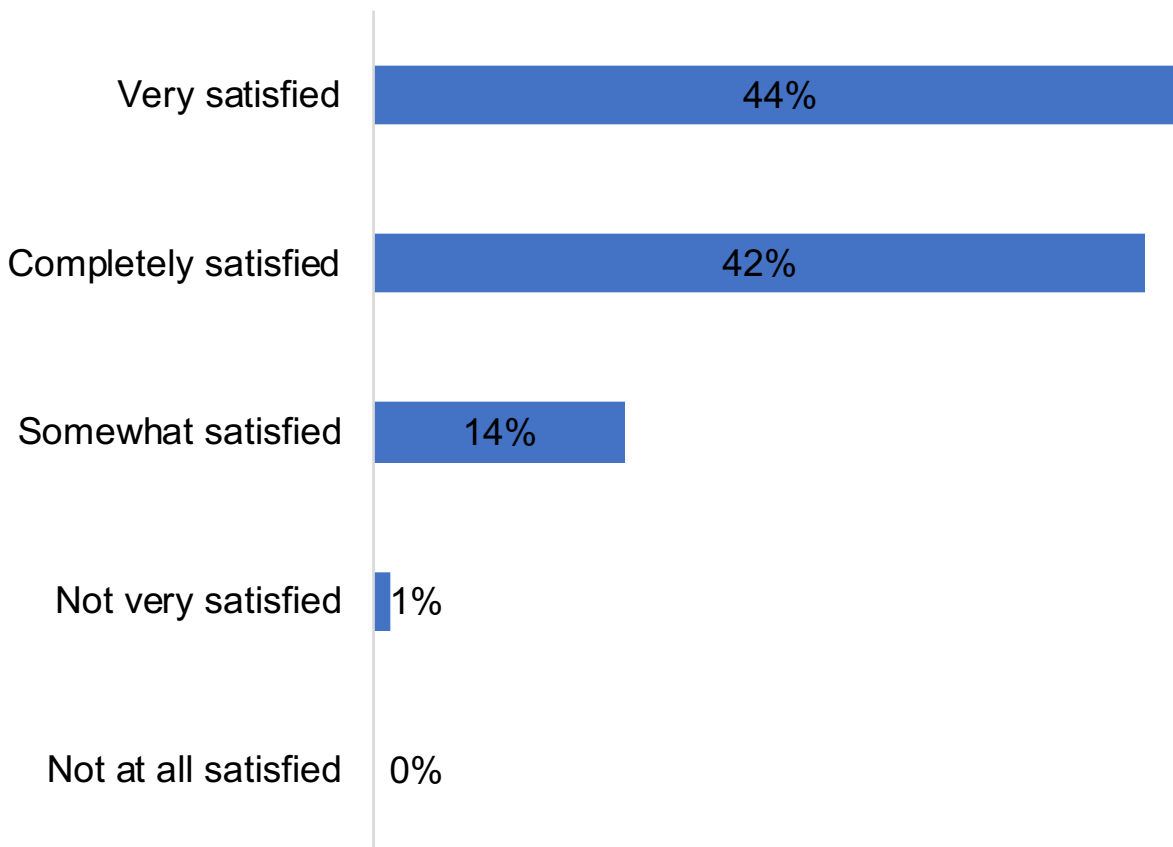
■ Online ■ In person ■ Both online and in person ■ I do not use library services



Please indicate your level of satisfaction with the online library services you've used.

---

Answered: 1895



Is there anything you would like to share about your experience with online library services?

---

Answered: 902

I love being able to renew books online and put them on hold.

Is there an on-line system to request inter-library loans for books not available in the MCLS? I couldn't find one.

Love using the Overdrive audio books.

One spelling mistake and the item can't be found. Search process is not very helpful.

I frequently reserve materials online, this service works well. I frequently use the ability to renew materials online. it would be nice if, when placing a hold, there was an estimated time till the held materials would arrive; currently I see my position in the hold queue, but not a time estimate.

Libby saved me during the pandemic!

Is there anything you would like to share about your experience with online library services?

---

Answered: 902

When using the Monroe County Library app, it seems like it takes a very long time to load the titles available. Hopefully you can make this app more user friendly and quicker for patrons to use!

I participated in a 4 week garden series on Zoom in February... hosted jointly by Penfield and Pittsford libraries... well organized and interestingly presented.

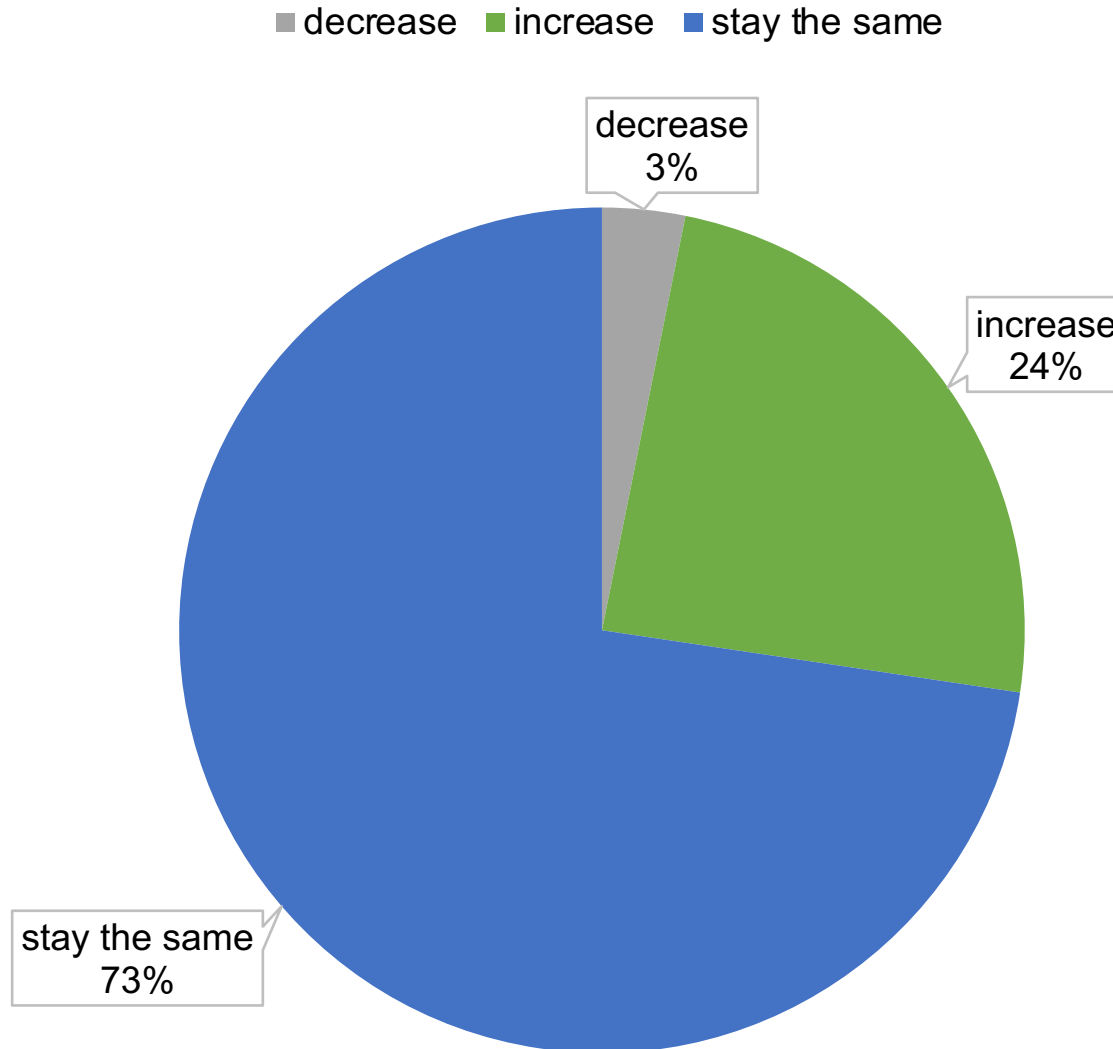
The app tends to not work sometimes. For example, I can get in and find a title but then I can't place a hold. Or when I find a title it shuts down when I try to see where the copies are at other libraries. Also, the app never saves my data so I have to re enter my # and name each time, it's a pain.

Long wait times for e-books and downloadable audio.

I have had trouble with online applications that I have not been able to figure out on my own. For example, I borrowed audiobooks and could not get them to play.. Not all libraries have tech support.

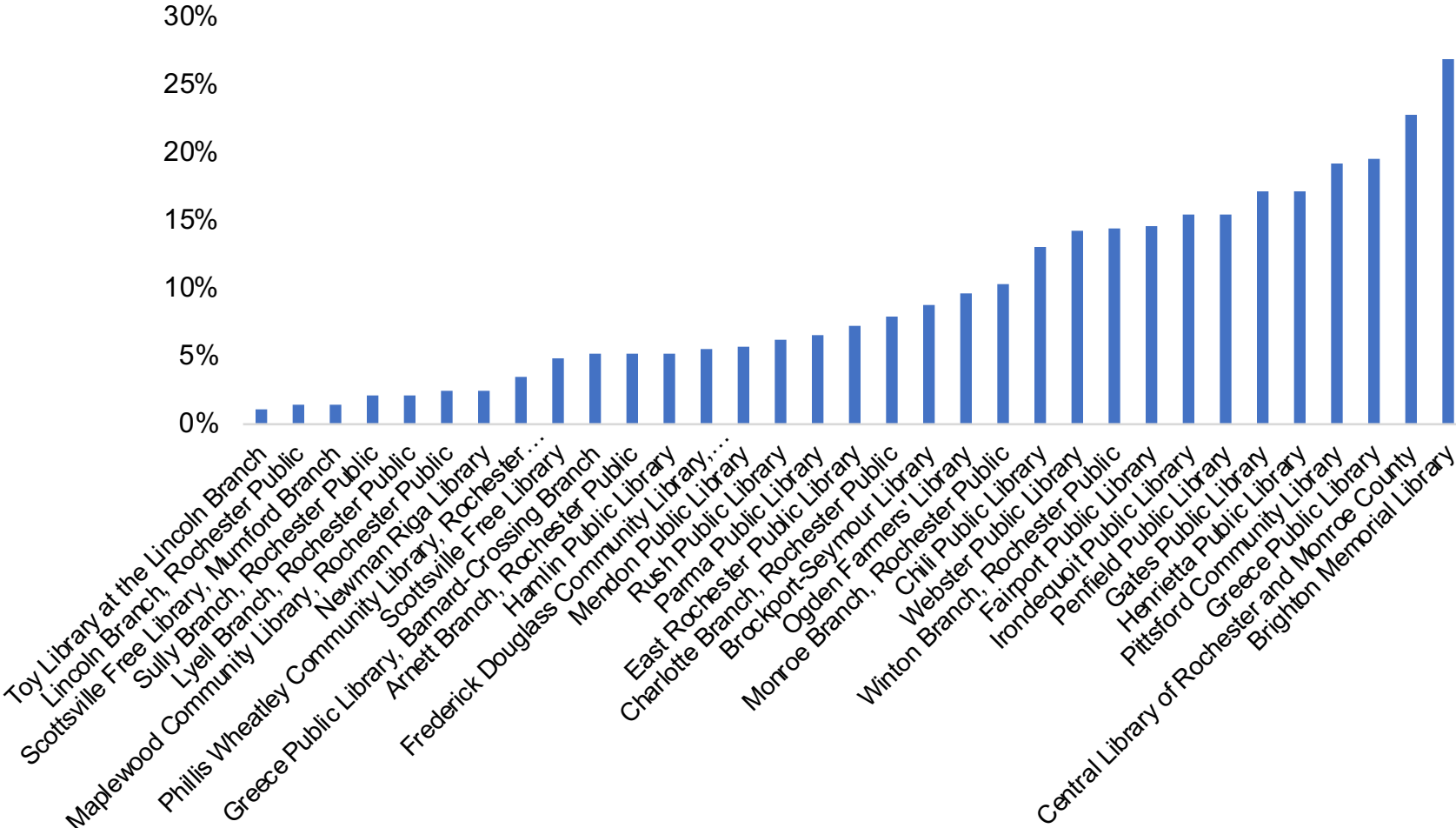
# As I can best predict today, I expect my future use of digital/online resources to...

Answered: 2639



# Pre-pandemic, which of these libraries did you use?

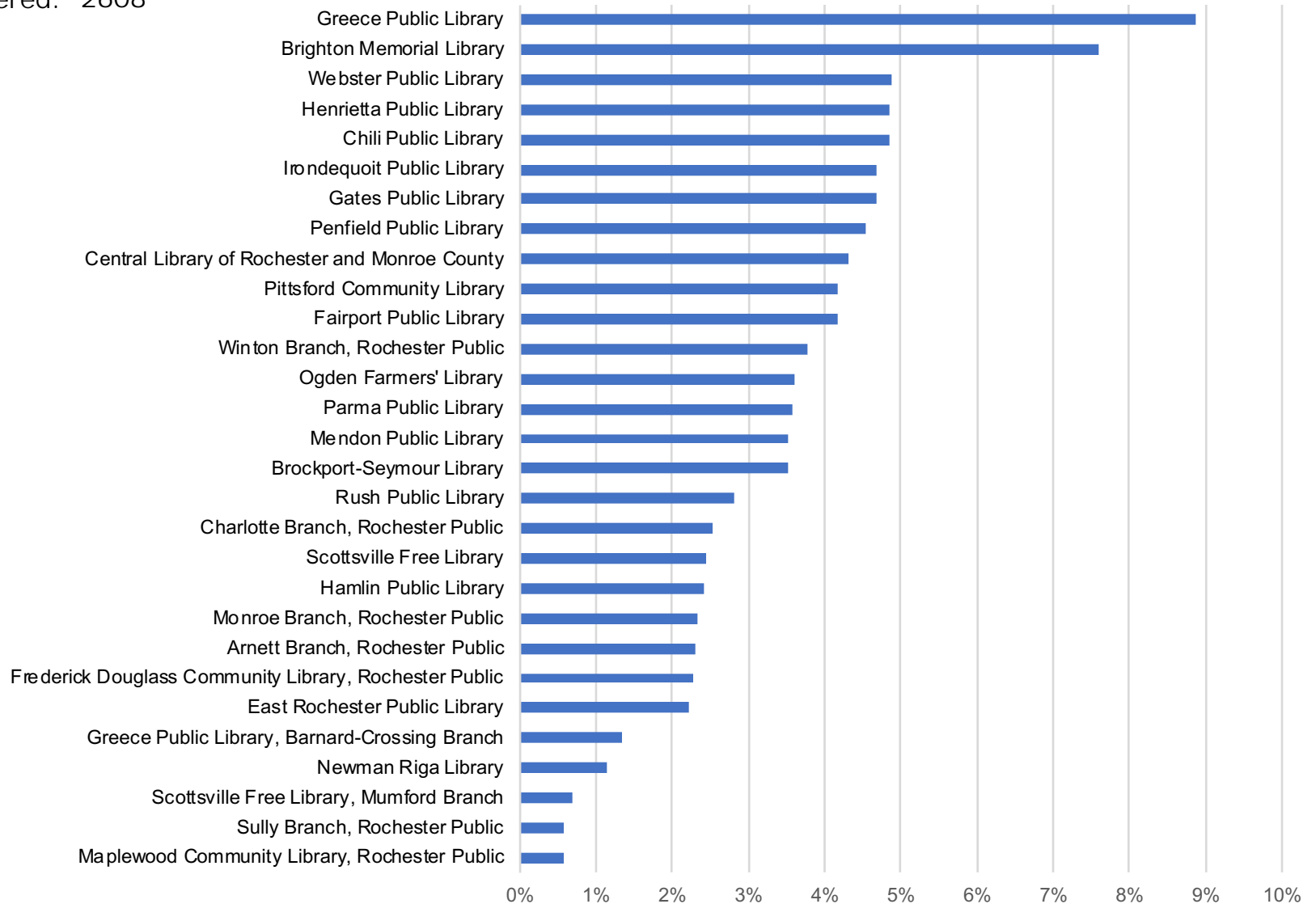
Answered: 2620





# What library do you use most?

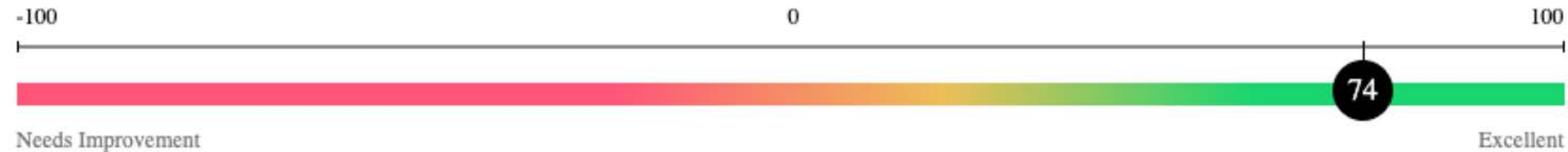
Answered: 2608



Thinking about the [library you use most], how likely would you be to recommend the library to a family member, friend or colleague?

Answered: 2604

NPS = 74



Net Promoter Score	% of Responses
Promoter (9-10)	79%
Passive (7-8)	16%
Detractor (0-6)	5%

Please tell us why you might not recommend the [library you use most].

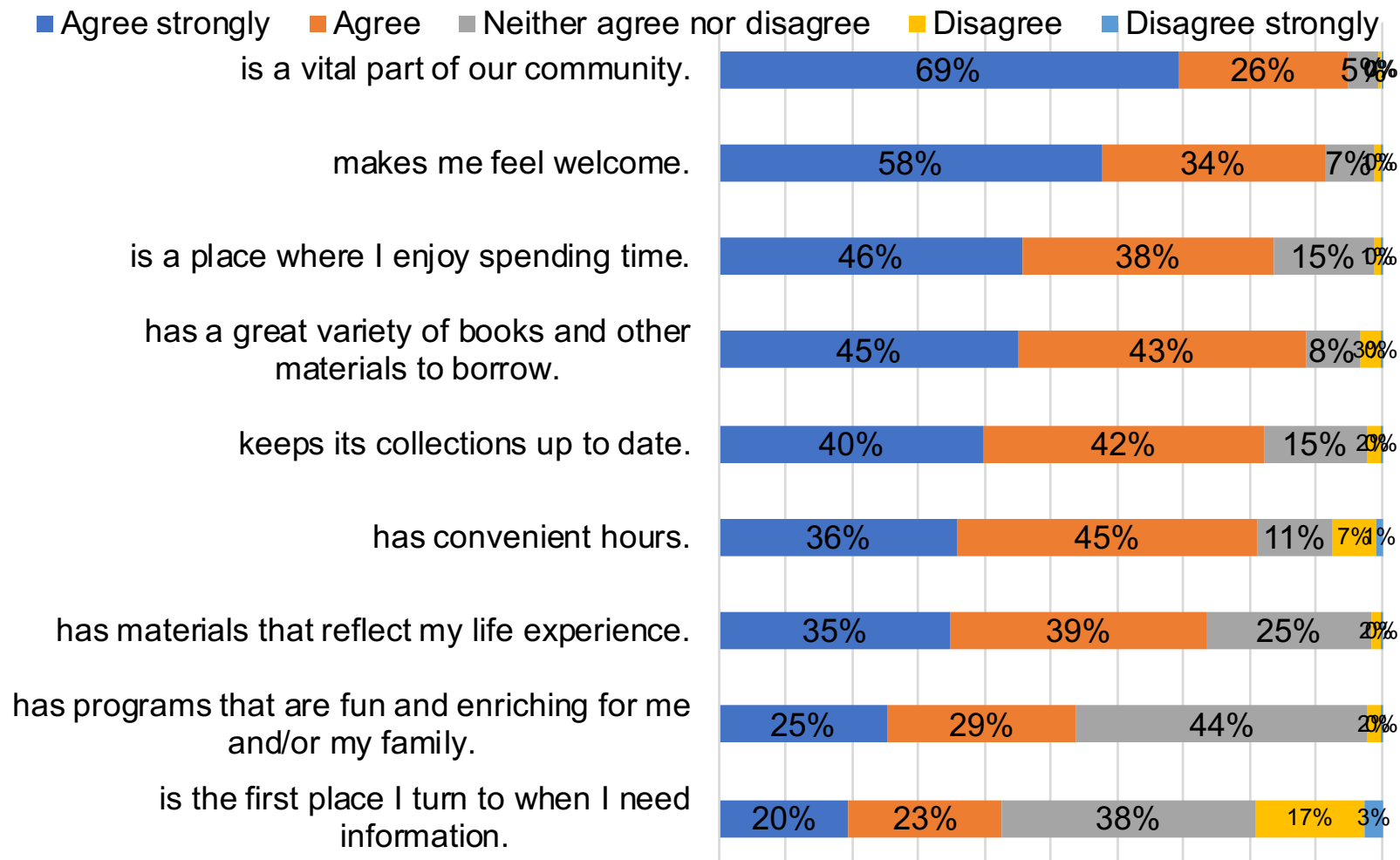
---

Answered: 126

- Facilities - "Too much walking to get where you want. No stop sign coming out of lot on south side. The drive thru book drop is way to high for anyone to use it without getting out of their car."
- Staff – "Staff is not helpful, you always feel like you're interrupting their work. Not enough smiling and greeting." "They almost seem put out that they have to check out items for you. And forget trying to ask them a question."
- Hours - "Their hours and restrictions make it difficult to use the library. They were closed for public use well past the time other libraries and town offices were closed."
- Selection - "The library is lovely, but they are not well-stocked with new materials. I always have to do inter library loans to get any recent releases, regardless of whether it's for adults or children."
- Size – "Small and has somewhat limited resources onsite due to its physical small size."
- Programming – "Need more various active kids program and resources" "...you have to register for everything."

When thinking about [the library you use most], please indicate your level of agreement with each statement. (The library I use most)...

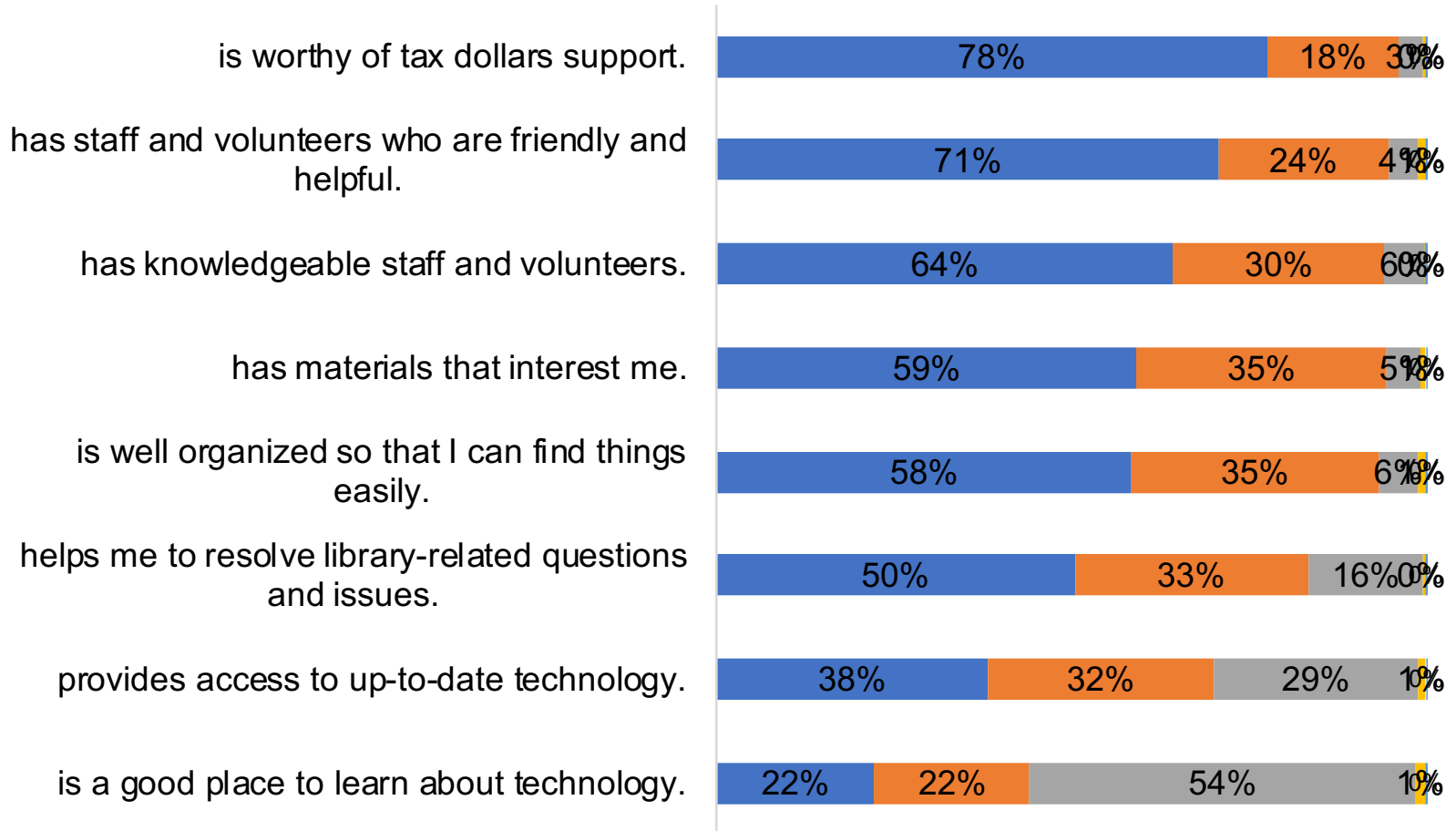
Answered: 2572



When thinking about [the library you use most], please indicate your level of agreement with each statement. (The library I use most )...

Answered: 2542

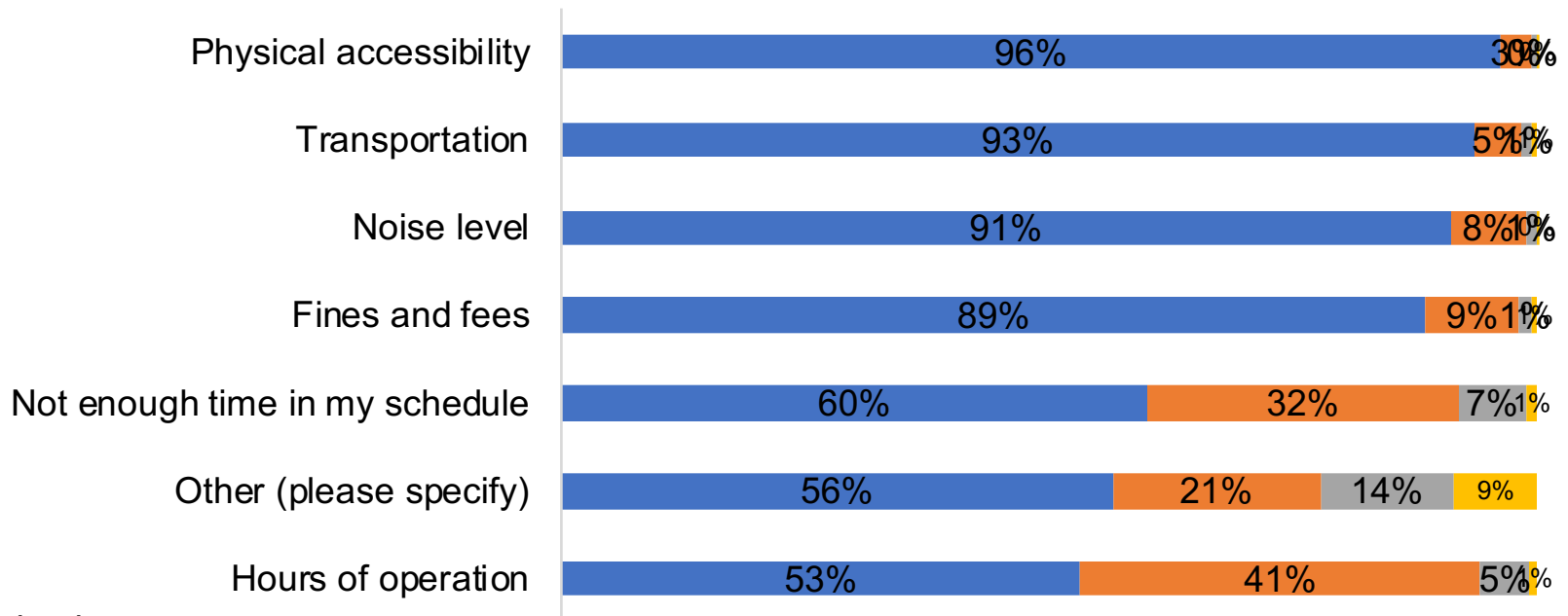
■ Agree strongly 
 ■ Agree 
 ■ Neither agree nor disagree 
 ■ Disagree 
 ■ Disagree strongly



# How much does each of the following get in the way of your use of the library?

Answered: 2505

- Does not get in the way at all
- Often gets in the way
- Sometimes gets in the way
- Always gets in the way



## Other

Parking

Fear of pandemic

Not welcoming

Don't have items I want

Website not up to date on hours

Lack of diversity in staffing and materials

Lack of drive up book drop

Lack of cleanliness

Security concerns

If you could change one thing about the [the library you use most], what would it be?

---

Answered: 2472

- Open more hours: weekends, evenings, early mornings once a week
- More weekend or evening programming for working parents that can't make daytime programs
- Get them more funding so that they can expand their collection of books
- Subscribe to The Week, Daily NY Times, Wall Street Journal
- Create a more welcoming toddler/kid friendly area or activities such as grab and go activities like other local libraries provide
- Add a Book a Bike program. Since it's so close to a bike trail, would be nice if library users could borrow a bike with their library card!
- More instant borrows for digital media in the hoopla app
- More computers for public use and catalog access
- More Technology classes taught, especially for seniors
- Make the outside book drop more convenient
- Increased # of story hour offerings and family entered events that promote literacy
- More programs: parenting classes, community field trips that build literacy, life skills
- Hire more diverse staff and provide racial bias training

If there is anything else you'd like to tell us about your experience with the Monroe County Library System, please add it below. Again, your responses are anonymous.

---

Answered: 1,055 Users/Volunteers

### What's working

- Access to the MCLS has made my pandemic experience easier to bear. I appreciate everything the staff has done to keep community members safe, cared for, and well-read. Thank you!!
- I am so happy with the interlibrary loan system. If my branch doesn't have the book I want, another one likely does. Also your computer listings tell me other branches that have the desired book if I want to get it pronto. Books on hold come in a fairly timely manner and allow me to have a sense of my place in line.
- Everyone is helpful & accommodating. I have a hearing impairment & prefer e-mail communication vs telephone. Inquiries are answered promptly & often offer more specific information than requested. I am a happy user.
- I feel I have made new friends with many of the employees and know many by name. They are to be commended for the work they do.
- I like to go to different libraries, because different things are emphasized, and it broadens my thinking.
- We enjoy the activities, zoom classes, etc.



If there is anything else you'd like to tell us about your experience with the Monroe County Library System, please add it below. Again, your responses are anonymous.

---

Answered: 1,055 Users/Volunteers

## Suggestions for Improvements

- I'm confused by the disparity between various library branches.
  - The city libraries are so inferior to the town ones. The physical spaces are too small and dreary, the collections are very limited (although they are more multicultural) and the hours are so limited and hard to remember.
  - Some have book ordering fees, others do not. Why is that?
  - Every library is open different days and times it seems.
- Consider eliminating fines and fees for holds/requests from other libraries.
- The hours of operation and days of operation need to be posted on outside displays whenever possible.
- I would like to be able to renew material indefinitely or up to 6 months as long as no one is waiting for it.
- Please make more available online.
- Please make the app quicker/better for users!
- Open more on evenings and weekends.
- Improve the online search feature.

# Four Pillars: Strategic Implications

## Digital transformation

Issues with user experiences (problems with app, online searches are finicky) may lead users to go elsewhere

## Role of MCLS/libraries in community

Requests for libraries to be open more evenings, weekends and early mornings to accommodate patrons' schedules

The interlibrary loan service is invaluable to people. How can we continue to provide services like this that feature flexibility?

96% of respondents agree libraries are worthy of tax dollar support. Is this something we can leverage?

## DEI

## Library system structure

How can we eliminate confusion and inconsistent experiences through policy standardization?

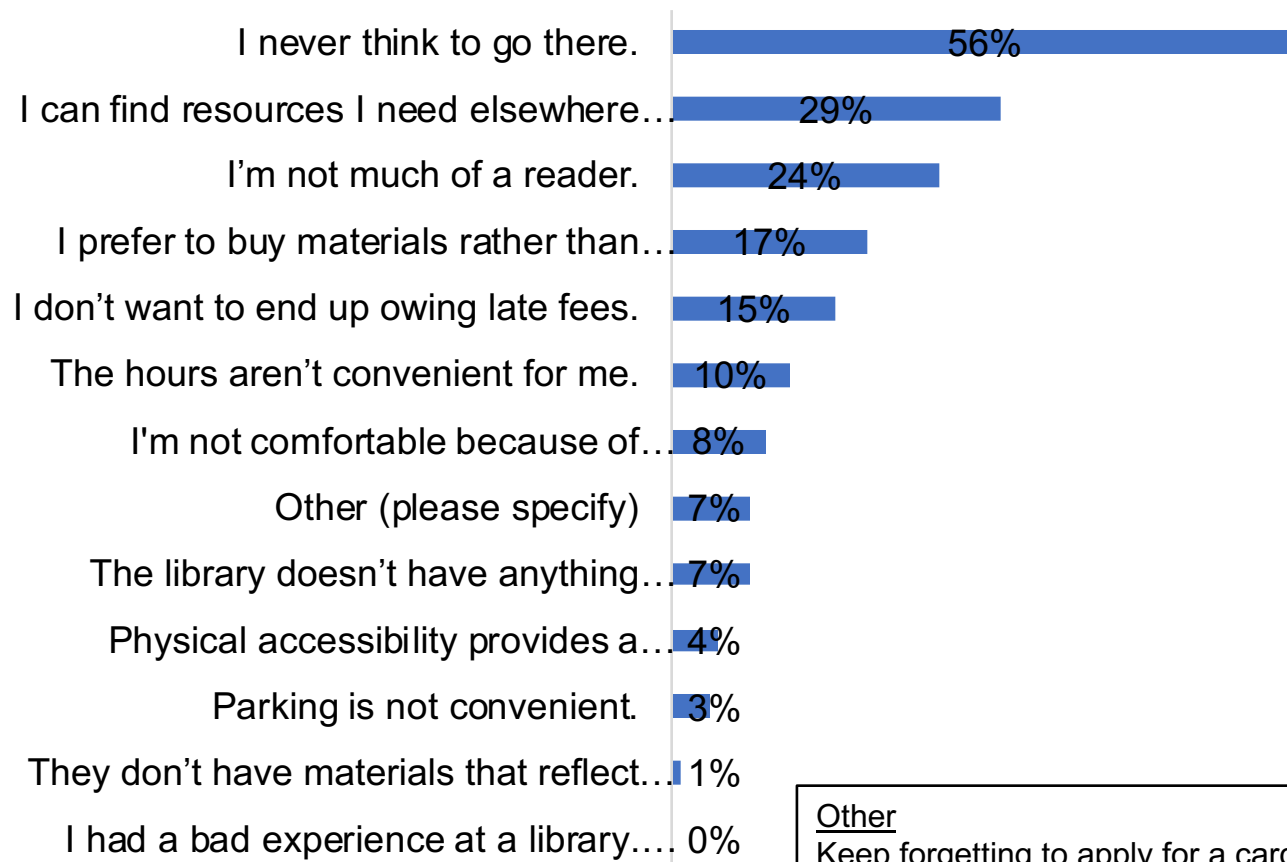


Questions for  
library non-users



# Please tell us why you do not use library services.

Answered: 143



Other  
Keep forgetting to apply for a card  
I go on a need to use basis  
Fear of judgement  
It's not something I think about participating in  
COVID closures and mask mandates kept me away from using them  
I research on the computer

# What would make you more likely to use library services?

---

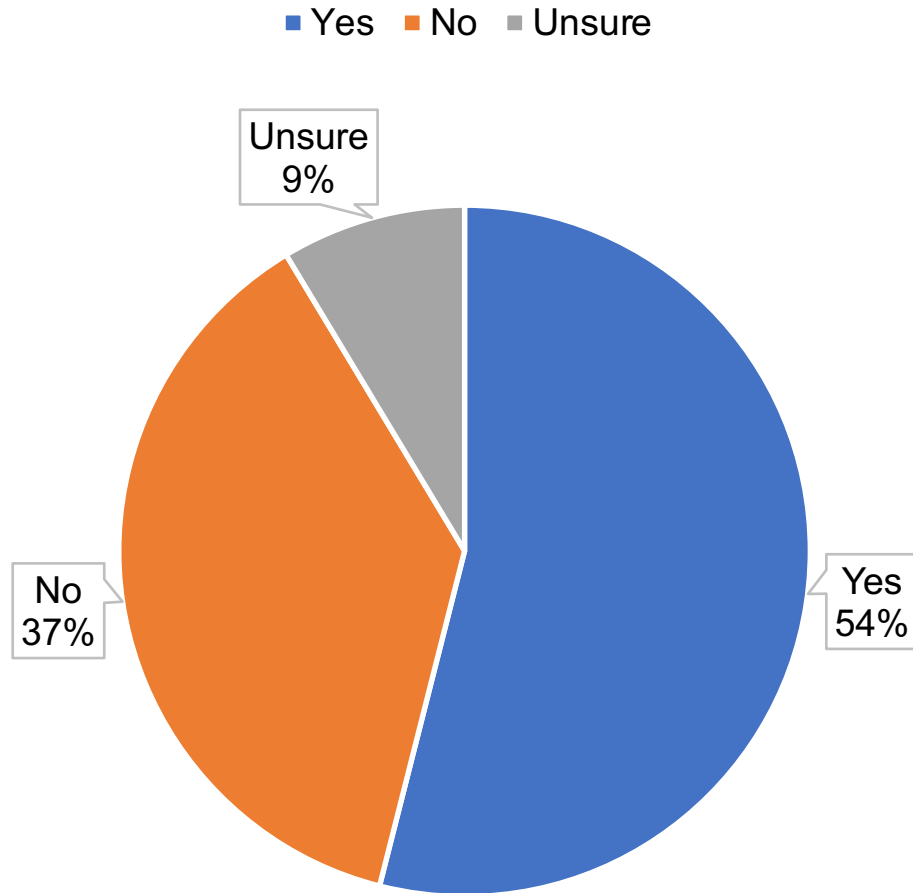
Answered: 134

- More convenient hours, after 6 pm
- Closer location
- Longer borrowing times, no late fees
- Ability to buy the books, not just rent them
- If it had what entertains me; books that interest me
- More space for meetings with Zoom
- Individual work areas
- Free internet
- "I typically read newly published books. Some take me a while to read. I feel pressured to finish and return a library book."
- Resources that I can't find anywhere else
- I'm not sure because everything is online now
- Group gatherings that match my interests
- More awareness of what libraries offer
- Higher vaccination rate

# Are you aware that libraries provide online services such as eBooks, audiobooks, music, videos, information databases, online events, and classes?

---

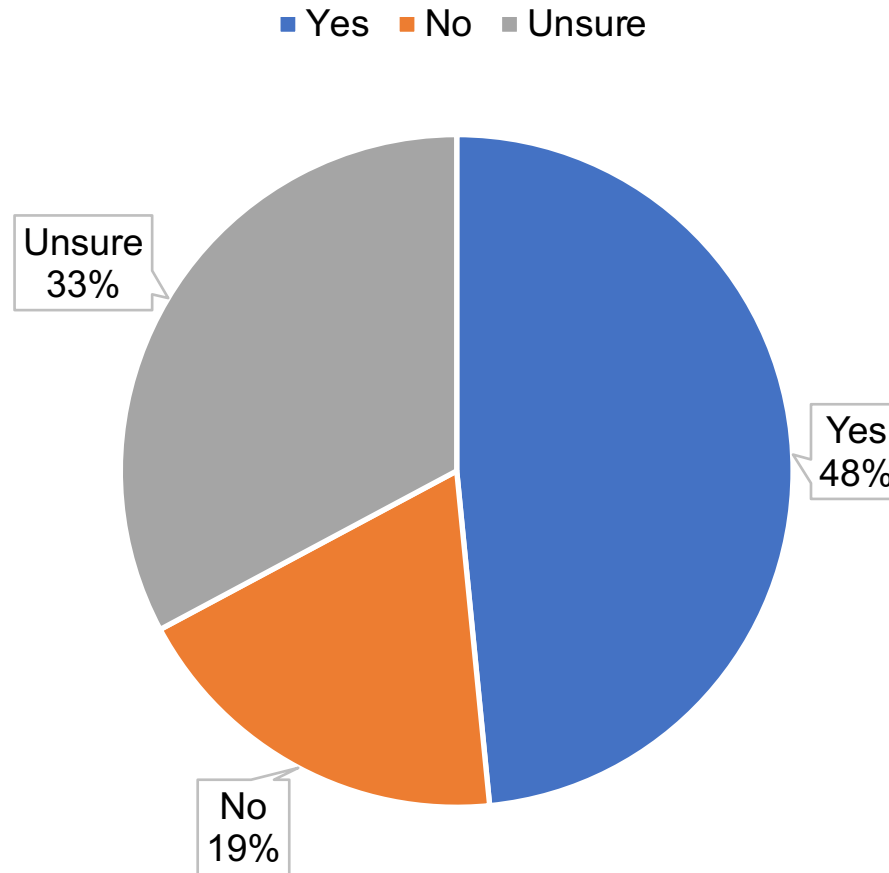
Answered: 139



Would access to online services such as eBooks, audiobooks, music, videos, information databases, online events, and classes make you more likely to use library services?

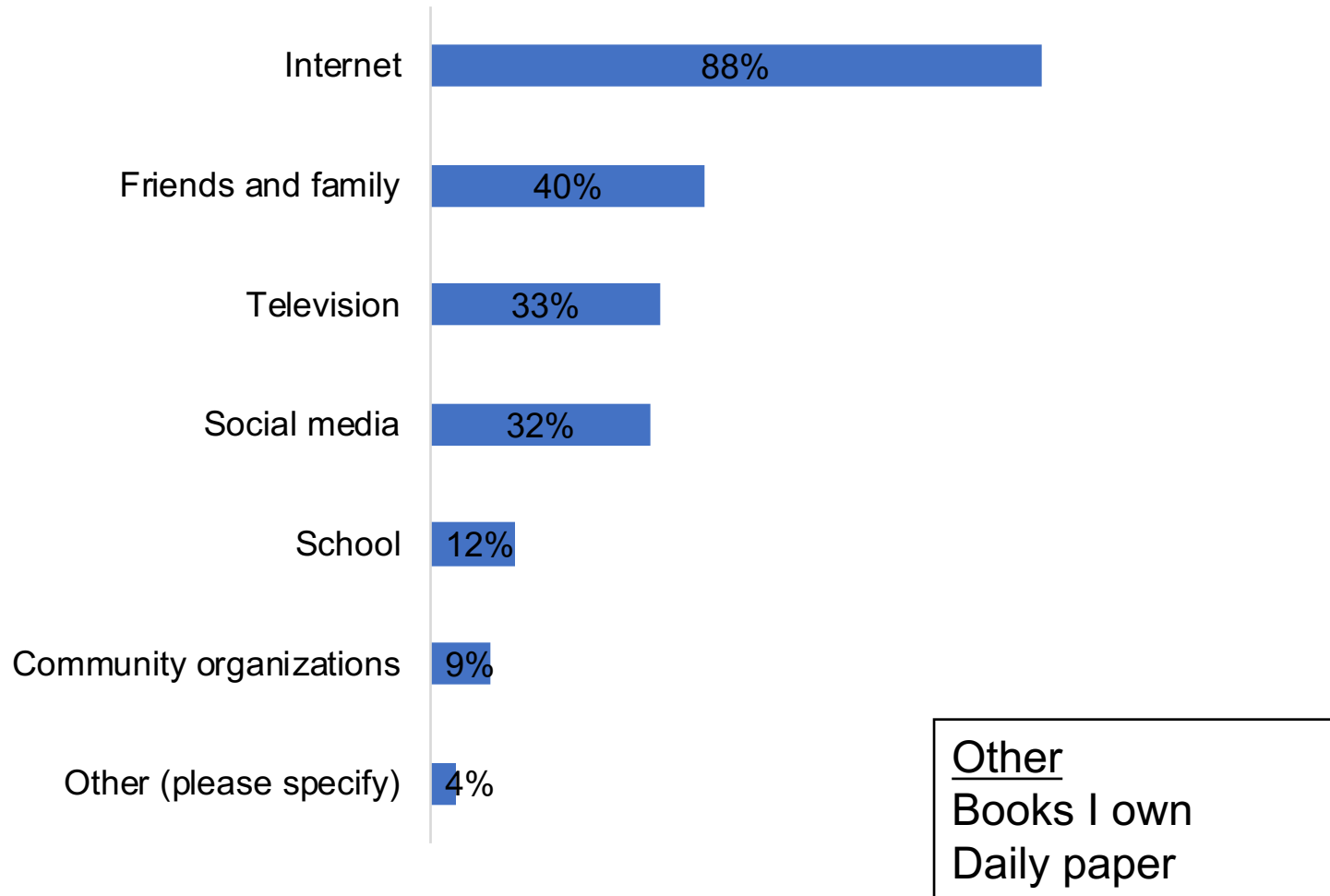
---

Answered: 64



# Where do you go for information?

Answered: 139

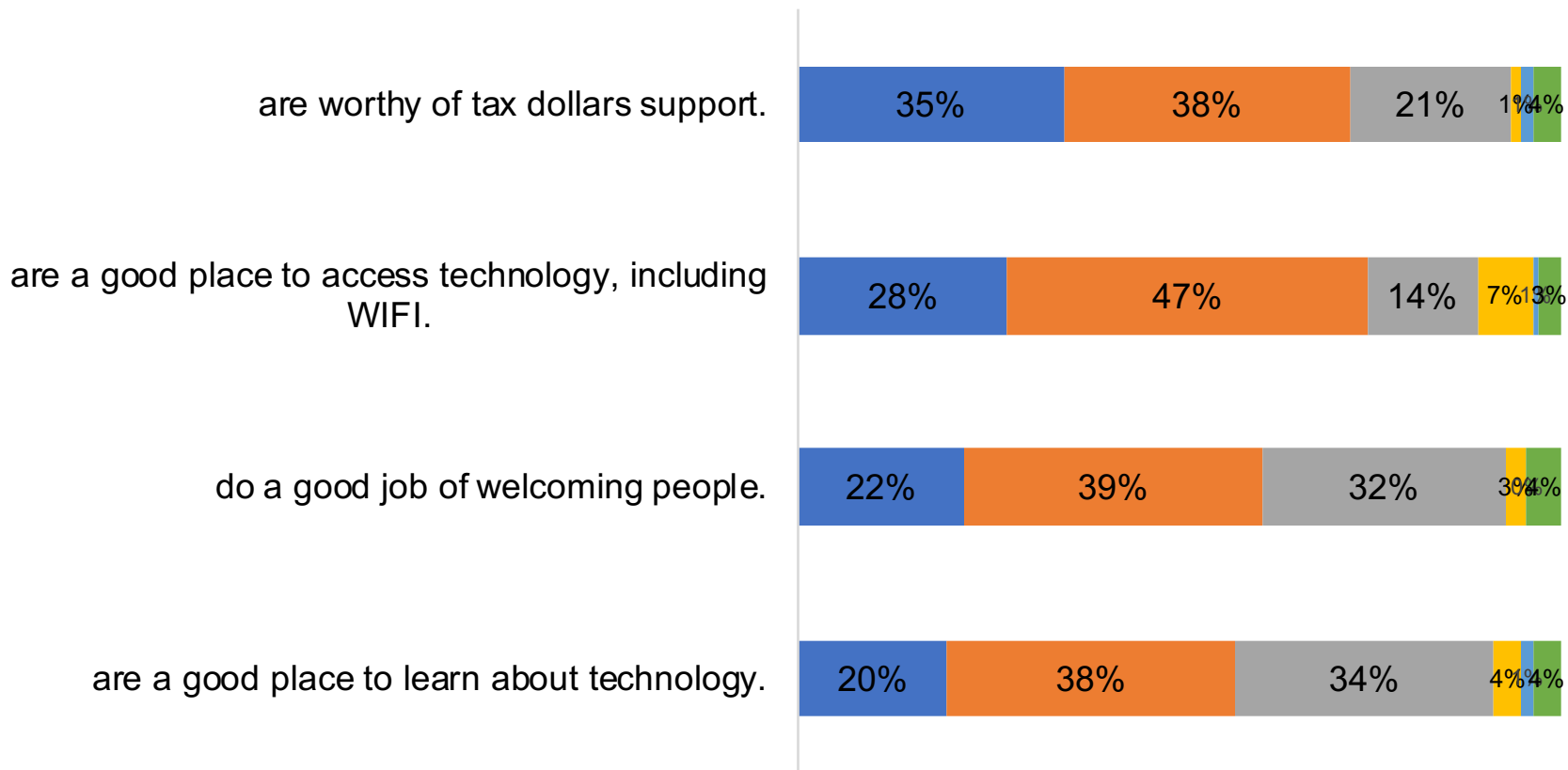




# Please indicate your level of agreement with each statement. Libraries....

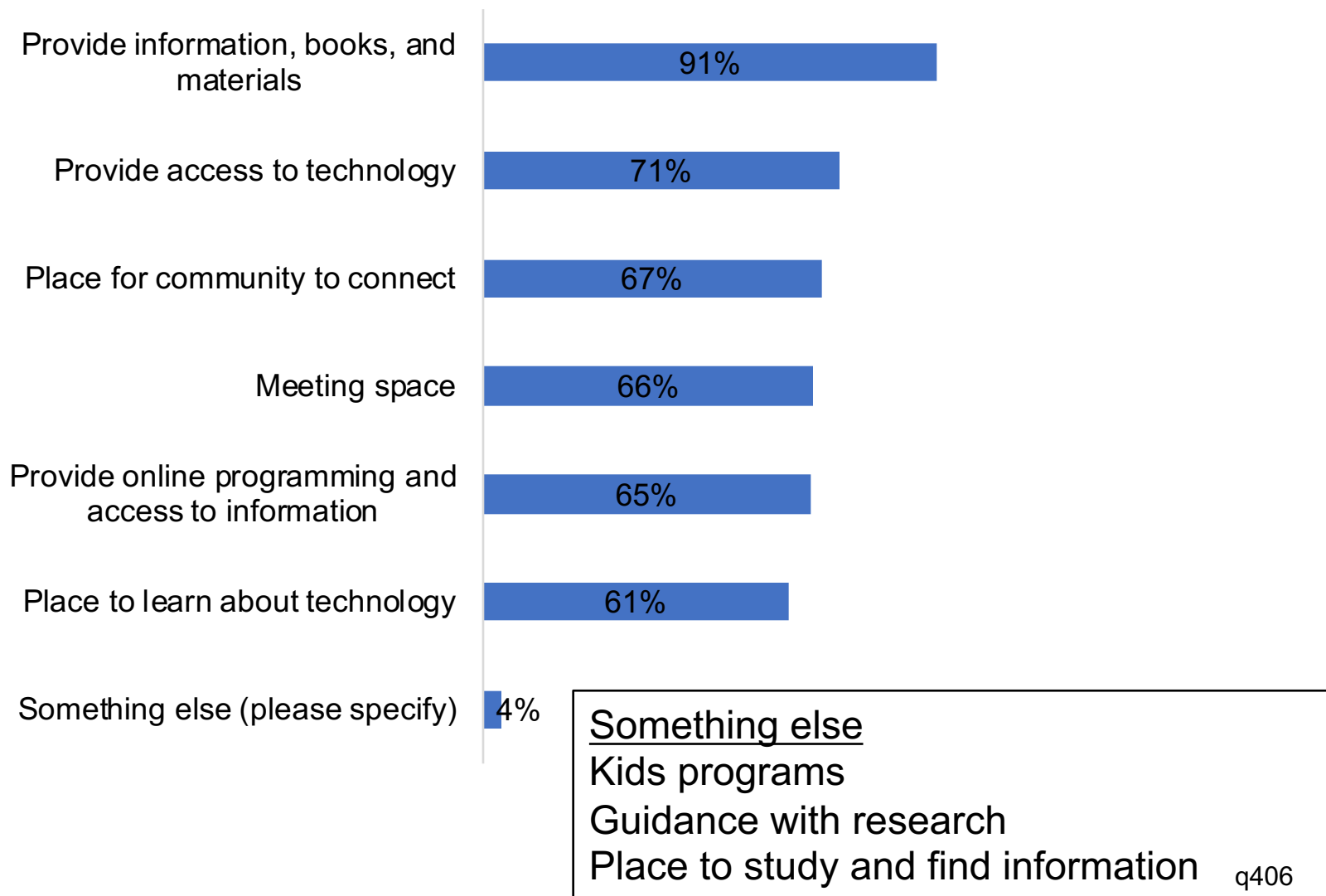
Answered: 138

■ Agree strongly ■ Agree ■ Neither agree nor disagree ■ Disagree ■ Disagree strongly ■ Don't know



# What role in the community can libraries play?

Answered: 138



If there is anything else you'd like to tell us about your experience with the Monroe County Library System, please add it below. Again, your responses are anonymous.

---

Answered: 37 non-users

- When I used it it was great for getting resources and printing documents.
- I recently called about looking at a 1964 yearbook and was pleasantly surprised to find that it was available in the historical section.
- In the past, before the internet, they were vital to me for books and media. I think they still are for people on restricted incomes and limited internet.
- Would like to see programming for children this summer.
- I tried to get books but the wait time was too long.
- I like that it gives you a quiet space.

# Four Pillars: Strategic Implications

## Digital transformation

Half of non-users agree that access to online services would make them more likely to use a library. Should we reach out to nonusers to make them aware of online resources?

## Role of MCLS/libraries in community

73% of non-users still agree libraries are worthy of tax dollars support. How can we leverage that?

## DEI

## Library system structure



Using the Research to  
Inform our Strategic  
Framework



# Four Pillars: Strategic Implications

Digital transformation

Role of MCLS/libraries in community

DEI

Library system structure



# Next steps