



Donors' collective investments enhance library collections, make free programs possible throughout the city, and fund new services to help everyone connect to information that will better their lives.



## Ensuring the Long-Term Vitality of The Seattle Public Library

Seattle is a city of readers. And in a city of readers who aspire to create and sustain an extraordinary quality of life for all residents, a great public library is essential.

The Seattle Public Library exemplifies our city's reputation for innovation and learning. Through generous investments of both public resources and private philanthropy, we have created a vital, vibrant resource of knowledge that our city uses and values.

Today, The Seattle Public Library Foundation

represents nearly 6,000 donors who declare through their generous contributions how much they value the resources that the Library provides everyone in our community.

Private support also strengthens the Library's capacity to innovate and adapt to change. It allows the Library to take risks, evaluate the results, and invest resources in areas that have the greatest potential to ensure our Library remains a vital resource for all of Seattle now and in the future.

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Philanthropy has provided critical support to The Seattle Public Library. Since The Seattle Public Library Foundation was founded in 1980, its leaders have raised and invested more than \$150 million in our city's library system—in collections, programs and facilities such as the 26 heavily-used neighborhood branches and our Central Library.

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# Why Our Library Matters

Our libraries are more than a place to find books; they are spaces—both physical and online—for anyone who wants to feed their intellectual curiosity. They empower individuals, strengthen families and make our community a better place.

## **The library welcomes everyone and provides access to a lifetime of learning free of charge.**

Libraries are the most inclusive public institutions in our country, serving people of all ages and origins in every neighborhood. The Foundation funds programs that provide resources for job-seekers, help recent immigrants learn English, offer free previews of arts events, and deliver practical information on everything from car repairs to writing a business plan.

## **The library helps raise a new generation of readers.**

Our library resources can help every child learn to love books and reading. The Foundation funds early learning programs that support what may be the first library experiences for young children and their families and can launch a life-long passion for reading.

## **The library is a trusted source of information and its collections are extensive.**

The Library helps patrons navigate an increasingly complex and sometimes confusing world of online information. It connects patrons to the accurate resources they need to learn to gain digital proficiency, find jobs, advance in school, research health issues, or resolve a business dilemma.

## **The Library creates community.**

The Library provides meeting spaces for community groups and is a place for civic gathering. The Library even joins in with seemingly non-literary events—like offering fans a family-friendly environment to cheer on the Seahawks. These and many other experiences are

supported by the Foundation because they strengthen the fabric of community and build civic pride.

## **The Library preserves Seattle's history and culture.**

Support from the Foundation allows the Library to provide unique access to precious historical documents that trace our region's growth. The Library makes rare and irreplaceable resources available to everyone, both online through digitized materials and in person. The Foundation helps acquire these special collections and provides appropriate places to house them.

## The Seattle Public Library's Priorities

Library leadership has identified five service priorities to meet the needs of tomorrow's library patrons.

- **Youth and early learning:** support early learning and academic success through collections and resources, services, programs, and partnerships.
- **Technology and access:** enhance technology to provide discoverability and increased access to materials, information, services, and interactive experiences.
- **Community engagement:** engage with the community through outreach, partnerships, and programming that connect the Library with patrons in meaningful ways.
- **Seattle culture and history:** capture and cultivate the rich recorded history of Seattle, making our unique heritage available to our communities.
- **Re-imagined spaces:** create new uses for Library spaces, in keeping with the changing needs of Library patrons, services, programs, and interests.





# Investing in the Library's Future through the Foundation

**W**ith the support of donors to the Foundation, The Seattle Public Library has the resources to be proactive, to serve as a community catalyst, to take risks and push for innovation.

City tax dollars cover basic Library operations such as maintaining buildings and staff salaries, while the Foundation raises funds to expand support to pilot programs as well as research and development activities. Private philanthropic support through the Foundation provides 7% of the overall Library budget, providing a measure of stability for the Library and setting a standard for excellence.

Here are some of the ways that you can join the Foundation in the effort to ensure the long-term vitality of The Seattle Public Library:

## **Piloting and Scaling Library Programs**

Donors' gifts are used to pilot new and expand proven, high impact Library programs that reach early learners, school-age children and teens, and adults. Increased resources ensure the multi-year support essential for program stability.

## **Ensuring Robust Collections**

Funding from the city does not keep up with the demand for Library materials. The Foundation helps expand those

offerings, funding one in every six items found in the Library's collections.

## **Improving Library Environments**

The facilities built during the "Libraries for All" initiative have had a decade of intensive use with clear signs of wear and tear. Philanthropic support is key to re-imagining library spaces that keep pace with the needs of all of our patrons.

## **Fueling Library Innovation**

Seattle's library system is recognized as a leader in the U.S. and around the world. Foundation funds allow the Library to continue testing new program offerings and services.

## **Building Endowments for the Future**

The Foundation's endowments sustain our collections, Library programs, and operations for the next generation. Building existing endowments, and launching new funds to sustain specific programs, allow donors to continue their investment in the Library.

## The Seattle Public Library: 2017 Statistics

### FACILITIES

The Central Library

26 neighborhood branches

Mobile Services

### STAFF

678 staff members

### CIRCULATION

Books & materials 8,337,998

Digital/downloadable media 3,284,524

**Total 11,622,522**

### PATRON VISITS

Central Library 1,372,383

Branches 5,162,519

Online visits 5,710,732

**Total 12,245,634**

### PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

Database use 356,517

Reference questions answered 742,835

Free public programs offered 10,965

Attendance at free public programs 329,395

## 2017 Grant Commitments to The Seattle Public Library

Capital Improvements and Technology \$ 379,900

Collections \$1,318,100

Programs and Promotion \$2,056,700

Other \$ 314,100

**Total \$4,368,800**

## You can help

If you believe in the power of the public library to enrich the lives of everyone in our community, become a donor to The Seattle Public Library Foundation. With gifts from generous people like you, we can continue to enhance the collection, offer free public programs, and fund new ideas – ensuring the long-term vitality of The Seattle Public Library.

*“We believe passionately in the role libraries have played in helping people learn about and participate in the world around them, and want to support the next generation of that essential endeavor.”*

– A Foundation donor

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The Seattle Public Library Foundation

1000 Fourth Ave. • Seattle, Washington 98104 • (206) 386.4130

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