

From Awareness to Funding

Voter Perceptions and Support of Public Libraries in 2018

A new survey of US voters commissioned by OCLC, the American Library Association, and its Public Library Association division offers valuable insights on current voter perceptions as public libraries continue to strategize for the future. Read on for a selection of key survey findings.

Public libraries are essential to communities



55%

view the public library as an essential local institution



58%

believe public libraries advance education for any community

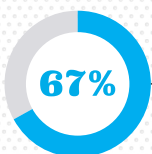
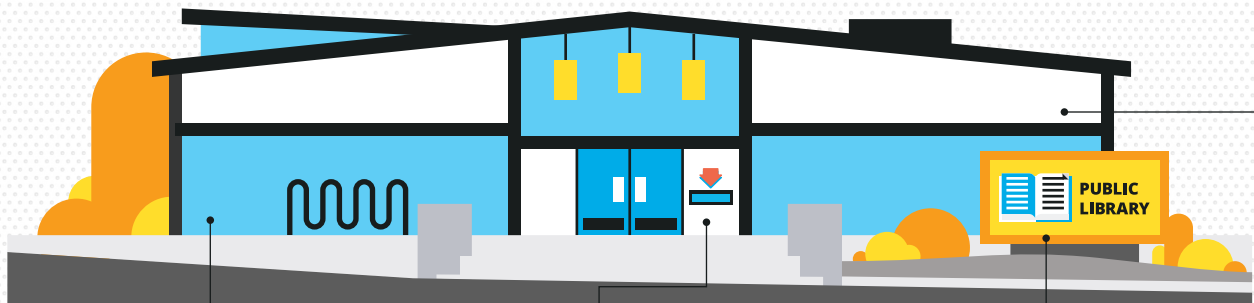


44%

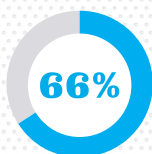
view the library as a gathering place for community members

2 in 3 voters

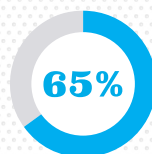
place high importance on foundational library services, including:



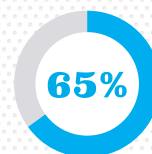
quiet areas



books and technology



a broad range of materials to explore



computers and internet

Voters frequently visit libraries in person and online



70%

of voters have visited a public library in the last year, an average of

8.6 visits



52%

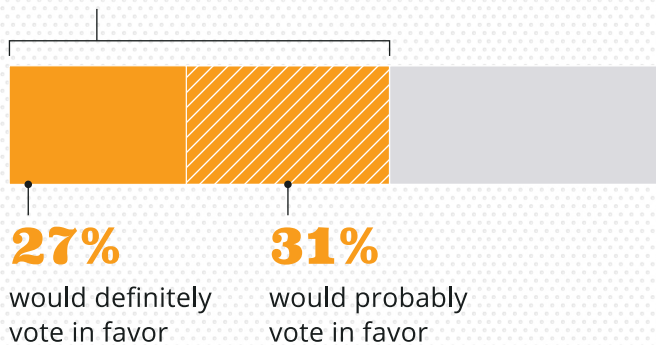
have visited the library's website in the last year, an average of

7.6 visits

Majority of voters support local funding for libraries

58%

would vote favorably for libraries at the ballot box



Most voters are confused about library funding sources



59%

of voters think most library funding comes from nonlocal sources (e.g., state, federal, donations, fines, and fees)



In reality,

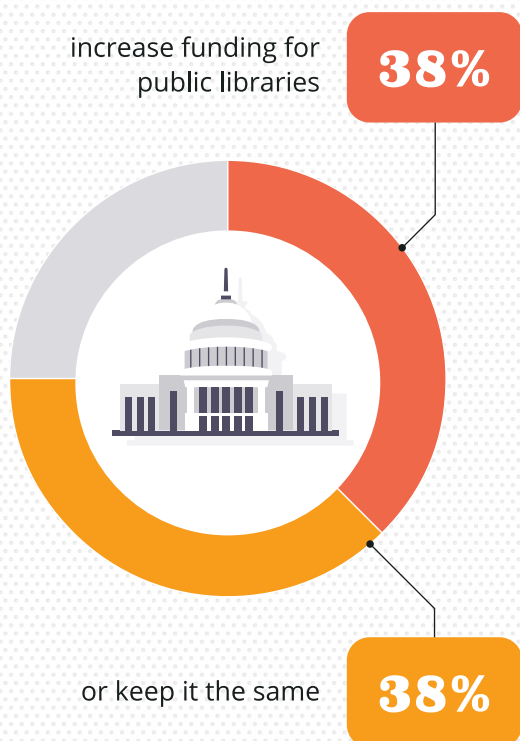
86%

of funding comes from local sources (IMLS, 2015)

Voters support other funding options

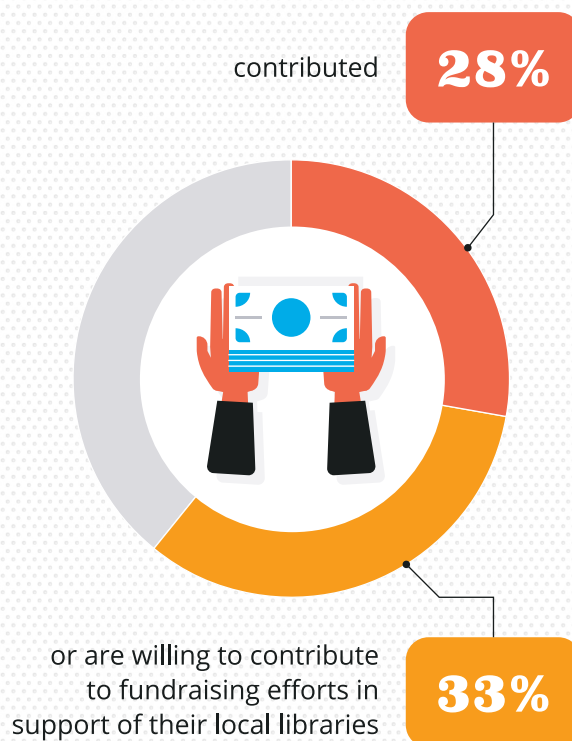
Most voters support federal funding

76% say the federal government should either...



The majority of voters are willing to donate money to libraries

61% have either...



Read the full report to learn more!

Visit oc.lc/awareness2018

to discover the variations in attitudes, perceptions, and behaviors among different segments of the voting public over the past ten years and how that drives their support for libraries today.



Sources:

Data from a survey panel of 2,000 US voters ages 18 to 69 living in areas with populations of fewer than 300,000, administered by Leo Burnett USA between September 29 and October 4, 2017. This research and report is a project led by OCLC, the American Library Association, and its Public Library Association division.

The Institute of Museum and Library Services, 2015 library funding data

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