

Library Futures

2022 Annual Report

A note from Jennie Rose Halperin, Director

Last year, Library Futures became an even bigger player in the fight for balanced digital rights. Well into our second year, we've reached thousands through our events, talks, research and legal briefs, and advocacy campaigns. Since the beginning, our goal has been to tackle the cutting-edge issues around technology and access, promoting access to information with an emphasis on equity and fighting corporate enclosure.

Library Futures builds connections between library practitioners, policymakers, advocates, and technologists, promoting new possibilities for preservation of, and unfettered access to, information. Our work is situated at the front end of the curve, tackling key and emerging issues while promoting the rights of libraries to provide equitable, open access to culture in the service of the public good.

I am proud that we move with such decisiveness and thoughtfulness. Settled into our new home at the Engelberg Center on Innovation Law & Policy at NYU Law and with a two year capacity-building grant from the Mellon Foundation, we are better positioned than ever to tackle the most pressing information issues facing the communities we serve.

Libraries face unprecedented challenges, and together we can rise to meet them in an uncertain landscape of censorship, corporatized knowledge systems, anti-democratic legislation, and court decisions that privilege profits over people. But we can only do it together. Thank you for your support this year, and in the years to come.



Improving Digital Access to Local News Through Library-Newsroom Collaboration

Library Futures completed a project with the Albany Public Library, Hearken, and the Albany Times Union to improve digital access to local news through collaboration with libraries and newsrooms. This three month pilot project established ties between the library, newsroom, and patrons. The program used public-powered journalism, a method that engages communities directly with journalists to cover otherwise overlooked or underreported stories. The aim was to explore possibilities for expanding equitable digital access to local news through library-newsroom collaboration with an emphasis on sustainable, low-tech solutions, library ownership of digital materials, and long-term relationship-building.

Amicus Briefs



Our amicus program filed three briefs in national cases, including at the Supreme Court. Led by Board Chair and Fellow Kyle K. Courtney and Policy Fellow Juliya Ziskina, the briefs have been called ‘the most collaborative library briefs in history,’ and were supported by organizations like the American Library Association, Software Preservation Network, Every Library, and Readers First.

Opposition to SMART Copyright Act

This bill, which deputizes the Copyright Office to designate certain “technological measures” (i.e., filters and content monitoring software) that every digital platform or website hosting user-uploaded content must use was introduced in May. We joined with Electronic Frontier Foundation, Public Knowledge, Author’s Alliance, Internet Archive, among others, to object in the form of a public letter to protest the onerous burden on libraries.

Opposition to the JCPA

In the form of opeds, letters to Congress, and news conferences, Library Futures was a leading voice in the opposition to The Journalism Competition and Preservation Act, which would alter the free and open nature of the internet.



4

*Research
papers*

18

Webinars

3

*Amicus
Briefs*

Mitigating the Library Ebook Conundrum Policy Paper

Library Futures supports legislation that aims to equitize the eBook marketplace. In this paper, we propose model legislation grounded in state consumer protection, state contract law, state procurement law, and contract preemption.



10+

*Conference
presentations*



1000+

*Webinar
participants*

Joint Campaign with SPARC to Halt Wiley E-Textbook Removal



In late August, just before the start of the Fall 2022 school semester, Wiley Publishing Company abruptly withdrew 1,379 multidisciplinary titles from Proquest, a vendor for university ebook collections.

Library Futures and SPARC launched a joint campaign to protest this removal and hold vendors to account for making unilateral decisions that harm learning and information accessibility for all students.

We Demand Accountability from Hoopla and Overdrive

Collection development is a core responsibility of librarians and our vendors must take this responsibility as seriously as professional librarians take it. That begins with transparency about how materials are finding their way into the collections of services like Hoopla. Together with Library Freedom Project, we demand that Hoopla provide the library community with answers about their content selection process, including both the automated and human elements involved.

Databroker Dragnet: LexisNexis, ICE, and How Librarians Are Fighting Back

Data brokers like LexisNexis and Thomson Reuters are increasingly contracting with Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) to sell databases full of personal information for use in deportations. This campaign with Mijente and Library Freedom Project kicked off with a webinar and letter writing.



**too
many to
count!**

*Communities
engaged with*

Educational resources

2022

Copyright Booth to Go



Community Fellow Emily Finch converted the American Library Association Conference copyright booth into a portable Open Educational Resource that can be used anywhere.

More of our work...

2022

Month by month

January: We are co-hosts and Zine Makers for Public Domain Day in front of an audience of thousands

February: We release our first insights report from our work with the Albany Public Library

April: We hold our first in person event in NYC with METRO Library Council and the Engelberg Center

May: We welcome our first fellows for digital equity

June: Director Jennie Rose Halperin presents at the US Book Show

Month by month, continued

July: We kick off our event series Exploring the Decentralized Web with METRO Library Council and the Internet Archive

August: Director Jennie Rose Halperin is named Chair of the National Information Standards Organization's Controlled Digital Lending Working Group

September: We establish our new home at the Engelberg Center for Technology Law & Policy

October: Kyle K. Courtney receives IP3 Award from Public Knowledge, Library Futures attends the Library Leaders Forum

November: Library Futures releases our RELX: Don't Do It T-Shirt

December: The Mellon Foundation grants \$1 million to support libraries in the Digital Age

We were featured in...

Washington Post, Wall Street Journal, Wired, Vice, Pew Trusts, Albany Times Union, Sludge, Bloomberg Law, NPR, Publisher's Weekly, The Hill, and American Libraries Magazine

Thank you to our donors!

In 2022, the Mellon Foundation announced their generous support of \$1 million, as well as more than a dozen individual donors. Please consider supporting Library Futures this year with a tax deductible donation or foundation contribution.

Special thank you to our staff and community.