WVLS LIBRARIES IN 2023

IN 2023, WVLS LIBRARIES HAD...

129,685 REGISTERED USERS

The equivalent of **45%** of the population of the seven-county service area **had a library card.**

Library cards are available for free to all residents of the seven counties in the WVLS service area, including those who live in municipalities that do not have a library.

23% of registered users **live in a municipality without a library**.

Non-resident users have access to all library services.

25% of checkouts were to registered users from municipalities without libraries.

IN 2023, AN AVERAGE USER...

visited a library 5 times.
Visits to libraries increased 8.5% over 2022 and are more than double the pandemic low of 2020.

checked out 12 physical items.
Circulation of physical items remains the primary function of a WVLS public library.

used a public computer or logged onto public wi-fi 2 times.
Public PC use is down from pre-pandemic numbers, but has increased since 2020.

participated in 1 program or self-directed activity.
Attendance at in-person programs increased 45% over 2022 while participation in self-directed activities has dropped slightly.

IN 2023, WVLS LIBRARIES OFFERED...

1,070,897 PHYSICAL ITEMS IN THEIR COMBINED COLLECTIONS

Physical items can be checked out from any member library. These items move between libraries through the system's courier service.

ACCESS TO 236,183 ITEMS IN THE STATEWIDE DIGITAL LIBRARY CONSORTIUM

Also known "Overdrive" or "Wisconsin's Digital Library," registered users can check out ebooks, eaudiobooks, and emagazines on their personal devices through the Libby app.

447,884 items moved between WVLS libraries
An average of 84 items per courier stop.

13% of items checked out come from another library's collection.

WVLS users accessed 361,695 ebooks, eaudiobooks, and emagazines.
a 7% increase over 2022, and a 60% increase since 2015,

Use of e-audiobooks is now nearly equal to the use of e-books, even though e-audiobooks account for only 1/3 of the digital library collection.

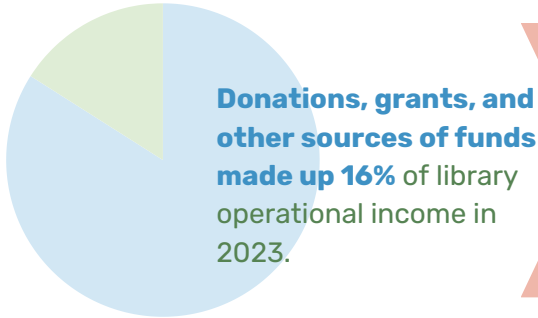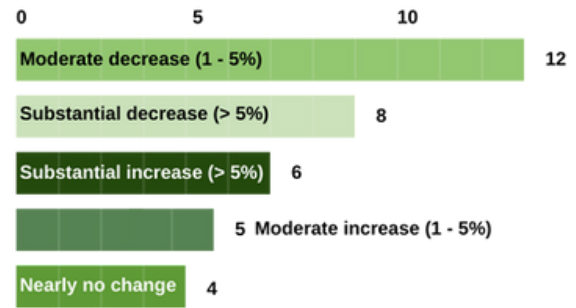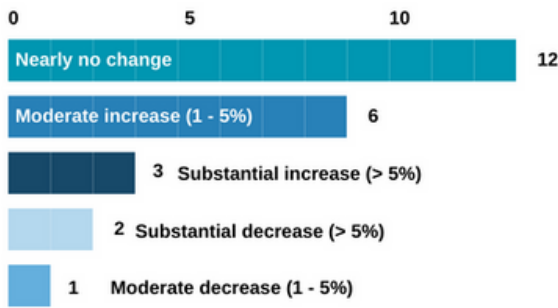WVLS

WVLS LIBRARIES - BEHIND THE SCENES

2023 WVLS LIBRARY FUNDING

OVERALL, LIBRARY FUNDING FOR OPERATIONAL INCOME INCREASED IN 2023

Funding from **local municipal governments increased 1.8%.**

Funding from **county governments decreased by 6.75%.**

This is how the change was distrbuted across libraries:

Nearly no change	12
Moderate increase (1 - 5%)	6
Substantial increase (> 5%)	3
Substantial decrease (> 5%)	2
Moderate decrease (1 - 5%)	1

Moderate decrease (1 - 5%)	12
Substantial decrease (> 5%)	8
Substantial increase (> 5%)	6
Moderate increase (1 - 5%)	5
Nearly no change	4

Donations, grants, and other sources of funds made up 16% of library operational income in 2023.

INFLATION

Over the last 20 years, the purchasing power of allocated operational budgets **decreased** in **2 counties**. Cumulatively, local municipal funding lost ground to inflation in **6 of 7 WVLS counties.**
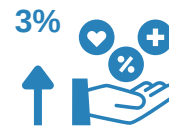
2023 WVLS LIBRARY EXPENDITURES

AS A WHOLE, LIBRARY OPERATIONAL EXPENDITURES INCREASED 6.9% IN 2023

Salary costs were up 9%, benefits up 3%, and materials spending decreased by 3.6%.

Increased personnel expenditures don't guarantee increased staffing at member libraries. Benefits costs have increased 20% since 2019. Inflation and a competitive job market have forced wages to dramatically increase to attract and retain qualified staff.
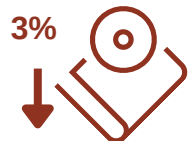
9% — Salary
3% — Benefits
3% — Materials

WVLS LIBRARY LEADERSHIP

BETWEEN 2019 AND 2023, 17 DIRECTORSHIPS TURNED OVER AMONG 25 WVLS LIBRARIES
3 libraries had multiple director turnovers in five years.

Libraries have worked to maintain levels of service amidst staff and leadership changes. **Director salaries struggle to stay competitive.**