



ANNUAL REPORT

FISCAL YEAR 2017

BROOKLYN PUBLIC LIBRARY

Mission

It is the mission of Brooklyn Public Library to ensure the preservation and transmission of society's knowledge, history and culture, and to provide the people of Brooklyn with free and open access to information for education, recreation and reference.

Vision

Brooklyn Public Library will be a vital center of knowledge for all, accessible 24 hours a day, and will be a leader in traditional and innovative library services which reflect the diverse and dynamic spirit of the people of Brooklyn.



CONTENTS

Letter from the President & CEO and Chair 4

BPL Presents: A New Age for Arts & Culture at the Library..... 5

BPL's Blossoming Branches:
Improvements Big & Small, Indoors & Out 6

A Year of Milestones for Brooklyn Public Library..... 7

BPL by the Numbers..... 14

Donor List..... 18



LETTER FROM PRESIDENT & CEO AND CHAIR



LINDA E. JOHNSON

Access is one of those words so often used it's begun to lose meaning. But our librarians are exact with their words, and when we say access, we mean it in the Oxford English Dictionary sense: *the power or right to come into contact with something*. Brooklyn Public Library has always championed access through reading, and in 2017 we lent more than 12.5 million books to readers across the borough, empowering them to come into contact with as many voices, worlds, and moments in time.

This year, we challenged ourselves to champion access in new ways. Our New Americans Navigators fielded over 6,000 calls on the Immigrant Services hotline about resources such as ESOL classes and free legal assistance. Language Line, which provides interpretation services via phone, expanded to every single branch, so staff can communicate with patrons in more than 100 languages.

Library Lanes brought older patrons into contact with technology—and community—as part of a new virtual bowling league, with 24 branch teams competing in a raucous tournament. And BKLYN Incubator brought staff into contact with the tools and training they needed to launch new programs about music production, creative writing, food justice and more.

We also reconsidered what it means for every Brooklynite to access the robust art and culture that defines our city. A new Vice President of Arts & Culture took the helm of BPL Presents,

a series of free events that includes live music, film screenings, dance and art exhibitions, readings, and author talks—all designed to inspire democratic debate and civic engagement. BPL Presents partnered with Theater of War to bring ancient Greek drama to life for hundreds of people in Central's grand lobby, sparking dialogue about inequality and violence. BPL's first Night of Philosophy exceeded our wildest expectations, with 7,000 people streaming through our doors over the course of the all-night event to deliberate everything from environmental justice to feminism to Buddhism. Hopeful about the potential of art to catalyze social justice and determined to deliver the highest quality content, Brooklyn Public Library has emerged as a premier cultural institution.

None of this would be possible, of course, without your support. We are grateful to the many donors, trustees, elected officials, and volunteers who ensure every Brooklynite has the right to access knowledge—whether in the guise of a novel, concerto or 2AM lecture.

Linda E. Johnson
President & CEO

Susan Marcinek
Chair, Board of Trustees

A NIGHT OF
PHILOSOPHY & IDEAS



Check-Out





BPL PRESENTS: A NEW AGE FOR ARTS & CULTURE AT THE LIBRARY

Brooklyn Public Library's 2016 fall programming signaled a new direction for the institution, with a roster of creatively staged, provocative and inspiring events intended to bring exciting new programming to communities throughout the borough.

"BPL is at the forefront of a new era for libraries—one which puts art in a larger socio-cultural context in order to speak to wide and diverse communities. I can't imagine a better place than Brooklyn to conceive and produce relevant, innovative projects that reach out and take inspiration from a multi-layered community," said Jakab Orsos, the Library's Vice President of Arts & Culture.

The first order of business was a rebrand: BPL Presents is now the name for Central Library's series of arts and culture events, including talks, conversations and readings with authors, artists and scholars; live music, dance and theater performances; film screenings and art exhibitions. In the fall, among other celebrated writers, artists and scholars, the Library welcomed writer and musician Patti Smith, filmmakers Oliver Stone and Spanish novelist and translator Javier Marías. In October, Central Library's soaring lobby was the backdrop for an event called Theater of War, where a

dramatic reading of Euripides' *Madness of Hercules* was followed by a town hall-style conversation on policing and gun violence.

In January, bleary-eyed Brooklynites poured out of Central Library on a Sunday morning after A Night of Philosophy and Ideas, a 12-hour marathon of philosophical debate, performances, screenings, readings and music. The worldwide event takes place in over 30 cities, including Paris, Helsinki, London, Tokyo and Tel Aviv. The New York City event was co-hosted by the Library and the Cultural Services of the French Embassy and featured musical and dance performances as well as lectures by renowned philosophers including Simon Critchley, Achille Mbembe and Gayatri Spivak.

That was only the beginning. For the remainder of the 2016 season, the BPL Presents team and hardworking BPL staff proved that creative, thought-provoking cultural programming can flourish at the library—indeed, our patrons are eager for it. From a fairy tale writing workshop for Brooklyn nannies to a lecture series on art and activism during the Civil Rights and Black Lives Matter movements (Vision & Justice), from a multimedia community art event (Brooklyn Gaze) to combined yoga and poetry sessions, BPL Presents continues to introduce surprising, smart programs not just to Brooklynites, but to New Yorkers at large.





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The new
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BPL'S BLOSSOMING BRANCHES: IMPROVEMENTS BIG & SMALL, INDOORS & OUT

Brooklyn Public Library is in the midst of our most significant era of rebuilding in history, with more than one third of BPL's system being rebuilt or renovated in the next five years. In the past year alone, a handful of our most well-attended neighborhood libraries welcomed patrons back to freshly renovated branches or introduced them to newly created, innovative spaces.

Three of our busiest branches—New Utrecht, Dyker and Brighton Beach libraries—hosted reopening parties with elected officials and local residents to unveil renovations including energy-efficient lighting, new furniture and shelving, wired computer tables, new heating and cooling systems, children's play spaces, signage and more. At Brighton Beach Library's celebration, Council Member Chaim Deutsch explained why he was proud to support the project: "The library has been an essential resource for our community, providing programming for children and adults, computer and internet access, workshops and, of course, books!" Council Member Deutsch's words ring true for all of BPL's rebuilding efforts; we know Brooklynites in every neighborhood rely on our services, and we are working to ensure that our branches are comfortable as well as modernized.

While it is a well-established fact that libraries are a vital part of any community, connecting residents to information, education, social services and much more, these institutions generally don't have the resources to be at the forefront of technological advancement. But in 2016, a grant from the Brooklyn Delegation of the New York State Assembly changed

that for BPL and the borough's 2.6 million inhabitants.

The \$3 million grant provided all Brooklyn libraries with an array of technology including laptops, televisions, video game consoles, portable sound systems, and kits for the STEM programs Lego Robotics and Little Bits. The new technology was delivered just in time—thanks to increased funding from the City of New York, BPL expanded its STEM programming and assigned at least one technology resource specialist to every branch. The tech funding made an immediate difference to the thousands of Brooklynites who rely on the internet access at our neighborhood libraries in order to study, do homework or research, apply for jobs, work remotely or to learn new skills.

In May of 2017, Park Slope Library cut the ribbon on its reading circle and storytelling garden, a beautiful new outdoor space featuring an amphitheater, community garden with native plants, cedar planting boxes for children's gardening and seating for seniors. The garden was proposed through the participatory budgeting of New York City (PBNYC) process by the Friends of Park Slope Library, and was selected by PBNYC voters in Council Member Brad Lander's district.

"The Park Slope Library reading circle and storytelling garden is a joyful new public space for kids and families to read, dream, play, learn, create, perform, garden and share stories," Council Member Lander said at the ribbon-cutting ceremony. "It never would have happened without the leadership of the Friends of Park Slope Library, the support of Brooklyn Public Library and the creativity made possible through participatory budgeting." Since its opening, the Park Slope Library garden has been the site of a variety of library events including children's story hours,



sculpture-building with foam blocks and gardening classes for adults. The garden will also be home to a statue of beloved children's book character Knuffle Bunny, the creation of author Mo Willems.

Across the borough, BPL is making needed improvements to our neighborhood libraries. In addition to smaller renovation projects at branches like Dyker, Mill Basin, Marcy, New Utrecht and Ulmer Park libraries, we announced an exciting, larger scale project: the Greenpoint Library and Environmental Education Center. "We envision the center as Brooklyn's new home for environmental stewardship and activism, with resources for the people and organizations working to preserve Greenpoint's past and contribute to its future," said President and CEO Linda E. Johnson. The innovative library, made possible in part by a grant from the Greenpoint Community Environmental Fund, will promote environmental awareness, education and advocacy, and will provide significantly more space—indoor and outdoor—to house expanded programs and activities for one of our busiest library communities.



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A YEAR OF MILESTONES FOR BROOKLYN PUBLIC LIBRARY

Last year witnessed a series of major milestones for Brooklyn Public Library, and appropriately, it all started with a birthday party. 2016 marked the 75th anniversary of Central Library, our Art Deco masterpiece designed to evoke an open book, with the spine on Grand Army Plaza and two wings unfolding onto Eastern Parkway and Flatbush Avenue.

This Brooklyn icon has served the borough since it first opened its doors in 1941, and BPL commemorated its 75 years of service with an all-day celebration including musical performances, a creative arts workshop, an exhibition displaying the visual history of Central Library, a presentation by library photographer Elizabeth Felicella and architecture historian Francis Morrone, guided building tours and a proclamation by Brooklyn Borough President Eric Adams.

The Library also worked with Arcadia Publishing to create a book in honor of Central Library's 75th anniversary. *Brooklyn's Central Library*, published as part of Arcadia's 'Images in America' series, tells the story of Central Library through a collection of historical photographs, from its initial proposal in 1889 and its 1912 groundbreaking on the original Beaux-Arts building, to the resumed construction on a new design in 1935 and the library's grand opening on February 1, 1941.

"Central Library remains a Brooklyn landmark," wrote President and CEO Linda E. Johnson in the book's introduction. "New technologies have broadened Brooklyn Public Library's mission so much that our work—and often our facilities—would be unrecognizable to librarians and patrons of generations past, and the years ahead promise technological breakthroughs beyond the contemporary bounds of our imagination.

New means of communication, of engaging with the world, will continue to emerge at an astonishing pace. Yet whatever the future brings, Central Library will continue to adapt to meet the needs of its patrons and visitors—just as it has, proudly, for 75 years."

April 2017 marked another BPL milestone, this time with over 450 guests in attendance. The Library's 20th annual Gala honored BPL trustee Peter Aschkenasy and actress, author and playwright Anna Deavere Smith, who held an onstage conversation with *The New York Times* columnist Charles Blow about how public libraries influenced her life. The Williamsburg-based event raised over \$830,000 to support BPL's vast array of programs and services, including early childhood programming, free legal assistance and new materials.

At the same time, our youngest patrons also had a reason to celebrate. BPL announced the release of a new library card featuring artwork from Maurice Sendak's classic children's book, *Where the Wild Things Are*. The limited-edition cards are being issued to all new library card applicants under 13 years old and are available to library users of any age upon request.

"*Where the Wild Things Are* has been a favorite at Brooklyn Public Library's storytimes for more than 50 years. The new library card, featuring Max and two of his most terrible monsters, is a tribute to one of Brooklyn's greatest authors and one of the most beloved children's books ever published," President and CEO Linda E. Johnson said at the library card's debut party. During the event, second graders from Brooklyn's PS 118, the Maurice Sendak Community School, visited Central Library to receive their own library cards and enjoy a reading of Sendak's book by

Brooklyn-born fashion designer, artist and performer Isaac Mizrahi. Throughout BPL's system, librarians incorporated



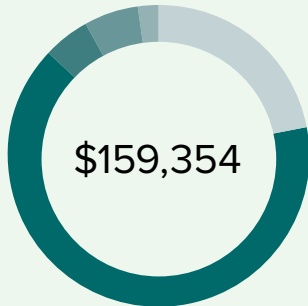
Where the Wild Things Are read-alouds and activities into their storytime programs. The events raised awareness around the importance of Saturday Storytime, the expansion of which was made possible by the city's increased investment in public libraries.

Our year of milestones extended to our online presence, too—we completely redesigned Brooklyn Public Library's website to make it easier for patrons to discover the books, programs and resources they'll love. The new site's main navigation is organized around the three ways a person can engage with the Library: borrow, learn and attend. We also revamped the online catalog, which allows patrons to access all of their library card information in one place, and unveiled an interactive branch map so anyone can easily find the best local library to meet their specific needs.

Of course, the Library is always changing, and more major developments are on the horizon. Our office of strategic initiatives and partnerships is in the process of developing a new vision and action plan for the Library, which will set the course for BPL's future. The new strategic plan will reflect who we are as an institution as well as what we strive to become—all on behalf of the vibrant, complex communities we serve in Brooklyn.

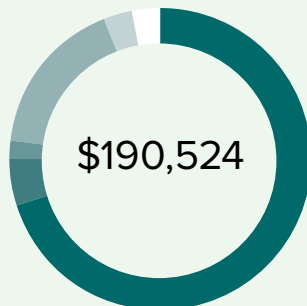
BPL BY THE NUMBERS

FISCAL YEAR 2017



FY 2017 TOTAL EXPENSES in thousands

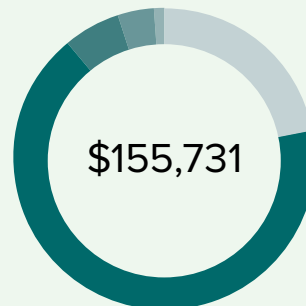
- 22% Central Library
- 65% Neighborhood Libraries
- 5% Special Programs
- 6% Management and General
- 2% Fundraising



FY 2017 TOTAL REVENUE & SUPPORT in thousands

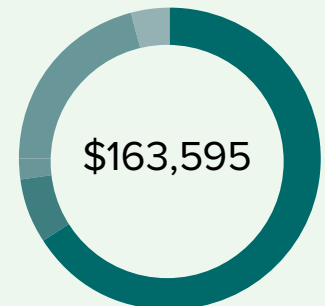
- 70% City of New York
- 5% State and Federal Govt.
- 2% Contributions
- 17% Contributed Facilities & Utilities
- 3% Net Investment Income
- 3% Other

FISCAL YEAR 2016



FY 2016 TOTAL EXPENSES in thousands

- 21% Central Library
- 65% Neighborhood Libraries
- 6% Special Programs
- 6% Management and General
- 2% Fundraising



FY 2016 TOTAL REVENUE & SUPPORT in thousands

- 66% City of New York
- 7% State and Federal Govt
- 2% Contributions
- 21% Contributed Facilities & Utilities
- 0% Net Investment Income
- 4% Other

FINANCIAL RATIOS

	Fiscal Year 2017		Fiscal Year 2016		Fiscal Year 2015	
	\$ in 000s	%	\$ in 000s	%	\$ in 000s	%
Total Operating Expenses						
Central Library	34,440	22%	33,286	21%	31,972	22%
Neighborhood Libraries	103,045	65%	101,308	65%	97,060	67%
Special Programs	8,776	5%	8,591	6%	8,236	6%
Management and General	9,966	6%	9,507	6%	6,195	4%
Fundraising	3,127	2%	3,039	2%	2,252	1%
	\$ 159,354	100%	\$155,731	100%	\$ 145,715	100%
Total Revenue & Support						
City of New York	132,980	70%	108,055	66%	98,691	64%
State and Federal Govt	9,955	5%	10,956	7%	11,855	8%
Contributions	4,537	2%	3,314	2%	3,732	2%
Contributed Facilities & Utilities	32,523	17%	33,909	21%	33,413	22%
Net Investment Income	4,807	3%	447	0%	633	0%
Other	5,722	3%	6,914	4%	5,908	4%
	\$ 190,524	100%	\$163,595	100%	\$ 154,232	100%

The accompanying statement of financial position was taken from the audited financial statements as of and for the year ending June 30, 2017, for Brooklyn Public Library.

For a complete copy of the audited financial statements, please write to:
Finance Department, Brooklyn Public Library, 10 Grand Army Plaza, Brooklyn, NY 11238

CONSOLIDATED STATEMENTS OF FINANCIAL POSITION *in thousands*

	June 30, 2017	June 30, 2016
Assets		
Cash And Cash Equivalents	\$ 21,266	\$ 20,015
Restricted Cash And Cash Equivalents	\$ 21,686	
Receivables, Net	8,964	8,358
Investments	44,071	42,114
Property And Equipment, Net	38,541	36,198
Other Assets	267	83
	134,795	106,768
Liabilities and Net Assets		
Accounts payable, accrued expenses and advances	\$ 9,506	\$ 10,287
Accrued wages and related liabilities	14,294	14,407
Deferred revenue	1,750	348
Total liabilities	25,550	25,042
Commitments and contingencies		
Net assets:		
Unrestricted:		
Corporate	66,262	62,573
Board-designated for building renovation	7,350	5,800
Board-designated for use in subsequent fiscal year	5,439	5,439
Total unrestricted	79,051	73,812
Temporarily restricted	27,579	5,320
Permanently restricted	2,615	2,594
Total net assets	109,245	81,726
	\$134,795	\$106,768

CONSOLIDATED STATEMENTS OF ACTIVITIES *in thousands*

	Unrestricted	Temporarily Unrestricted	Permanently Unrestricted	Total June 30, 2017	Unrestricted	Temporarily Unrestricted	Permanently Unrestricted	Total June 30, 2016
Operating support and revenues:								
City of New York	\$ 110,980			\$ 110,980	\$ 108,055			\$ 108,055
State of New York	7,810			7,810	7,614			7,614
Federal government	1,187			1,187	1,156			1,156
Contribution income	1,304	3,212		4,516	1,048	2,188		3,236
Purchase discount reimbursement contribution	834			834	2,214			2,214
Contributed facilities and utilities	32,058			32,058	33,531			33,531
Net investment income	1,588	182		1,770	1,188	145		1,333
Contributed goods and services	465			465	378			378
Special events, net of direct benefit to donors of \$157 and \$151 in 2017 and 2016, respectively	581			581	688			688
Fines, royalties and other revenue	4,307			4,307	4,012			4,012
	161,114	3,394		164,508	159,884	2,333		162,217
Net assets released from restrictions for operations	2,936	(2,936)		0	1,902	(1,902)		0
Total operating revenues and support	164,050	458		164,508	161,786	431		162,217
Operating expenses:								
Program services:								
Central library	34,440			34,440	33,286			33,286
Neighborhood libraries	103,045			103,045	101,308			101,308
Special programs	8,776			8,776	8,591			8,591
Total program services	146,261			146,261	143,185			143,185
Supporting services:								
Management and general	9,966			9,966	9,507			9,507
Fund-raising	3,127			3,127	3,039			3,039
Total support services	13,093			13,093	12,546			12,546
Total operating expenses	159,354			159,354	155,731			155,731
Change in net assets from operating activities	4,696	458		5,154	6,055	431		6,486
Non-operating activities:								
Grants and contributions	958	22,000		22,958	1,986	200		2,186
Permanently restricted contributions			21	21			78	78
Loss on disposal of fixed assets	(59)			(59)	(351)			(351)
Underwater funds transfer	4	(4)			(5)	5		
Depreciation	(3,593)			(3,593)	(2,865)			(2,865)
Investment gains (losses) not designated for current operations	2,918	119		3,037	(691)	(195)		(886)
Net assets released from restrictions for capital expenditures	314	(314)			200	(200)		
Change in net assets from non-operating activities	542	21,801	21	22,364	(1,726)	(190)	78	(1,838)
Increase in net assets	5,238	22,259	21	27,518	4,329	241	78	4,648
Net assets – July 1	73,813	5,320	2,594	81,727	69,484	5,079	2,516	77,079
Net assets – June 30	\$79,051	\$27,579	\$2,615	\$ 109,245	\$ 73,813	\$5,320	\$2,594	\$ 81,727

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FISCAL YEAR 2017 DONORS

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