

**FREE LIBRARY
FISCAL YEAR 2024 BUDGET TESTIMONY
APRIL 19, 2023**

INTRODUCTION

Good afternoon, President Clarke, and Members of City Council. I am Kelly Richards, President, and Director of the Free Library. Joining me today are Sade Olanipekun-Lewis, Chair of the Board of Trustees, Priscilla Suero, First Deputy Director, Darren T. Cottman, Chief Operating Officer and Donyale Henderson, HR Manager 3. I am pleased to provide testimony on the Free Library's Fiscal Year 2024 Operating Budget.

DEPARTMENT MISSION & PLANS

Mission: The Free Library of Philadelphia (FLP) advances literacy, guides learning, and inspires curiosity.

Plans for Fiscal Year 2024:

The Free Library is thankful for the support received from Council and the Mayor in our FY23 budget. It has allowed us to begin restoring staffing levels, so we are fully equipped to provide resources, programs, and services for our communities. The proposed increase of \$9 million for FY24 will allow the Free Library to reach a level of stability not seen in decades.

The FY24 budget includes:

- \$2.8 million to provide the remaining 25% of FY23 full-time salaries for recently hired employees brought on to fulfill the goal of stable, five-day service.
- \$3.8 million to support staffing needs at Neighborhood Libraries and Parkway Central to allow us to serve all patrons, including youth and vulnerable populations, six days per week. This level of staffing allows the Free Library to expand programming and services to support literacy and learning. We will also meet the social/emotional needs of the communities we serve with the hiring of a small team of full-time permanent social workers.
- \$3.8 million to fill the gap in our materials budget to align with the state required materials funding for a library system of our size. With these funds, we will expand our print and digital offerings, further connecting Philadelphians to the world through their library card.
- \$250,000 for the planning and implementation of a strategic plan. This process, which will include robust staff and community input, will inform the Free Library's vision with a renewed focus on accommodating the wants and needs of our communities.

Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging will continue to be strengthened and integrated into Library operations and services by instilling diverse and inclusive practices.

Our ability to open consistently is critical to supporting and meeting the needs of our communities, as well as participating in citywide initiatives to provide safe spaces. Our staff are dedicated and committed to ensuring this goal for fiscal year 2024.

BUDGET SUMMARY & OTHER BUDGET DRIVERS

Staff Demographics Summary (as of December 2022)				
	Total	Minority	White	Female
Number of Full-Time Staff	630	359	271	385
Number of Exempt Staff	9	5	4	5
Number of Executive Staff (deputy level and above)	2	2	0	1
Average Salary, Full-Time Staff	\$56,035	\$50,532	\$63,325	\$57,549
Average Salary, Exempt Staff	\$118,619	\$145,285	\$85,286	\$109,229
Average Salary, Executive Staff	\$188,413	\$188,413	N/A	\$160,000
Median Salary, Full-Time Staff	\$48,179	\$43,963	\$66,647	\$50,657
Median Salary, Exempt Staff	\$119,600	\$130,000	\$75,482	\$100,000
Median Salary, Executive Staff	\$188,413	\$188,413	N/A	\$160,000

Employment Levels (as of December 2022)		
	Budgeted	Filled
Number of Full-Time Positions	1,023	630
Number of Part-Time Positions	0	23
Number of Exempt Positions	6	9

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Number of Executive Positions (deputy level and above)	3	2
Average Salary of All Full-Time Positions	\$52,217	\$56,035
Median Salary of All Full-Time Positions	\$55,305	\$48,179

General Fund Financial Summary by Class						
	FY22 Original Appropriations	FY22 Actual Obligations	FY23 Original Appropriations	FY23 Estimated Obligations	FY24 Proposed Appropriations	Difference: FY24-FY23
Class 100 - Employee Compensation	\$38,171,857	\$37,737,788	\$50,911,555	\$50,503,478	\$59,172,660	\$8,669,182
Class 200 - Purchase of Services	\$2,772,879	\$2,004,479	\$3,496,262	\$3,911,262	\$4,299,722	\$388,460
Class 300/400 - Materials, Supplies & Equipment	\$1,842,128	\$1,806,963	\$4,042,128	\$7,477,489	\$7,513,098	\$35,609
Class 500 - Contributions	\$0	\$272,500	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
	\$42,786,864	\$41,821,730	\$58,449,945	\$61,892,229	\$70,985,480	\$9,093,251

Contracts Summary (Professional Services only)						
	FY20	FY21	FY22	FY23	FY23 YTD (Q1 & Q2)	FY24 Projected
Total amount of contracts	\$638,177	\$1,838,576	\$636,722	\$1,209,710	\$1,209,710	\$1,300,000

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Total amount to M/W/DSBE	\$394,401	\$668,860	\$207,713	\$503,133	\$503,133	\$481,000
Participation Rate	62%	36%	33%	42%	42%	37%

Total M/W/DSBE Contract Participation Goal (Public Works; Services, Supplies & Equipment; and Professional Services combined)			
	FY22	FY23	FY24 Projected
M/W/DSBE Contract Participation Goal	37%	37%	37%

PROPOSED BUDGET OVERVIEW

Proposed Funding Request:

The proposed Fiscal Year 2024 General Fund budget totals \$70,985,480, an increase of \$9,093,251 over Fiscal Year 2023 estimated obligation levels. This increase is primarily due to the City's commitment to have the Free Library operate on a year-round six-day schedule.

The proposed budget includes:

- \$59,172,660 in Class 100, a \$8,669,182 increase over FY23. This funding will provide six-day service year-round in neighborhood libraries.
- \$4,299,722 in Class 200, a \$388,460 increase over FY23. This funding will provide the necessary services and contracts in order for the Free Library to operate.
- \$7,513,098 in Class 300/400, a \$35,609 increase over FY23. This funding will enable the purchasing of new books and other materials and will support several software purchases.

STAFFING LEVELS









The department is requesting 1,023 budgeted positions for FY24, an increase of 42 positions over FY23 levels. The increase is attributed to achieving our goal of stable, six-day service at all Free Library locations.

NEW HIRES

New Hires (from 7/1/2021 to December 2022)							
	Total Number of New Hires	Chinese	Czech	Fuzhounese	French	Russian	Spanish
Black or African American	9						
Asian	1						
Hispanic or Latino	1						
White	12		1		1	1	1
Other	2	1		1			
Total	25	1	1	1	1	1	1

PERFORMANCE, CHALLENGES, AND INITIATIVES

ADMINISTRATION

Measure	 FY22 ACTUAL	 FY23 TARGET	 FY24 TARGET	 MAYORAL PRIORITY
Social media usage: Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube¹	97,051	98,000	98,000	
Departmental M/W/DSBE participation rate²	33%	37%	37%	
Percentage of staff completing Customer Service training	36%	30%	30%	
Percentage of staff completing two sessions of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion training	42%	25%	25%	

¹This is a point-in-time measure.


²This is an annual measure, and it is tabulated at year-end. Contracts are conformed throughout the year, and the rate may vary across quarters, depending on the value of contracts conformed to date.

FY24 STRATEGIC GOALS

- Launch a strategic plan built on robust staff and community input and crafted with an eye toward impactful efforts that will inform the Free Library’s vision.
- Further strengthen and integrate DEI into Library operations and services by instilling diverse and inclusive practices, such as the inclusion of a DEI module in the onboarding of new staff, and procedures at all levels of the organization and creating DEI goals and objectives for all staff.
- Focus on transparency by growing internal communications, which would include building staff-inclusive feedback support and improving human resources (HR) and DEI policies and procedures.
- Create a fully staffed Communications department that will interface with internal and external stakeholders to promote the programs, services and initiatives of the Library and lead civic engagement.

CUSTOMER ENGAGEMENT

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Measure	 FY22 ACTUAL	 FY23 TARGET	 FY24 TARGET	 MAYORAL PRIORITY
In-person visits	1,829,104	2,300,000	2,300,000	
Percentage of Philadelphians who have Library cards	39%	40%	40%	
Preschool Program Attendance	103,448	100,000	100,000	
Children's Program Attendance	176,186	180,000	180,000	
Teen Program Attendance	13,732	38,000	38,000	
Adult Program Attendance	77,244	150,000	150,000	
Senior Program Attendance	2,248	8,000	8,000	
Hours of Service	78,743	83,000	83,000	
Program Attendance	386,569	476,000	476,000	
Circulation counts (collection use statistics)	5,241,011	4,500,000	4,500,000	







FY24 STRATEGIC GOALS

- Increase service hours in all branches to six days per week. The Library will stabilize services at all locations, and hire staff so that residents can rely on the accuracy of posted hours of operation.
- Focus on reorganization and expansion of programming and services to support the literacy, learning, and social/emotional needs of the communities it serves.
- Add social work services and passport services to further support the needs of the community and Library staff.
- Create sustainability and growth in the Literacy in Early Learning Spaces project to support childcare programs, teachers, and families in helping grow language and early literacy skills in children in early childhood settings, so that they are ready to learn how to read when they start school.

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- Strengthen and expand Literacy in Adult Education spaces to further support community members in obtaining their high school equivalency certification, English as a Second Language (ESL), workforce development, and digital literacy needs.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY AND DIGITAL STRATEGIES






Measure	 FY22 ACTUAL	 FY23 TARGET	 FY24 TARGET	 MAYORAL PRIORITY
Virtual visits via FLP website	4,827,866	4,850,000	4,850,000	
Digital access ¹	3,149,802	3,500,000	3,500,000	



¹ This measure includes digital reach and activities, including Wi-Fi usage, eBook circulation, electronic resource/database use and public PC use. This measure counts every login.

FY24 STRATEGIC GOALS

- The Library will provide system-wide deployment of new personal computers for the public and staff, along with wireless printing.
- Digital content and communication capabilities will be enhanced through the onboarding of a new robust content management system, responsible for freelibrary.org and other digital assets.
- To improve the effectiveness of material lending services, cloud-based data analysis tools will be introduced and made available to organizational decision makers.
- The services will enable report generation and strategic trend analysis to enhance data-driven decision making.
- As part of its mobile office initiative, the Library will be transitioning from installed office applications to Microsoft 365. This will include the use of OneDrive for personal data and SharePoint for staff collaboration, allowing staff to access their data without the need for VPN.

PROPERTY MANAGEMENT

Measure	 FY22 ACTUAL	 FY23 TARGET	 FY24 TARGET	 MAYORAL PRIORITY
Building Service Requests (totals)	2,753	3,700	3,700	
Median turnaround time (days to completion) for	6.7	12	12	

building service requests				
Number of events supported by property management	1,859	2,000	2,000	

FY24 STRATEGIC GOALS

- Provide efficient and timely service to keep libraries open for six-day service; achieve property management staffing at full budgeted level; and fill all open positions. Establish Board level management financial and policy support for all library facilities, and work with key Board members to re-establish the Building Committee.
- Optimize space to support library programming and maintain safe and secure facilities, including: continue working with the 1801/1901 committee to select a developer and begin planning for the new 60,000 square foot facility that can support a new children and family center; Continue working with the citywide ADA committee and begin implementation of the ADA plan for all libraries; complete central news department renovation (lighting); complete Frankford library renovation; complete restoration of the adult section of the West Oak Lane Library; support all Rebuild renovation efforts including four major renovations and facility upgrades work at four additional sites; and implement 10 to 15 major capital investment projects in FY24.

OTHER BUDGETARY IMPACTS

Federal and State (Where Applicable)

In FY23, we received approximately \$8.6 million in state funding, which we utilize to fund all aspects of library operations. However, a majority of these funds are allocated for library materials and some Property Management projects.

CONTRACTING EXPERIENCE

M/W/DSBE Participation on Large Professional Services Contracts											
Top Five Largest Contracts, FY23											
Vendor Name	Service Provided	Dollar Amount of Contract	RFP Issue Date	Contract Start Date	Ranges in RFP	% of M/W/DSBE Participation Achieved	\$ Value of M/W/DSBE Participation	Total % Participation - All DSBES	Total \$ Value Participation - All DSBES	Local Business (principal place of business located within City limits) [yes / no]	Waiver for Living Wage Compliance? [yes / no]
Verizon	Wide Area Network	\$468,960	12/7/2020	7/1/2021	MBE: Best Efforts	0%	\$0	0%	\$0	yes	no
					WBE: Best Efforts	0%	\$0				
					DSBE: Best Efforts	0%	\$0				
Copy Systems	Cash Management	\$90,000	9/1/2022	1/1/2023	MBE: Best Efforts	0%	\$0	0%	\$0	no	no
					WBE: Best Efforts	0%	\$0				
					DSBE: Best Efforts	0%	\$0				

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Boom Chicka	Non-Transit Advertising	\$84,000	12/19/2022	1/23/2023	MBE: Best Efforts	0%	\$0	100%	\$84,000	yes	no
					WBE: Best Efforts	100%	\$84,000				
					DSBE: Best Efforts	0%	\$0				
Boom Chicka	Transit Advertising	\$84,000	12/20/2023	1/23/2023	MBE: Best Efforts	0%	\$0	100%	\$84,000	yes	no
					WBE: Best Efforts	100%	\$84,000				
					DSBE: Best Efforts	0%	\$0				
Grace Cianas Jones	Graphic Design Service	\$34,000		7/1/2022	MBE: Best Efforts	100%	\$34,000	100%	\$34,000	yes	no
					WBE: Best Efforts	0%	\$0				
					DSBE: Best Efforts	0%	\$0				

EMPLOYEE DATA

Staff Demographics (as of December 2022)				
Full-Time Staff			Executive Staff	
	Male	Female		
	African-American	African-American	African-American	African-American
<i>Total</i>	119	182	<i>Total</i>	1
<i>% of Total</i>	19%	29%	<i>% of Total</i>	50%
<i>Average Salary</i>	\$48,621	\$49,187	<i>Average Salary</i>	N/A
<i>Median Salary</i>	\$43,963	\$42,637	<i>Median Salary</i>	N/A
	White	White	White	White
<i>Total</i>	98	173	<i>Total</i>	0
<i>% of Total</i>	16%	27%	<i>% of Total</i>	0%
<i>Average Salary</i>	\$59,190	\$65,667	<i>Average Salary</i>	N/A
<i>Median Salary</i>	\$58,659	\$66,647	<i>Median Salary</i>	N/A
	Hispanic	Hispanic	Hispanic	Hispanic
<i>Total</i>	12	14	<i>Total</i>	0
<i>% of Total</i>	2%	2%	<i>% of Total</i>	50%
<i>Average Salary</i>	\$48,591	\$63,217	<i>Average Salary</i>	\$160,000
<i>Median Salary</i>	\$42,637	\$53,296	<i>Median Salary</i>	\$160,000
	Asian	Asian	Asian	Asian
<i>Total</i>	9	12	<i>Total</i>	0
<i>% of Total</i>	1%	2%	<i>% of Total</i>	0%
<i>Average Salary</i>	\$64,678	\$59,955	<i>Average Salary</i>	N/A
<i>Median Salary</i>	\$66,647	\$56,106	<i>Median Salary</i>	N/A

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	Other		Other			Other		Other	
<i>Total</i>	7		4		<i>Total</i>	0		0	
<i>% of Total</i>	1%		1%		<i>% of Total</i>	0%		0%	
<i>Average Salary</i>	\$48,591		\$59,818		<i>Average Salary</i>	N/A		N/A	
<i>Median Salary</i>	\$42,637		\$56,801		<i>Median Salary</i>	N/A		N/A	
	Bilingual		Bilingual			Bilingual		Bilingual	
<i>Total</i>	0		0		<i>Total</i>	0		0	
<i>% of Total</i>	0%		0%		<i>% of Total</i>	0%		0%	
<i>Average Salary</i>	N/A		N/A		<i>Average Salary</i>	N/A		N/A	
<i>Median Salary</i>	N/A		N/A		<i>Median Salary</i>	N/A		N/A	
	Male		Female			Male		Female	
<i>Total</i>	245		385		<i>Total</i>	1		1	
<i>% of Total</i>	39%		61%		<i>% of Total</i>	50%		50%	
<i>Average Salary</i>	\$53,261		\$56,731		<i>Average Salary</i>	\$216,825		\$160,000	
<i>Median Salary</i>	\$43,963		\$48,605		<i>Median Salary</i>	\$216,825		\$160,000	

LANGUAGE ACCESS

- 1. Provide the name of your language access coordinator, the date of your last department training, and a link to the posting of your language access plan.**

Language Access Coordinator: Lindsay Southworth

Date of Last Department Training: 1/12/23 (this does not include the Language Access Plan training that is happening every two weeks for new hires)

Link to Language Access Plan: <https://www.phila.gov/media/20220322125839/Free-Library-Language-Access-Plan-January-2022.pdf>

- 2. Breakdown new hires and existing staff by race and language. Breakdown how many front-line personnel are trained to provide language access services.**

All frontline staff are trained in language access services (through staff meetings and new hire onboarding). An optional survey was sent to all FLP staff in December 2022, asking staff to self-identify their language abilities. The results were as follows:

ASL	1
Arabic	2
Bengali	1
Czech	1
French	5
German	1
Hungarian	1
Italian	1
Malayalam	1
Mandarin	1
Portuguese	1
Russian	3
Spanish	10
Tamil	1
Telugu	1

Vietnamese	2
Yiddish	1

3. How many requests for language access services did your department receive in the past year? How many language access services were delivered by staff? Breakdown language access services provided, by language, including but not limited to the language line, translation of public notices and documents, website language services, and advertisement/publication services.

For FY22, we processed 245 requests for language access services. Staff delivered a combined 175 hours of language access services (not including telephone interpretation). 213 calls were made on the telephonic interpretation line for Spanish, Haitian Creole, Arabic, Portuguese, French, Mandarin, Russian, Pashto, Turkish, Vietnamese, Albanian, Ashanti, Cantonese, Indonesian (Bahasa), Mandingo (Mandinka), and Urdu. We processed 32 written translation requests in Spanish, Russian, Simplified Chinese, Arabic, Vietnamese, French, Japanese, and Korean.

4. Explain what your department has done to improve language access services over the past year.

The Free Library of Philadelphia updated our Language Access Plan in FY22 in close collaboration with OIA. We increased the data collected on language access services provided by staff system-wide by creating a monthly survey distributed to supervisors. We made a video training on the Language Access Plan specific to the Free Library and worked with FLP HR to make it a mandatory part of new staff onboarding. We distributed 'We Speak Your Language' to library locations and began a project with FLP Graphics and OIA to create a new visual campaign for Language Access called 'Language Help Here.'

For FY23, the Free Library is onboarding many new staff. As part of new hire orientation, the Language Access Coordinator presents in person when possible, and if that is not possible, all new hires will review a library-specific video training on the language access plan. This fiscal year, we are also rolling out a new communications plan for staff and the public around the use of telephonic interpretation, featuring new materials created in collaboration with FLP Graphics and OIA. The Language Access Coordinator will present a refresher on telephonic interpretation for all staff at cluster meetings. We will use new neighborhood demographic data to provide library locations with information on key languages to target for print translations.

CLIMATE CHANGE

1. How has climate change affected your department's provision of services?

Climate change is perceived to cause unusually high humidity (Rh) conditions in the library facilities that require maintenance responses not previously needed.

2. How might worsening climate change increase costs and demands for your department?

Climate change high humidity (Rh) conditions results in designing and implementing extensive HVAC system modifications to mitigate the humidity, the Library's Property Management Division had to make 4 major modifications in the past 18 months and project that we will need three more in the next 12 months. Dehumidification equipment units also had to be purchased for some situations. These recent changes resulted in the expenditure of an estimated \$400,000 of capital.

3. How does your department intend to mitigate and adapt to climate change?

We will continue to implement HVAC system modifications proven to address this condition.