The year 2020 was meant to be filled with long-planned celebrations of the 125th anniversary of The New York Public Library's founding. While this was not possible in the manner we expected, one of the consequences of the pandemic was that the Library marked this milestone by reaffirming our core objective to serve all New Yorkers no matter the challenge. As we moved first to being an entirely online organization, and then into hybrid service models, we demonstrated our irreplaceable role in supporting all New Yorkers while cementing our position as a resource for New Yorkers in turbulent times.

**Continuity of Service**

- **March 13**
  - NYPL announces physical closure beginning March 14
  - 134% one-day increase in physical checkouts as patrons stock up
  - 38% more unique borrowers than daily average
  - 48K physical collection items loaned to 10K patrons

- **Mar 14**
  - NYPL announces remote database access and suspends fines for overdue materials

- **Mar 16**
  - Brooklyn Public Library, Queens Library, and DOE closures begin

- **Mar 17**
  - NYC restaurants and bars close or switch to takeout only
  - New e-newsletter NYPL Connect launches with 1.2 million recipients

- **Mar 20**
  - DOE letters sent out to students promoting e-resources

- **Mar 21**
  - Surge in user requests to Ask NYPL
  - 101% spike in average daily tickets of queries concern e-books, up from 7% pre-closure

- **Mar 22**
  - “New York on Pause” law comes into effect (essential services only)

- **Mar 23**
  - Release of ResearchNow (Digital Research Books beta)

- **Mar 24**
  - NYPL announces partnership with Brainfuse to offer free after-school homework help

**E-BOOK HIGHLIGHT**

227% one-day increase in SimplyE sign-ups after March 18. Time Out NY piece. By the end of March, daily SimplyE sign-ups had increased 400%.

**Patrons Turning to the Library**

- Mar 16
  - Brooklyn Public Library, Queens Library, and DOE closures begin

- Mar 17
  - NYC restaurants and bars close or switch to takeout only

**New Initiative**

- **Mar 17**
  - New e-newsletter NYPL Connect launches with 1.2 million recipients

**Ensuring Equity**

- Mar 24
  - NYPL announces partnership with Brainfuse to offer free after-school homework help
### April (116K borrowers served)

- **Apr 6**
  - NYC reaches peak of first wave of COVID cases

- **Apr 15**
  - New York State requires face masks in public

- **Apr 6**
  - **NYPL launches online storytime, which runs weekdays and features branch librarians**

- **Apr 21**
  - Nearly 2,000 New Yorkers post online sticky notes about how the Library is helping them

- **Apr 30**
  - NYPL hosts first virtual book club with WNYC

### May (117K borrowers served)

- **May 1**
  - NYPL releases Missing Sounds of New York album (404K streams by end of 2020)

- **May 12–18**
  - **LIVE from NYPL’s weeklong reading of Neil Gaiman’s Coraline (110K views)**

- **May 17**
  - 89% of patrons surveyed report that post-closure library services meet or exceed their needs

- **May 22**
  - NYPL marks 125th Anniversary on May 23 with “Reading Brings Us Together” video featuring writers and celebrities

### June (116K borrowers served)

- **Jun 8**
  - ReCAP electronic document delivery resumes

- **Jun 9**
  - Schomburg Center releases Black Liberation Reading List

- **Jun 22**
  - NYPL Kids launches Summer Reading Virtual Summer Camp

- **Jun 29**
  - Patience & Fortitude don face masks and make headlines around the world

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**PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS**

- **240%** rise in online program attendance from April into May, holding steady in June
- **53K** attendees of virtual programs hosted in April, May, and June

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**NYPL Year in Impact | 2**


**NYPL Year in Impact | 3**

**July** (124K borrowers served)

- Jul 6
  - NYC begins Phase 3: personal care services

- Jul 13
  - **NYPL begins Grab-and-Go at 8 branches, including new Stavros Niarchos Foundation Library (SNFL), giving patrons access to physical books**

- Jul 19
  - NYC begins Phase 4: pro sports (without spectators)

- Jul 29
  - **Center for Research in the Humanities launches its first episode of Doc Chat**
  - **NYPL begins distribution of physical Summer Reading kits to high-needs communities**

- Jul 31
  - CARES Act expires

**August** (129K borrowers served)

- Aug 3
  - **Grab-and-Go expands to 30 branches**

- Aug 10
  - **NYPL partners with Time Out NY to promote online storytimes**

- Aug 18
  - **NYPL marks 19th Amendment centennial with Essential Reads on Feminism list**

- Aug 23
  - **NYC museums and low-risk indoor activities permitted to reopen**

**September** (136K borrowers served)

- Sept 1
  - **Research centers launch Scan & Deliver electronic document delivery service**

- Sept 8
  - **Grab-and-Go expands to 50 branches**

- Sept 20
  - **NYPL launches Back to School remote learning resources campaign**

- Sept 27
  - **NYPL After School launches online programs, activities, and book talks**

- Sept 16
  - NYC schools resume with fully remote instruction

- Sept 29
  - NYC schools begin hybrid in-person learning model

- Sept 30
  - Indoor dining in NYC resumes
October (135K borrowers served)

- **Oct 5** Brances launch One-on-One Job Support service
- **Oct 6** NYPL launches Election Reading List and associated public program series
  - 350+ programs, in-person and virtually
  - 80+ new partnerships established
  - 100+ volunteers involved in Census-related activities and events
- **Oct 6** New targeted lockdowns in areas of Brooklyn and Queens
- **Oct 15** NYPL’s Census campaign ends
- **Oct 15** Census data collection ends
- **Oct 21** Schomburg Center co-hosts “Whose Vote Counts,” a virtual discussion on voter suppression (8K attendees)
- **Oct 26** NYPL launches Shelf Help, offering personalized book bundles
- **Oct 26** LIVE from NYPL launches The Harry Belafonte Black Liberation Speaker Series

November (135K borrowers served)

- **Nov 3** 2020 Election
- **Nov 4** Post-Election Uncertainty book list released
- **Nov 9** On-site service expands to include computer use, browsing, and research appointments (reversed one week later due to rising infection rates)
- **Nov 19** All NYC school buildings temporarily close
- **Nov 19** New NYPL app announced, allows patrons to manage their accounts and discover online programs
- **Nov 25** Three Staten Island branches in the orange zone are closed
- **Nov 25** Annual Black Friday ad encourages readers to find escape through books and reading—thanks to an anonymous trustee

December (132K borrowers served)

- **Dec 3** NYPL launches “Roar for NYC” campaign to inspire and support New Yorkers with online events, storytimes, and book lists
- **Dec 7**–**10** NYPL hosts Library-wide staff conference on Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Access (DEIA)
- **Dec 14** First coronavirus vaccine in US
- **Dec 18** NYC indoor dining ends
- **Dec 13** Annual Holiday Open House goes virtual for the first time, open to all patrons

NYPL Year in Impact | 4
January 2021 (141K borrowers served)

- Jan 6
  Attack on the US Capitol
- Jan 10
  NYPL launches Story Line service offering books read aloud by phone to kids in English, Spanish, and Mandarin
- Jan 11
  Battery Park City branch opens for Grab-and-Go
- Jan 13–16
  The Schomburg Center’s ninth annual Black Comic Book Festival goes virtual
- Jan 17–20
  New e-newsletters NYPL en Español and NYPL Events launch, reconnecting patrons to local branch events and resources
- Jan 20
  Inauguration of Joseph R. Biden Jr. as president and Kamala Harris as vice president
- Jan 25
  New Roosevelt Island branch opens and three Staten Island branches reopen for Grab-and-Go service
- Jan 29
  LPA’s Jerome Robbins Dance Division hosts A Symposium Beyond Boundaries, focused on the intersection of dance and immigration

February (137K borrowers served)
- Feb 1
  NYPL launches Black History Month celebrations with 100+ free online events, new online exhibitions, and book lists
- Feb 12
  Indoor dining in NYC resumes with a 25% occupancy limit
- Feb 14
  Schomburg Center launches online exhibition Georgia on My Mind: Black Politicians in Congress
- Feb 25
  NYC middle schools reopen for in-person learning

March
- Mar 1
  NYPL launches Women’s History Month celebrations

LOOKING AHEAD: This past year has presented unprecedented challenges, and staff across the Library have risen to the moment with innovation, improvisation, and lots of hard work. As we look to the uncertain year ahead, we will continue to serve the evolving needs of our communities with a focus on public health and equity of service.