

Public
Libraries
of New Zealand

2024-25

NATIONAL DATA COLLECTION **ANALYSIS AND INSIGHT REPORT**

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THE YEAR IN REVIEW



The year ending 30 June 2025 highlights a clear trend: New Zealand's public libraries are being used more than ever. As demand for services, spaces, and digital resources continues to grow, many libraries are doing more with less, demonstrating both their resilience and their ability to adapt to the changing needs of their communities.

With more than 1.5 million active borrowers - which is 28.5% of New Zealand's population - public libraries remain one of New Zealand's most valued and widely used public services. During the past year, libraries welcomed 28.6 million physical visitors and 32.8 million virtual visitors, reflecting their role as both trusted community spaces and essential digital gateways.

This impact is delivered through a network of 313 public libraries and 26 mobile libraries, providing a combined 13,064 hours of service every week.

Together, they ensure communities across Aotearoa have access to information, learning, and connection, regardless of where they live.

Public libraries also play a vital role in promoting equity and inclusion. Every public library in New Zealand provides free internet access, helping bridge the digital divide and ensuring everyone can participate in an increasingly digital world. Libraries also offer printing, scanning, and copying services, alongside knowledgeable staff who support customers to build confidence and digital skills.

This commitment extends beyond library walls, with 91% of libraries providing home delivery services, ensuring those who are unable to visit in person can continue to access resources and remain connected to their communities.

1.5

MILLION ACTIVE BORROWERS

+61

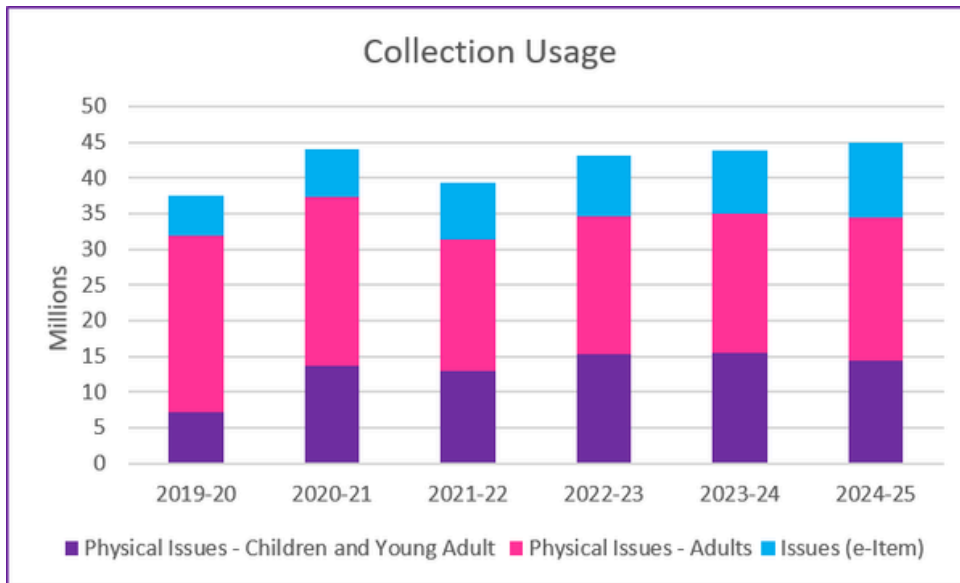
MILLION VISITS

91%

LIBRARIES PROVIDING
HOME DELIVERY
SERVICES

Collection Size, Use & Programmes

New Zealand libraries are home to an extensive collection of over 9.7 million physical items and 4.3 million e-Items. This equals 9.4 items per active borrower. Borrowing activity has continued to trend upward with 45 million items loaned this year. This includes 14.3 million children's physical items and 10.4 million loans of e-Items, representing 28.9% and 21.1% of total borrowing respectively.



14.1

MILLION ITEMS AVAILABLE

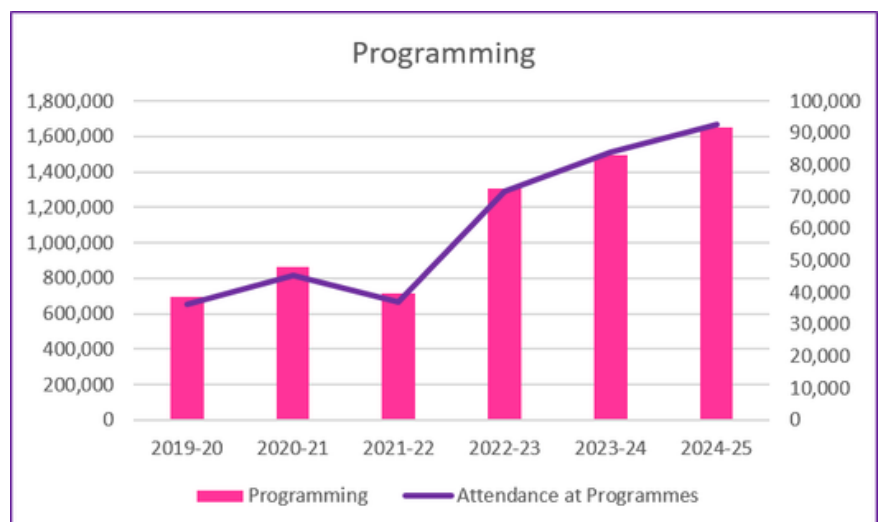
33

ITEMS BORROWED PER
ACTIVE BORROWER

Programming

Programming efforts have also expanded significantly, with 91,850 programmes delivered this year - an increase of 137% since 2019.

These initiatives have attracted over 1.6 million attendees, averaging 18 participants per session, and exemplify libraries' commitment to fostering learning and community engagement.



Fine Free Libraries

With a goal of having a Fine Free Aotearoa, as of 30 June 2025, 98% of libraries are fine-free for children's materials, and 90% have eliminated fines for all materials.



Libraries with No Late Fees

Ashburton Public Library
Auckland Libraries
Buller District Library
Carterton District Library
Central Hawke's Bay District Libraries
Central Otago District Libraries
Christchurch City Libraries
Clutha District Libraries
Dunedin Public Libraries
Far North District Libraries
Gore District Libraries
Hastings District Library
Hauraki District Libraries
HB Williams Memorial Library
Horowhenua District Library
Hurunui District Libraries
Hutt City Libraries
Invercargill City Libraries
Kaikōura District Library
Kaipara District Library
Kāpiti Coast District Libraries
Kawerau District Library
Libraries Tararua
Manawatū District Libraries
Masterton District Library
Matamata-Piako District Libraries
Napier Libraries
Nelson Public Libraries
Ōpōtiki District Library
Ōtorohanga District Library

Palmerston North City Library
Porirua Public Library
Puke Ariki - New Plymouth District Council
Queenstown Lake District Libraries
Rangitikei District Council Libraries
Rotorua Library Te Aka Mauri
Ruapehu District Libraries
Selwyn Library
Southland District Libraries
South Taranaki District Libraries
South Waikato District Libraries
South Wairarapa District Libraries
Stratford District and Centennial Library
Tasman District Libraries
Taupō District Libraries
Tauranga District Libraries
Thames-Coromandel District Libraries
Timaru District Libraries
Upper Hutt City Library
Waikato District Libraries
Waimakariri District Libraries
Waipā District Libraries
Waitaki District Libraries
Waitomo District Library
Wellington City Libraries
Western Bay of Plenty District Libraries
Westland District Library
Whakatāne Library and Exhibition Centre
Whangārei Libraries

FINE FREE
Public Libraries
AOTEAROA

90% of New Zealand Public Libraries are Fine Free

NATIONAL DATA YEAR END 30 JUNE 2025

Table 1: National Population	2019- 20	2020- 21	2021- 22	2022- 23	2023- 24	2024- 25	
Population	4,768,170	4,916,965	5,010,950	5,034,509	5,146,848	5,257,227	
Change from previous year	1.9%	3.1%	1.9%	0.5%	2.23%	2.14%	
Table 2: Library numbers and total opening hours	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023- 24	2024- 25	Change from previous year
Number of Libraries	328	332	332	315	315	313	-0.63%
Number of Mobile Service Vehicles ¹	N/A	N/A	N/A	23	23	26	13.04%
Number of Unstaffed Library Managed Outlets	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	5	N/A
Opening hours - normal week	12,380	12,979	13,051	12,924	12,863	13,064	1.56%
Extended Access	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	2	3	50.00%
Extended Access Hours	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	105.5	N/A
Table 3: Memberships and visits	2019- 20	2020- 21	2021- 22	2022- 23	2023- 24	2024- 25	Change from previous year
Active Borrowers	1,624,727	1,621,830	1,533,464	1,425,957	1,444,167	1,500,930	3.93%
Active Borrowers as % of population	34.07%	32.98%	30.60%	28.32%	28.06%	28.55%	1.75%
Visits (physical)	25,065,710	26,187,571	18,266,344	25,052,158	28,664,001	28,645,220	-0.07%
Visits (virtual) ²	27,470,884	28,654,136	29,860,821	26,929,502	30,259,467	32,838,111	8.52%
Total Visits	52,536,594	54,841,707	48,127,165	51,981,660	58,923,468	61,483,331	4.34%
Physical visits per active borrower	15.4	16.1	11.9	17.6	19.8	19.1	-3.84%
Physical visits per capita	5.3	5.3	3.6	5.0	5.6	5.4	-2.16%
Virtual visits per active borrower	16.9	17.7	19.5	18.9	21.0	21.9	4.42%
Virtual visits per capita	5.8	5.8	6.0	5.3	5.9	6.2	6.24%
Total Visits per active borrower	32.3	33.8	31.4	36.5	40.8	41.0	0.40%
Total Visits per capita	11.0	11.2	9.6	10.3	11.4	11.7	2.15%
Table 4: National collection size	2019- 20	2020- 21	2021- 22	2022- 23	2023- 24	2024- 25	Change from previous year
Collection size (physical)	10,382,266	10,520,063	10,274,693	10,057,053	9,869,412	9,791,125	-0.79%
Collection size (electronic) ³	2,217,674	3,411,239	6,642,179	12,621,012	3,748,301	4,374,367	16.70%
Total Collection size (physical and electronic)	12,599,940	13,931,302	16,916,872	22,678,065	13,617,713	14,165,492	4.02%
Collection size per capital (physical)	2.2	2.1	2.1	2.0	1.9	1.9	-2.88%
Collection size per capital (electronic)	0.5	0.7	1.3	2.5	0.7	0.8	14.25%
Total Collection size per capita ⁴	2.6	2.8	3.4	4.5	2.6	2.7	1.84%
Table 5: Collection Usage	2019- 20	2020- 21	2021- 22	2022- 23	2023- 24	2024- 25	Change from previous year
Physical Issues - Children and Young Adult	7,080,506	13,631,284	12,925,010	15,269,407	15,485,715	14,322,364	-7.51%
Physical Issues - Adults	24,786,327	23,759,921	18,399,901	19,255,307	19,528,000	20,196,156	3.42%
Issues (e-Item)	5,640,602	6,639,146	7,973,002	8,647,292	8,878,327	10,458,018	17.79%
Issues (e-Resources) ⁵	9,311,919	13,991,938	10,418,531	8,095,496	3,951,666	4,536,126	14.79%
Total Issues	46,819,354	58,022,289	49,716,444	51,267,502	47,843,708	49,512,664	3.49%
Physical Issues %	68.1%	64.4%	63.0%	67.3%	73.2%	69.7%	-4.74%
e-Item and E-Resources Issues %	31.9%	35.6%	37.0%	32.7%	26.8%	30.3%	12.93%
Issues per capita (physical)	6.7	7.6	6.3	6.9	6.8	6.6	-3.48%
Issues per capita (electronic)	3.1	4.2	3.7	3.3	2.5	2.9	14.41%
Total Issues per capita	9.8	11.8	9.9	10.2	9.3	9.4	1.32%
Table 6: Events and Programmes	2019- 20	2020- 21	2021- 22	2022- 23	2023- 24	2024- 25	Change from previous year
Programming	38,747	48,169	39,716	72,732	83,184	91,850	10.42%
Attendance at Programmes	655,520	813,942	666,004	1,288,991	1,510,454	1,666,639	10.34%
Attendance at Events per capita	0.14	0.17	0.13	0.26	0.29	0.32	8.02%
Table 7: Services	2019- 20	2020- 21	2021- 22	2022-23	2023-24	2024- 25	Change from previous year
Reading Programme Participants	30,054	76,583	89,016	108,699	106,923	57,353	-46.36%
Home delivery service	30	51	58	59	60	59	-1.67%
Libraries systems with maker/creative spaces	N/A	N/A	N/A	17	20	23	15.00%
Number of Maker/Creative Spaces	N/A	N/A	N/A	24	30	32	6.67%
Maker/Creative Space Equipment	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	8	N/A
Table 8: Internet and WiFi Usage	2019- 20	2020- 21	2021- 22	2022- 23	2023- 24	2024- 25	Change from previous year
Internet Access by Library Device	2,579,596	2,215,795	1,475,757	1,847,200	2,108,151	2,214,956	5.07%
Number of public devices	1,248	2,587	2,598	2,676	2,742	2,624	-4.30%
Public computers per 10,000 persons	2.62	5.26	5.18	5.32	5.33	4.99	-6.31%
Table 9: Fine free	2019- 20	2020- 21	2021- 22	2022- 23	2023- 24	2024- 25	Change from previous year
Fine free for children and young adult materials	19	46	54	59	63	64	1.59%
Fine free for adult materials	0	11	23	38	50	59	18.00%

NATIONAL DATA YEAR END 30 JUNE 2025

Table 10: Staff	2019- 20	2020- 21	2021- 22	2022- 23	2023- 24	2024- 25	Change from previous year
Staff numbers (FTE)	2,351	2,461	2,232	2,360	2,450	2,311	-5.68%
Staff numbers (actual)	N/A	N/A	N/A	3,207	3,275	3,133	-4.33%
Funded Staff Hours	N/A	N/A	N/A	129,893	123,030	115,860	-5.83%
Vacant Staff Positions (FTE)	N/A	N/A	N/A	182	149	152	1.88%
Staff members (FTE) per 10,000 persons	4.9	5.0	4.5	4.7	4.8	4.4	-7.66%
Table 11: Expenditure	2019- 20	2020- 21	2021- 22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	Change from previous year
Physical expenditure	\$140,494,264	\$148,232,757	\$157,867,764	\$173,052,428	\$184,655,419	\$197,101,835	6.74%
Physical Collection expenditure	\$19,826,947	\$29,571,365	\$28,412,146	\$30,299,438	\$32,714,585	\$32,694,598	-0.06%
e-Item expenditure	\$3,849,535	\$5,695,172	\$7,786,257	\$8,410,606	\$11,339,657	\$11,821,972	4.25%
e-resources expenditure	\$2,837,770	\$2,521,987	\$2,400,518	\$4,663,879	\$4,784,154	\$4,937,368	3.20%
Total Opex expenditure ⁷	\$80,901,550	\$68,421,650	\$74,297,898	\$89,573,589	\$83,638,997	\$96,349,150	15.20%
Total expenditure per capita	51.99	51.75	54.03	60.78	61.62	65.23	5.86%
Table 12: NZLPP	2019-20	2020- 21	2021- 22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	Change from previous year
NZLPP Events ⁵	31	2,613	5,834	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
NZLPP Event Attendance ⁶	250	28,361	55,947	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
NZLPP Content ⁶	7	7,559	79,874	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
NZLPP (FTE)Staff ⁶	3	149	142	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
NZLPP Funding ⁶	\$50,720	\$5,595,542	\$10,933,344	\$1,036,060	N/A	N/A	N/A

Notes

This report presents library data spanning from 2019 to the present. PLNZ is confident that the data from the 2021-22 year through the current period is the most accurate, owing to enhanced data literacy among staff and the implementation of consistent data definitions.

1 Data collected starting 2022-23.

2 The 2022-23 data has been updated and corrected, with social media references removed from the virtual visit information.

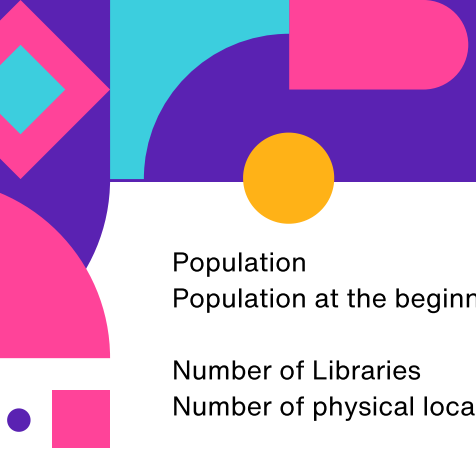
3 For the 2023-24 period, pay-per-use platforms have been excluded from the reported collection size. These platforms were previously included in the 2021-22 and 2022-23 data. The current year's data provides a more accurate representation of the actual collection owned by libraries.

4 The removal of pay-per-use (PPU) platforms has led to a decrease in the total collection size per capita. PPU data was not included in the 2020-21 figures, which has resulted in the 2023-24 data being more consistent on a per capita basis.

5 In 2023-24, data collected included only e-Magazines, e-Comics and digital movies. 2022-23 data included any e-Resources a library subscribed to. With the numerous platforms and reporting metrics, this metric was too variable to include all e-Resources.

6 NZLPP - New Zealand Libraries Partnership Programme ended 30 June 2022.

7 Total operating (OPEX) expenditures reported by each council include different types of expenses, so this data should not be used to make direct comparisons between councils.



NATIONAL DATA COLLECTION DEFINITIONS

Population

Population at the beginning of the reporting period (1 July 2024) of the library's legal service area.

Number of Libraries

Number of physical locations as of 30 June 2025.

Number of Mobile Service Vehicles

Any vehicle that is a dedicated library vehicle designed to offer library services as of 30 June 2025. Does not include staff or council vehicles used to deliver items to households.

Number of Unstaffed Library Managed Outlets

How many library-managed outlets do you have that operate without staff? Please include outlets not connected to a physical library building, such as self-service kiosks, book vending machines, or reservation lockers. Exclude “little free libraries” from this count.

Opening Hours - normal week

The total number of staffed hours when the library's services are available to users during a normal week. This includes the main library, Mobile Service Vehicles, and branches.

Extended Access Hours

If library services are available outside of staff hours, what is the total number of unstaffed hours available to users during a normal week? Extended access library services include customers browsing, issuing, using computers, printers, or using the facility while unstaffed. Extended access does not include meeting rooms available outside of staffed hours.

Active Borrowers

Number of registered people who have borrowed a physical or digital item within the past 24 months. A digital item is either an e-Item or e-Resource as defined below in Issues (e-Item) and Issues (e-Resource). Active borrowers does not represent the total level of community engagement due to ‘hidden membership.’ Hidden memberships include people who access the library through other library members (children/couples) who use the same card, or customers who, without registering, visit the library to use materials, computers, Wi-Fi, spaces or attend programmes. These customers will be counted in other stats (visits, computer or Wi-Fi use, programme attendance, etc).

Visits (Physical)

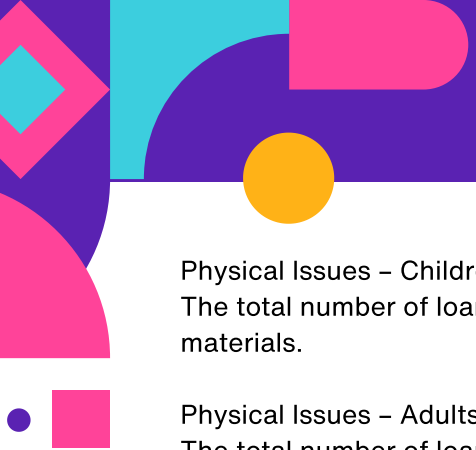
This is the total number of people entering the library for whatever purpose during the year. If an actual count of visits is unavailable, determine an annual estimate by counting visits during a typical week and multiplying by count by 52. A “typical week” is a time that is neither unusually busy nor unusually slow. Avoid holiday times or days when unusual events are taking place in the community or the library. Choose a week in which the library is open its regular hours. When reporting the physical visits please enter in the note field “Annual estimate.”

Visits (Virtual)

The total number of virtual visits to the library managed domains or subdomains, OPAC, and library app, regardless of the number of pages or elements viewed during the reporting period. Do not include visits to social media pages.

Collection Size (Physical)

Total physical collection size includes all physical library items on hand as of 30 June 2025 that are catalogued. This includes all book and non-book material, including but not limited to reference collections, non-circulating materials, magazines, audiobooks, CDs/DVDs, computer games, puzzles, toys, maps, and kits.



NATIONAL DATA COLLECTION DEFINITIONS

Physical Issues – Children and Young Adult

The total number of loans of any physical item, including renewals, of children's and young adult materials.

Physical Issues – Adults

The total number of loans of any physical item, including renewals, of adult materials.

Collection Size (e-Items)

An e-Item is defined as an electronic item that is purchased individually. This includes e-Books and e-Audiobooks. Report the total copies as of 30 June 2025. If the library is part of a consortium, report the total number of items the library's borrowers have access to. If items are purchased as simultaneous use, only report the number of licenses purchased, not issues. Do not include items purchased as a platform, via 'pay per use' agreements or licensed access to electronic resource databases in the collection size.

Issues (e-Items)

Number of loans of e-Items. e-Items are defined as electronic items purchased individually, item or title based, in which statistics can be recorded at an individual item level. Pay per use issues are recorded here.

Issues (e-Resources)

Number of issues of e-Magazines, e-Comics, and digital movies, that are not purchased as part of a pay per use model. We are not collecting issues/reads/opens of e-Newspapers.

Programming

The total number of library endorsed programs or events. These are defined as an activity or session that is planned, facilitated, delivered or endorsed by the library or partners in the library, in a community location or online. Library programs do not include events or services delivered by groups that use the library only as a venue. Services are not considered programmes and should not be included here (JP's, reference services, Skinny Jump, etc). An endorsed programme could be a book club held at the library, not facilitated by staff, but advertised by the library. If a programme is run as a series, count each instance. For example, a story time run weekly should be counted as 52.

Attendance at Programmes

Total attendance includes all community members who attended and/or participated in a library program (as defined above) during the year. Do not count staff or volunteers as attendees. Where programs are offered as a series, count attendance at each instance of the series. For example, a parent and child attending a weekly Story Time 40 times a year should be counted as 80 attendances. For online programmes, this could be engagements or actual attendees depending on the online platform. Report the number that you are confident reporting as attendance and be consistent year to year.

Reading Programme Participants

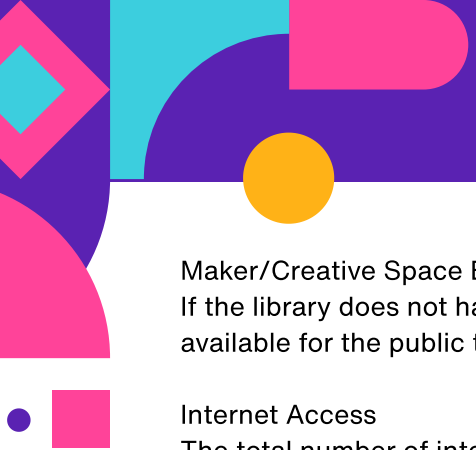
Does the library offer any reading programmes through the year, including Summer Reading, Winter Reading, Hell Reading Challenge, etc. If so, report the total number of participants in all offered reading programmes. For the Hell Reading Challenge, count the number of wheels given out.

Home Delivery Service

Does the library offer any form of home delivery service, including delivery of materials to customers by staff, volunteers or courier.

Number of Maker/Creative Spaces

Does the library have a dedicated makerspace or creative space area and if so, what is the total number of permanent maker/creative spaces. Does not include popup type of maker/creative spaces or spaces with portable equipment.



NATIONAL DATA COLLECTION DEFINITIONS

Maker/Creative Space Equipment

If the library does not have a dedicated maker/creative space, is there makerspace type equipment available for the public to use (3D printers, badge makers, vinyl cutters, etc)



Internet Access

The total number of internet accesses from public devices owned by the library and/or APNK.

Number of Public Devices

Include devices available for public use (desktops, laptops, and tablets). Do not include catalogue only devices, devices used only for programming or devices used to capture customer information or data.

Staff Numbers (FTE)

Include all paid full time, part time and casual staff that are funded through the library's budget as of 30 June 2025. Calculate the number of FTE (full time equivalent) based on a 40-hour week. Do not include volunteers or vacant positions.

Staff Numbers (actual)

Total number of staff. Include all paid full time, part time and casual staff that are funded through the library's budget as of 30 June 2025. Do not include volunteers or vacant positions.

Funded Staff Hours

Total number of funded hours per week for all staff as of 30 June 2025.

Vacant Staff Positions (FTE)

Total number of funded positions that are vacant as of 30 June 2025 based on a FTE of a 40-hour week.

Staff Expenditure

Total amount of salaries, wages, allowances, training, medical, kiwi saver and other employee benefits paid for the reporting period.

Physical Collection Expenditure

Total amount spent on physical collection including both operational and capital expenditures. This includes processing fees and processing materials if included in the cost of the item. NOTE: this corresponds to the Physical Collection Size.

e-Item Expenditure

Total amount spent on e-Item collection including both operational and capital expenditures, any platform costs and cost of pay per use items. NOTE: this corresponds to the Issues (e-Items).

e-Resources Expenditure

Total amount spent on e-Resource collections including both operational and capital expenditures and any start-up or platform costs. e-Resources are items purchased as a platform or database. These include the likes of Ancestry, Overdrive and Borrow Box magazines, PressReader, Newsbank, Beamafilm, Storybox, language platforms, library journals and databases. If you cannot purchase individual items within the resource, you would include the expenditure here. NOTE: this does not correspond to Issues (e-Resources) as you would also include any other databases or resources that you purchase as a platform.

Total Operating (OPEX) Expenditure

Total ordinary operating expenditure. This is the actual expenditure spent, less staffing, collections expenditure, depreciation and capital expenditure (CAPEX).