

ARL Statistics 2025

Instructions and Definitions

The ARL Statistics survey describes collections, expenditures, service activities, and staffing levels in ARL member libraries.

Log in and submit your library's data online at <https://www.arlstatistics.org> by **March 31, 2026**.

Deadline Procedures

1. The data collection period for the ARL Statistics Survey will end on **March 31, 2026**. During this time, ARL member institutions will have the opportunity to submit their data according to the survey instructions. At the end of this period, data collection will be closed, and ARL will begin its data closeout procedures to move on to the data cleaning phase of the survey cycle. **Surveys not submitted by the end of the data collection period will be removed from the rest of the survey cycle.** ARL Statistics data for these institutions will therefore not be included in any subsequent publications, data downloads, analysis, or the ARL Investment Index.
 - a. It is important to note that for the ARL Statistics Survey, a complete survey submission must include **all** reporting branches (e.g., Law, Health Science) for an institution. **Unsubmitted branch surveys will result in omission for the entire institution.** It is the primary contact's responsibility to review all branch-level survey forms and ensure that all survey forms are fully submitted to ARL.
2. During the data cleaning process, ARL staff will continue to contact survey coordinators with corrections or clarifications as needed. However, ARL will now set firm deadlines for receiving any required corrections. **After the agreed-upon deadline has passed, ARL will only use data that has been verified and will exclude any data points for which necessary corrections, clarifications, etc. have not been received.**

Resources

If there are significant changes in the reported data compared to the previous year, provide explanations in footnotes. Utilize the [Percentages Used to Check Data](#)

[Accuracy](#) spreadsheet to assess whether percentage changes are within bounds or need to be addressed in your footnotes.

Survey Configuration

Data Entry Roles

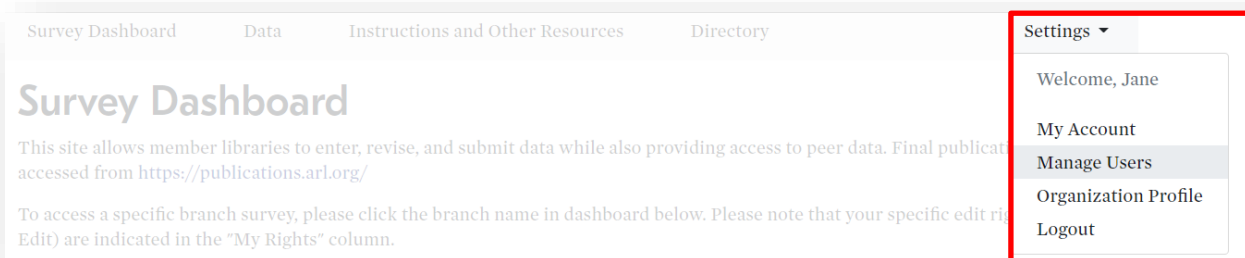
Primary contact

The primary contact is your institution's point person for the ARL Statistics survey. This person is responsible for creating accounts for data entry contacts and other users and for identifying the library branches that will report data. The primary contact has edit rights for all survey forms and is **exclusively responsible for reviewing and submitting data from all branches at your institution.**

Users

Other staff members at your institution who are involved with data submission can be added to the system as users. To add a new user with edit to one or more survey forms:

1. Add the user by clicking “Manage Users” under the Settings drop down and complete the form at the bottom of the screen.
2. Email stats@arl.org to inform ARL that the new contact needs data entry/edit rights.



Survey Set Up (primary contact)

At this stage, the primary contact should review the survey configuration and collaborate with ARL staff to make any desired modifications to the following:

1. Available survey forms
2. User data entry rights
3. Aggregation settings

To access your current survey configuration, click on the “view survey settings” on the survey dashboard. To add a new user, follow the instructions in the **Data Entry Roles** section above. For all other modifications, email stats@arl.org.

Data Submission Instructions

Complete Survey Forms

Complete the survey forms for all library branches listed on your dashboard, found on the ARL Statistics website after logging in. Depending on your library's configuration, there may be multiple survey forms on your data entry screen, including your main library, health sciences library, law library, special collections, and in some cases, regional branch library survey forms.

The screenshot shows the 'ARL Statistics 2025' dashboard. On the left, there are two bullet points linking to PDF instructions for 'main/general, law, health sciences, and special collections'. Below these is a link to 'ARL Statistics Instructions'. A callout box with an arrow points to a table, stating: 'Click the following hyperlinks to access branch-level survey forms'. The table has three columns: 'Branch', 'Status', and 'My Rights'. It lists four branches: Health Science Library, Law Library, Main Library, and Special Collections, all with a status of 'Awaiting Data' and an 'Edit' link.

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- [Web Data Entry Instructions \[pdf\]](#) *Used for "main"/general, law, health sciences, and special collections*
- [ARL Statistics Instructions \[pdf\]](#) *Used for "main"/general, law, health sciences, and special collections*

More information can be found at [ARL Statistics Instructions](#).

Primary contact: [Anam Mian](#)

Enter Data

Your surveys are open for data collection.

Branch	Status	My Rights
Health Science Library	Awaiting Data	Edit
Law Library	Awaiting Data	Edit
Main Library	Awaiting Data	Edit
Special Collections	Awaiting Data	Edit

Click the following hyperlinks to access branch-level survey forms

Different users at your institution may be responsible for completing each survey form. **However, it remains the primary contact's responsibility to ensure all forms are completed before submitting data to ARL.** When completing the survey forms, please follow the guidelines below:

- Enter data for all sub-questions related to the investment index (Q6–Q8, and Q9). **Do not use the manual override option for these questions.**
- Round all figures to the nearest whole number; refrain from using decimals.
- If an exact figure is unavailable, do not input zero. Instead, leave the question blank, and the primary contact will mark it as NA during the review stage.
- Access the definition and instructions for a specific question by clicking on the  icon.
- To add a footnote or document internal notes that persist year-over-year, select the  icon on the relevant row.

- f. For forced-choice questions (questions 3, 5, 14a, 15a, and 16a), choose the radio button corresponding to the choice you want to display in the publication. Your selections will automatically appear on the review screen.
- g. Save the survey form by clicking the **Save** button at the end of each section.

The screenshot shows a survey form with sections: Collections, Expenditures, and Personnel. Callouts point to specific features: 'Last Year's Data' points to the percentage change column; 'Footnotes' points to the footnote icon; 'Manual' points to the manual entry icon; and 'Information/Definition' points to the information/definition icon.

Question	Response	Last Year's Data	Footnotes	Manual	Information/Definition
Collections					
1) Titles held June 30	76,777	76,777 [-100%]	ⓘ	✎	
2) Volumes held June 30	22,434	22,434 [-100%]	ⓘ	✎	
3) Basis of volume count.	Physical		ⓘ	✎	
4) Electronic books (included in question 2)	333,333	333,333 [-100%]	ⓘ	✎	
Expenditures					
5) Are expenditure figures reported in Canadian dollars?	Yes		ⓘ	✎	
6) Total library expenditures (exclude fringe benefits) 7 + 8 + 9	131,422,003	131,422,003 [-100%]	ⓘ	✎	
7) Total library materials 2a + 2b + 2c	5,333,099	5,333,099 [-100%]	ⓘ	✎	
a) One-time resource purchases	4,444,333	4,444,333 [-100%]	ⓘ	✎	
b) Ongoing resource purchases (e.g., subscriptions, annual license fees)	444,433	444,433 [-100%]	ⓘ	✎	
c) Collection Support	444,333	444,333 [-100%]	ⓘ	✎	
8) Total salaries and wages 8.a + 8.b + 8.c	122,149,511	122,149,511 [-100%]	ⓘ	✎	
a) Professional staff	83,736,365	83,736,365 [-100%]	ⓘ	✎	
b) Support staff	39,383	39,383 [-100%]	ⓘ	✎	
c) Student assistants	3,939,393	3,939,393 [-100%]	ⓘ	✎	
9) Other operating expenditures	N/A	N/A	ⓘ	✎	
10) Fringe Benefits (provide a detailed footnote on what this includes)	N/A	N/A	ⓘ	✎	
11) Official designated percent	N/A	N/A	ⓘ	✎	
12) Consortia/Networks/Bibliographic Utilities Expenditures from External Sources	N/A	N/A	ⓘ	✎	
Personnel					
13) Total Staff, FTE 13.a + 13.b + 13.c	4,626,261	4,626,261 [-100%]	ⓘ	✎	
a) Professional staff, FTE	3,838,383	3,838,383 [-100%]	ⓘ	✎	
b) Support staff, FTE	393,939	393,939 [-100%]	ⓘ	✎	
c) Student assistants, FTE	393,939	393,939 [-100%]	ⓘ	✎	

Branch Library Data Entry

If your institution elects to report data for the ARL Health Sciences Statistics and Law Library Statistics publications, separate survey forms for each library will appear on your survey dashboard. To enter branch data correctly you must follow the aggregation settings that are set up in your account. If you're uncertain about your institution's aggregation setting, please email stats@arl.org for guidance.

Although the survey form allows for data to be entered for both main and branch libraries (such as art or engineering), an effort should be made to report figures for the main campus only. (The US National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) defines a branch institution (or regional campus) as "a campus or site of an educational institution that is not temporary, is located in a community beyond a reasonable commuting distance from its parent institution, and offers organized programs of study, not just courses"). If figures for libraries located at regional campuses are reported, specify which branch libraries

are included and which ones are excluded in the footnotes section of the main library survey form.

A branch library is defined as an auxiliary library service outlet with quarters separate from the central library of an institution, which has a basic collection of books and other materials, a regular staffing level, and an established schedule. A branch library is administered either by the central library or (as in the case of some law and medical libraries) through the administrative structure of other units within the university. Departmental study/reading rooms are not included.

Special Collections Data Entry

ARL continues to collect Special Collections data. Provide the following key pieces of information regarding your special collections: expenditures (questions 6–9), staffing (questions 13a–c), the number of library presentations to groups, and the number of participants in group presentations (questions 14–15). The Special Collections survey also requires answers to the following forced-choice questions: Q3, 5, 14a, 15a, and 16a. We are not collecting Special Collections data for some of the items to which these questions correspond. However, the system needs responses to the forced-choice questions so that you can submit your surveys. If a forced-choice question on the Special Collections survey is inapplicable, repeat the response that you chose for the Main Library survey.

Footnotes

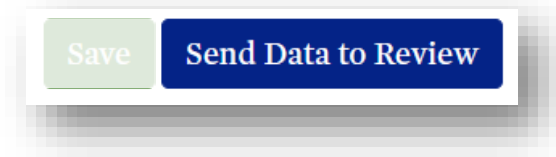
Explanatory footnotes will be included with the published statistics. Record in the footnote section any information that would clarify the figures submitted. Record the footnotes in a manner consistent with notes appearing in the published report, so that ARL staff can interpret the footnotes correctly. Use a concise sentence or paragraph format when writing footnotes; refrain from employing bullet points or creating a bulleted list. Footnotes must be entered in the footnote box attached to each question. Do not place notes in the response fields. Document local practice that differs from the definitions found in the instructions by including a footnote

To enter footnotes for individual questions, select the  icon on the appropriate row. **Any large shifts in reported data from last year should be explained with footnotes.** Refer to the [Percentages Used to Check Data Accuracy](#) spreadsheet to determine whether percentage changes are within bounds or need to be addressed in your footnotes.

Provide any additional notes you may have in the footnotes area at the end of each survey form, including:

- The ending date of your fiscal year (MM/DD/YYYY).
- Branch libraries **included** in the ARL Statistics. Report branch libraries included in the data reported on each survey form.
- Branch libraries **excluded** from the ARL Statistics. It is not necessary to state that law and health sciences libraries are reported separately.

After completing data entry for a survey form, click **Send Data to Review** at the bottom of the survey form. After the **Send Data to Review** button is clicked on all survey forms the system will take you back to the survey dashboard.



If applicable, proceed to the next survey form for your library by clicking the next form in the Branch Section of the survey dashboard.

Review and Submit Data (primary contact)

After all branch survey forms have been completed and sent to review, the primary contact must review the data across all forms and submit all data to ARL. Click on the **Go to Review and Submit** button on the survey dashboard. Use the [Percentages Used to Check Data Accuracy](#) spreadsheet to determine whether percentage changes are within bounds or need to be addressed in your footnotes.

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More information can be found at [ARL Statistics Instructions](#).

Primary contact: [Anam Mian](#)

Data Collected/Not Reviewed

All branches have indicated they have entered their data. You now have to review how the data will appear in the publications and submit the final summary to ARL.

[Go To Review and Submit](#)

Below are links to the individual branch surveys for reference.

- [Health Science Library](#)
- [Law Library](#)
- [Main Library](#)
- [Special Collections](#)

[View survey settings](#)

You will be presented with the following page, which shows the aggregated data that will be published in the ARL Statistics publication (see the “ARL Statistics Publication” tab) along with the Law and Health Sciences data on their respective tabs.

NOTE: For most member libraries, the data on this tab will be the sum of Main + Law + HSL.

ARL Statistics Publication Health Sciences Publication Law Publication Special Collections Publication Footnotes						
Question	This Year's Data	Last Year's Data	% Changed	Lower Bound %	Upper Bound %	NA/UA

At the end of each response row is a checkbox in a column marked NA/UA (“Not Applicable/Unavailable”). Check this box **only** if you wish for the data displayed for this question to appear as ‘NA/UA’ in the publication. Responses marked as NA/UA are not included in publication. Otherwise, leave the checkbox blank.

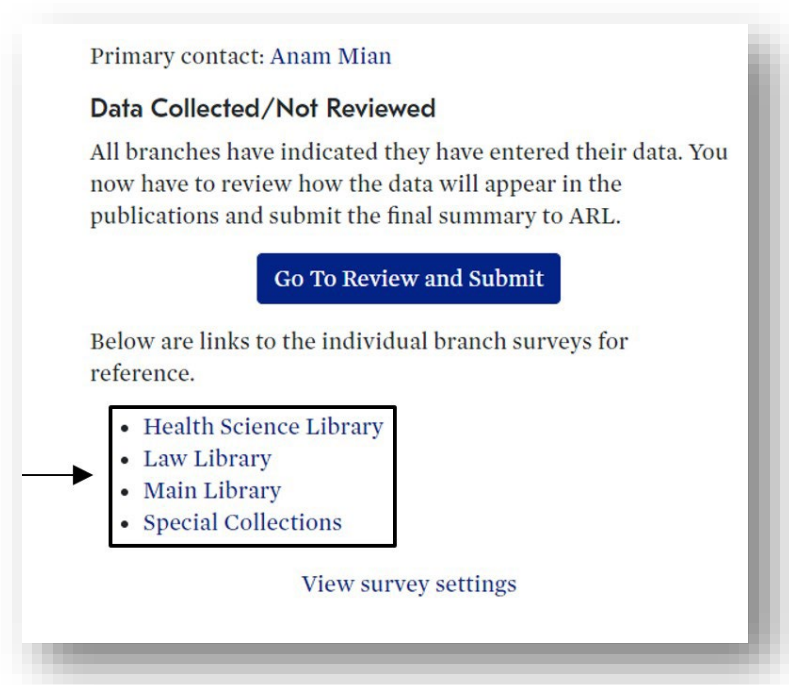
ARL Statistics Publication	Health Sciences Publication	Law Publication	Special Collections Publication	Footnotes		
Question	This Year's Data	Last Year's Data	% Changed	Lower Bound %	Upper Bound %	NA/UA
Collections						
1) Titles held June 30	53,500	5,554,569	-99.0			☐

As you complete your review of each tab, click the **Save** button at the bottom of the page.

Go through each tab and review your institution's data:

1. Review the response for each question and compare with the previous year's total. Use the [Percentages Used to Check Data Accuracy](#) spreadsheet to determine whether percentage changes are within bounds or need to be

addressed in your footnotes.



2. If you find data that needs adjusting, return to the appropriate individual branch survey by clicking on the branch name and making the necessary corrections. When you have finalized all data for your institution, click the **Submit all tabs to ARL** button at the bottom of the page. This step cannot be reversed.



After clicking **Submit all tabs to ARL**, you will see **Survey complete and submitted to ARL** displayed under the Survey Dashboard. This means that you have closed the survey for your institution. No further edits can be made via the arlstatistics.org website, but you will still be able to view the branch forms and summaries if needed in the [Data Repository](#).

ARL Statistics 2025

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- [ARL Statistics Instructions](#) [pdf] *Used for "main"/general, law, health sciences, and special collections*

More information can be found at [ARL Statistics Instructions](#).

Primary contact: [Anam Mian](#)

Survey complete and submitted to ARL

This survey has been submitted to ARL. You may still be contacted for details or corrections. To see this data, please go to the [Data Repository](#).

*As a reminder, data collection will be closed as of **March 31, 2026** when ARL will begin its data closeout procedures and move on to the data-cleaning phase of the survey cycle. Surveys not submitted by the end of the data collection period will not be included in any subsequent publications, data downloads, analysis, or the ARL Investment Index.

You can download copies of footnotes submitted by your institution in previous years in the [ARL Statistics data repository](#).

Definitions

Collections

Question 1. Titles Held. The ANSI/NISO Z39.7-2004 definition for title is as follows:

The designation of a separate bibliographic whole, whether issued in one or several volumes ... Titles are defined according to the Anglo-American Cataloging Rules. A book or serial title may be distinguished from other such titles by its unique International Standard Book Number (ISBN) or International Standard Serial Number (ISSN). This definition applies equally to print, audiovisual, and other library materials. For unpublished works, the term is used to designate a manuscript collection or an archival record series. Two subscriptions to Science magazine, for example, are counted as one title. When vertical file materials are counted, a file folder is considered a title.

Report the total number of titles managed and maintained by the library that are cataloged and made ready for use. Deduplicate titles by counting multiple copies of the same manifestation as one title. Identical content in different formats should not be deduplicated, and each format should be counted as a different title. For example, a serial title available in print, microform and online would be counted as three titles. Count different editions and versions of the same work as separate titles since they denote depth in the collection. Counting the 245 field when the library provides stewardship for those resources may be sufficient.

Titles held includes:

- Print and electronic serials and monographs
- Other virtual serial volumes
- E-books
- Print & electronic government documents (monographs and serials)
- Microforms
- Computer files
- Manuscripts and archives
- Audiovisual materials (cartographic, graphic, audio, film and video, etc.).
- Gifts
- Electronic theses & dissertations
- Special collections materials that have been cataloged and made ready for use*
- Digitized content from your collection that is accessible under current copyright law
- For demand driven acquisition report titles only after they are purchased. If a library does not provide access to a title, do not report it.
- All other cataloged, locally digitized, and licensed resources
- Include all materials where financial contribution has been made even if partial.

Titles Held excludes:

- Titles for which your library is not providing sustained stewardship and maintenance
- HathiTrust, CRL, Internet Archive, etc. unless your library owns the digitized item and it is accessible under current copyright law
- Uncataloged items

*Special collection materials in particular constitute resources of national/international distinction and the breadth and depth of these resources is a key indicator tied to the mission of research libraries.

Note: Titles held is not related to the items reported under Volumes held defined prior to 2011–12.

Question 2. Volumes in Library. Use the ANSI/NISO Z39.7-2004 definition for volume as follows:

a single physical unit of any printed, typewritten, handwritten, mimeographed, or processed work, distinguished from other units by a separate binding, encasement, portfolio, or other clear distinction, which has been cataloged, classified, and made ready for use, and which is typically the unit used to charge circulation transactions. Either a serial volume is bound, or it comprises the serial issues that would be bound together if the library bound all serials.

Volumes held is a count of “print only” items and e-books. Report the total number of volumes managed and maintained by the library that are cataloged and made ready for use. If either formulas or sampling are used for deriving your count, indicate in a footnote.

Volumes held includes:

- Print monographic volumes
- Bound volumes of periodicals/serials
- Print-based government documents **
- Electronic monographic government documents (also reported in Q4)
- E-books that are not serial publications (also reported in Q4) ***
- Electronic theses & dissertations (also reported in Q4)
- Volumes purchased collectively where the cost is shared at the time of purchase

Volumes held excludes:

- Nonprint materials, with the exception of e-books,
- Electronic serials and other virtual serial volumes (report in Q1),
- Electronic serial government documents (report in Q1),
- Microforms (report in Q1),
- Maps (report in Q1),
- Uncataloged items

** Include government document volumes that are accessible through the library's catalogs regardless of whether they are separately shelved. "Classified" includes documents arranged by Superintendent of Documents, CODOC, or similar numbers. "Cataloged" includes documents for which records are provided by the library or downloaded from other sources into the library's card or online catalogs. Documents should, to the extent possible, be counted as they would if they were in bound volumes (e.g., 12 issues of an annual serial would be one or two volumes). Title and piece counts should not be considered the same as volume counts. If a volume count has not been kept, it may be estimated through sampling a representative group of title records and determining the corresponding number of volumes, then extrapolating to the rest of the collection. As an alternative, an estimate may be made using the following formulae:

52 documents pieces per foot
10 "traditional" volumes per foot
5.2 documents pieces per volume

*** Include e-book units, as long as these e-books are owned or leased and have been cataloged by your library. Include electronic books purchased through vendors such as NetLibrary® or Books 24x7, and e-books that come as part of aggregate services. Include individual titles of e-book sets that are treated as individual reference sources. Include locally digitized electronic books and electronic theses and dissertations. Provide a footnote reporting the products and the number of titles in a note.

Question 3. Basis of Volume Count. A physical count is a piece count; a bibliographic count is a catalog record count.

Question 4. E-books (included in Q2, Volumes Held). Report the number of electronic books held. Include electronic theses and dissertations. **Exclude electronic**

serials and other virtual serial volumes. This number is a subset of Volumes Held reported in Q2. See the definition of Volumes Held above for more guidance.

Expenditures

Questions 6–12. Expenditures. Report all expenditures of funds that come to the library from the regular institutional budget, and from sources such as research grants, special projects, gifts and endowments, and fees for service. (For **Salaries and wages** include non-library funds; see specific instructions below). Do not report encumbrances of funds that have not yet been expended. Canadian libraries should report expenditures in Canadian dollars. (For your information, if interested in determining figures in U.S. dollars, divide Canadian dollar amounts by 1.3954, the annual exchange rate calculated from the Bank of Canada’s monthly average exchange rates for the period July 2024–June 2025.) Round figures to the nearest dollar.

Report figures for the following categories of expenditures:

Question 7. Total Library Materials Expenditures.

Question 7a. One-time library materials expenditures. Report expenditures for all library materials that are non-subscription, one-time, or monographic in nature; include expenditures for software and machine-readable materials considered part of the collections. Examples include periodical backfiles, literature collections, one-time costs for JSTOR membership, etc.

Question 7b. Ongoing library materials expenditures. Report subscription expenditures (or those which are expected to be ongoing commitments) for serial and other publications; include online searches of remote databases such as OCLC FirstSearch®, DIALOG®, Lexis-Nexis®, etc. Examples include paid subscriptions for print and electronic journals and indexes/abstracts available via the Internet, CD-ROM serials, and annual access fees for resources purchased on a “one-time” basis, such as literature collections, JSTOR membership, etc.

Question 7c. Collection support. Include miscellaneous expenditures as well as document delivery/interlibrary loan. Include materials funds expenditures not included in questions (7a)–(7b), e.g., expenditures for bibliographic utilities, literature searching, security devices, memberships for the purposes of publications, etc. List categories, with amounts, in a footnote. Note: If your library does **not** use materials funds for non-materials expenditures—i.e., if those expenditures are included in “Other Operating Expenditures”—report 0. Include all Contract Binding expenditures—that is, only **contract** expenditures for binding done **outside** the library. If all binding is done in-house, state this fact and give in-house expenditures in a footnote; do not include personnel expenditures in this question. Some computer hardware and software expenditures may be reported here if they are expended from collection funds.

Question 8. Salaries and wages. Exclude fringe benefits. If professional, support staff and student salaries cannot be separated, check the Manual Override box and enter the total.

Question 8c. Salaries and wages: Student Assistants. Report 100% of student wages regardless of budgetary source of funds. Include federal and local funds for work-study students.

Question 9. Other operating expenditures. Exclude expenditures for buildings, maintenance, and fringe benefits. Include computer hardware and software. Do not include personnel expenditures in this question.

Question 10. Fringe Benefits. Include here the dollar amount of fringe benefits. If fringe benefits are not paid from the library budget provide an estimate. Use the institution's official designated percent for your estimation. For example, if the library budget for salaries and wages is \$2,000,000 and the official designated percent is 30%, multiply $\$2,000,000 \times .30 = \$600,000$ and report the estimated amount of \$600,000. As another example, if the official designated percent is 30% for professional staff and 20% for support staff, estimate the dollar amount by multiplying the salaries for professional staff and the salaries for support staff with the appropriate percent and sum the totals.

Question 11. Official designated percent. Report the official designated percent for fringe benefits for the institution. If the official designated percent is 30% for one type of employee and 20% for another type, report here the designated percent for professional library staff. Provide explanatory footnotes as needed.

Question 12. Consortia/Networks/Bibliographic Utilities Expenditures from External Sources. If the library receives access to computer files, electronic serials or search services **through one or more centrally-funded system or consortial arrangements for which it does not pay fully and/or directly** (for example, funding is provided by the state on behalf of all members), enter the amount paid by external bodies on its behalf. If the specific dollar amount is not known, but the total student FTE for the consortium and amount spent for the academic members are known, divide the overall amount spent by the institution's share of the total student FTE.

Personnel

Questions 13–13c. Personnel. Report the number of FTE (full-time equivalent) staff in filled positions, or positions that are only temporarily vacant. ARL defines temporarily vacant positions as positions that were vacated during the fiscal year for which ARL data were submitted, for which there is a firm intent to refill, and for which there are expenditures for salaries reported in the Expenditures section.

Include cost recovery positions and staff hired for special projects and grants, and provide an explanatory footnote indicating the number of such staff. If such staff cannot be included, provide a footnote. To compute full-time equivalents of part-time employees and student assistants, take the **total** number of hours per week (or year) worked by part-time employees in each category and divide it by the number of hours considered by the reporting library to be a full-time work week (or year). Round figures to the nearest whole numbers.

Exclude maintenance and custodial staff.

Question 13a. Professional Staff. Since the criteria for determining professional status vary among libraries, there is no attempt to define the term “professional.” Each library should report those staff members it considers professional, including, when appropriate, staff who are not librarians in the strict sense of the term, for example computer experts, systems analysts, or budget officers.

Question 13b. Support Staff. Report the total FTE (see *Personnel*, above) of staff are not included in *Professional Staff*.

Question 13c. Student Assistants. Report the total FTE (see *Personnel*, above) of student assistants employed on an hourly basis whose wages are paid from funds under library control **or from a budget other** than the library’s, including federal work-study programs.

Instruction

Questions 14–15. Instruction. Sampling based on a typical week may be used to extrapolate TO A FULL YEAR. Indicate if responses are based on sampling.

Question 14. Presentations to Groups. Report the total number of sessions during the year of presentations made as part of formal bibliographic instruction programs and through other planned class presentations, orientation sessions, and tours. If the library sponsors multi-session or credit courses that meet several times over the course of a semester, each session should be counted. Presentations to groups may be for either bibliographic instruction, cultural, recreational, or educational purposes. Presentations both on and off the premises should be included as long as they are sponsored by the library. Do not include meetings sponsored by other groups using library meeting rooms. Do not include training for library staff; the purpose of this question is to capture information about the services the library provides for its clientele. Indicate if the figure is based on sampling.

Question 15. Participants in Group Presentations. Report the total number of attendees in all group presentations (as defined in *Presentations to Groups*, above). For multi-session classes with a constant enrollment, count each person only once. Indicate if the figure is based on sampling. Use a footnote to describe any special situations.

NOTE: Personal, one-to-one instruction in the use of sources should be counted as reference transactions as described in the next section.

Reference

Question 16. Reference Transactions. Report the total number of reference transactions.

A reference transaction is:

An information contact that involves the knowledge, use, recommendations, interpretation, or instruction in the use [or creation of] one or more information sources by a member of the library staff. The term includes information and

referral service. Information sources include (a) printed and nonprinted materials; (b) machine-readable databases (including computer-assisted instruction); (c) the library's own catalogs and other holdings records; (d) other libraries and institutions through communication or referral; and (e) persons both inside and outside the library. When a staff member uses information gained from previous use of information sources to answer a question, the [transaction] is reported as a [reference transaction] even if the source is not consulted again. [Note: this is a modified ANSI/NISO Z39.7-2004 definition for an information request.]

If a contact includes both reference and directional services, it should be reported as one reference transaction. Include virtual reference transactions (e.g., email, WWW form, chat). Duration should not be an element in determining whether a transaction is a reference transaction. **Sampling based on a typical week may be used to extrapolate TO A FULL YEAR.** Indicate if the figure is based on sampling.

EXCLUDE SIMPLE DIRECTIONAL QUESTIONS. A directional transaction is an information contact that facilitates the logistical use of the library and that does not involve the knowledge, use, recommendations, interpretation, or instruction in the use or creation of information sources other than those that describe the library, such as schedules, floor plans, and handbooks.

Circulation

Question 17. Initial circulations (excluding reserves). Count the number of initial circulations during the fiscal year from the general collection for use usually (although not always) outside the library. **Do not count renewals. Exclude e-books.** Include circulations to and from remote storage facilities for library users (i.e., do not include transactions reflecting transfers or stages of technical processing). Count the total number of items lent, not the number of borrowers.

Use of Electronic Resources

Usage statistics for electronic resources are generally provided by vendors through COUNTER-compliant reports. As of May 2023, Release 5.1 is the current [COUNTER Code of Practice](#) (see the [Project COUNTER Release 5.1 Friendly Guide](#)). When vendors do not provide COUNTER Release 5 compliant reports, libraries may report usage using other established methods for monitoring digital and electronic resource use.

Question 18. Number of successful full-text article requests (journals). Items reported should follow definitions as defined in the COUNTER 5 Code of Practice (The COUNTER 5 report that corresponds to Question 18 is *TR_J3 Journal Usage by Access Type*. The metric from this COUNTER 5 report is *Unique Item Requests*).

In a footnote, please include the types of resources for which you are reporting data. It is recommended that ONLY data that follow the COUNTER definitions be reported. Any exceptions should be documented in a footnote.

Question 19. Number of regular searches (databases). Items reported should follow definitions as defined in the COUNTER 5 Code of Practice. The COUNTER 5 report that corresponds to Question 19 is *DR_D1 Database Search and Item Usage*. The metric from this COUNTER 5 report is *Searches_Regular*. If this report is unavailable, the *PR_P1* report can be used as an alternative, with the *PR_P1 Searches Platform* metric.

In a footnote, please include the types of resources for which you are reporting data. Please be sure to indicate whether you used *DR_D1* or *PR_P1*. It is recommended that ONLY data that follow the COUNTER definitions be reported. Any exceptions should be documented in a footnote.

Question 20. Number of federated searches (databases). Items reported should follow definitions as defined in the COUNTER 5 Code of Practice. The COUNTER 5 report that corresponds to Question 20 is *DR_D1 Searches_Federated*. Metric options include “*Searches_Federated*,” “*Total_Item_Requests* for full text databases,” and “*Total_Item_Investigations* for non-full text databases.” If a combination of these metrics must be used to capture all the federated search data at your institution, please sum the numbers accordingly, provided the information is not duplicative, and indicate in a footnote. The goal is to capture the totality of federated searches.

In a footnote, please include the types of resources for which you are reporting data, and please specify the COUNTER 5 metric used to report this value. It is recommended that ONLY data that follow the COUNTER definitions be reported. Any exceptions should be documented in a footnote.

Interlibrary Loans

Questions 21–22. Interlibrary Loans. Report the number of requests for material (both returnables and non-returnables) provided to other libraries and the number of filled requests received from other libraries or providers. For both of these figures, include originals, photocopies, and materials sent by fax or other forms of electronic transmission. Include patron-initiated transactions. Exclude requests for materials locally owned and available on the shelves or electronically. Do not include transactions between libraries covered by this questionnaire.

Gate Count

Question 23. Report the total annual gate count.

Annual gate count is:

The number of persons who physically enter the library in a year. The total includes persons who visit in groups and persons who visit for library-sponsored programs. It is understood that a single person may be counted more than once if they enter the library multiple times. Include annexes and other such facilities if they provide public access. If the library is virtual or entirely electronic, leave the line blank. [Note: this definition is modified from the ANSI/NISO Z39.7-2013 and Academic Library Survey 2012 definitions for gate count.]

If the library uses an electronic counter that captures entrances and exits, divide by two to obtain the entries only. If the library does not use an electronic counter, sampling based on a typical week may be used to extrapolate to a full year.

University Characteristics: Doctor's Degrees, Faculty, and Enrollment

Question 24. Doctor's Degrees. Report the number awarded during the 2025 fiscal year. For the purposes of this report, Doctor's Degrees includes research/scholarship degrees and professional practice degrees (e.g., Ph.D., D.Ed., D.P.A., M.D., J.D., etc.) as enumerated in the U.S. Department of Education's Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS). Any exceptions should be footnoted.

Question 25. Doctor's Degrees Fields. For the purposes of this report, Doctor's Degrees fields are defined as the specific discipline specialties enumerated in the U.S. Department of Education's Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) "Completions" Survey. Any exceptions should be footnoted.

Question 26. Instructional Faculty. Instructional faculty are defined by the U.S. Dept. of Education as:

members of the instruction/research staff who are employed full-time as defined by the institution, including faculty with released time for research and faculty on sabbatical leave.

Full-time counts generally exclude faculty who are employed to teach fewer than two semesters, three quarters, two trimesters, or two four-month sessions; replacements for faculty on sabbatical leave or leave without pay; faculty for preclinical and clinical medicine; faculty who are donating their services; faculty who are members of military organizations and paid on a different pay scale from civilian employees; academic officers, whose primary duties are administrative; and graduate students who assist in the instruction of courses. Make sure the number reported, and the basis for counting, are consistent with those for 2024 (unless in previous years faculty were counted who should have been excluded according to the above definition). Footnote any discrepancies.

Questions 27–30. Enrollment. U.S. libraries should use the Fall 2024 enrollment figures reported to the Department of Education on the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System survey. Check these figures against the enrollment figures reported to ARL last year to ensure consistency and accuracy. NOTE: In the past, the number of students reported was FTE; the number now reported to IPEDS is a head count of students. Canadian libraries should note that the category "graduate students" as reported here includes all post-baccalaureate students.

Submit the completed questionnaire
by **March 31, 2026**

For assistance, please email stats@arl.org
Tel. (202) 296-2296

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