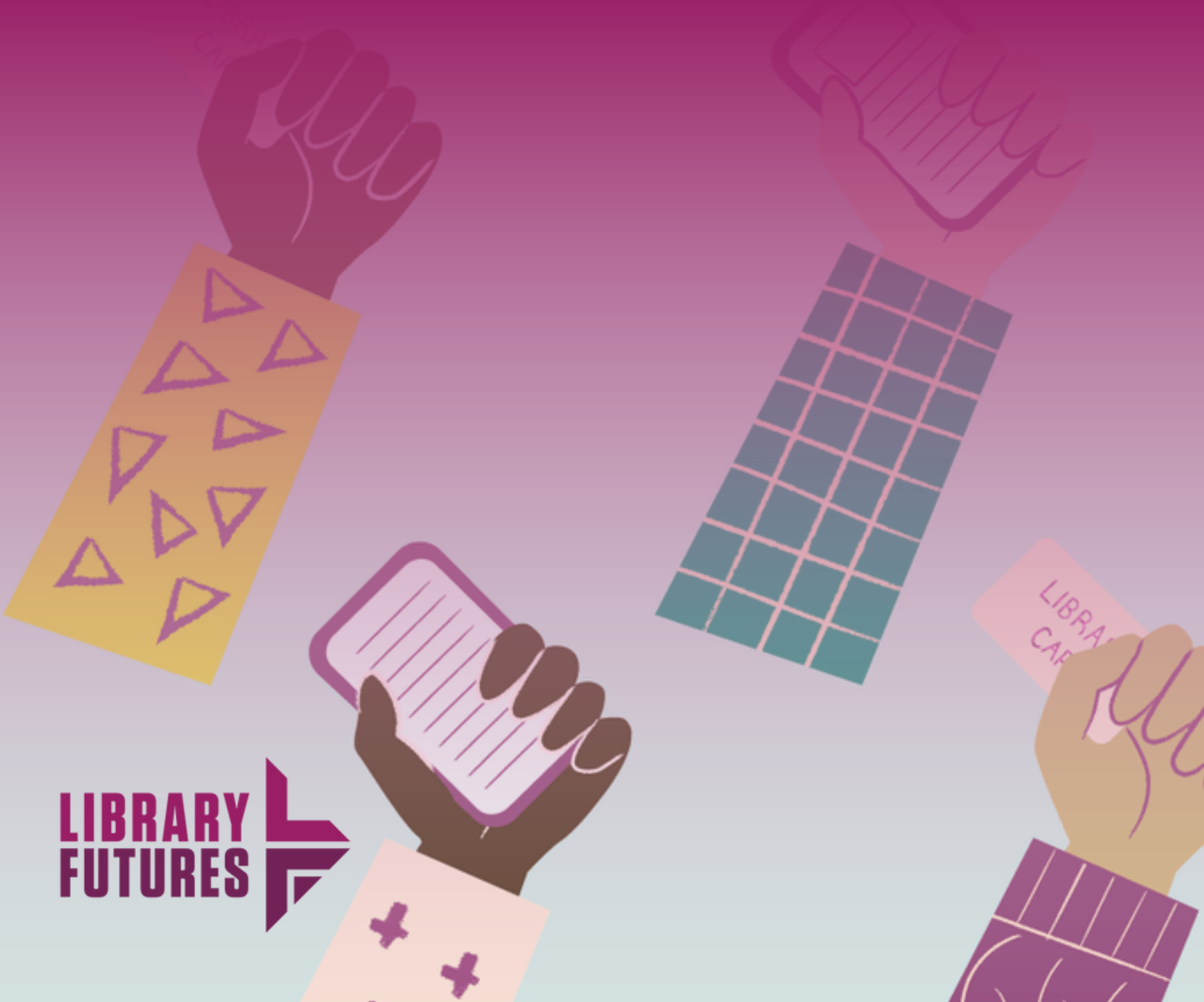


ANNUAL REPORT

2023



**LIBRARY
FUTURES**



a note from our director

We believe that librarians have the knowledge and skills to advance digital rights in their communities now – and into the future. Some of our goals for this year were to engage with a large community of stakeholders and advocates, create quality resources, build engagement, and support better technical standards and sharing among knowledge professionals. And we did!

With the help of our community, the philanthropic gifts that keep us running, and a strong commitment from the Engelberg Center on Innovation Law & Policy at NYU School of Law, we are better poised than ever to continue to make a major difference in the field.

I can think of so many highlights from this year, but it's the people who make it worth it – thank you for being a part of this project.

I like to say our work is “urgent and emergent,” and looking to 2024, it remains so. Let's do some great things together – see you in person and on the internet!

Yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jennie Rose Halperin". The script is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of each name being capitalized and prominent.

Jennie Rose Halperin

Director, Library Futures

WHO WE ARE

Library Futures is the vanguard nonprofit organization uncovering and confronting the fundamental policy issues that threaten libraries in the digital age.

Librarians, policymakers, and community leaders deserve a new approach to digital rights so they can protect, advocate for and advance a fair digital future for libraries and the communities they serve. Library Futures meets this need with fresh research, visionary policy and advocacy initiatives, and engaging education programs.



**ENGELBERG
CENTER**
on Innovation Law & Policy
NYU School of Law

TAKING A STAND

Librarians and library staff are already experts at providing free and unfettered access to critical information, tools, and resources for their community members.

But in our increasingly digital world, accelerated technological innovation and unjust laws governing digital rights require librarians, policymakers, and community leaders to confront new challenges that will shape the future of libraries and our society.

Library Futures believes librarians, community leaders, and policymakers **can and should be** knowledgeable about:

- The effects of current policy on libraries' digital rights
- The opportunities and threats digital access holds for libraries
- How to advocate for current and future digital rights policies that better serve their communities

Through fresh research, visionary policy and advocacy initiatives, and engaging education efforts, Library Futures empowers these critical audiences with the information and resources they need to protect, advocate for, and advance a fair digital future for libraries and the communities they serve.



THE MELLON FOUNDATION AWARDED A \$1 MILLION GRANT TO SUPPORT LIBRARIES IN THE DIGITAL AGE.

OUR FUNDING

In 2023, the Mellon Foundation generously awarded a \$1 million grant over two years to the Engelberg Center on Innovation Law & Policy at NYU School of Law to support the specialized mission of Library Futures: to identify, address, and tackle issues at the cutting edge of libraries and technology.

With our team of library practitioners, policymakers, advocates, and technologists, Library Futures is poised to explore new technologies, promote new possibilities, and address the challenges of the digital age.

The Mellon Foundation’s transformative grant makes it possible for that work to continue – and expand. It would not have been possible without the support of our community, board, donors, and staff, who have been core to the growth and advancement of the Library Futures project.



ADVANCING CLEAR POLICY SOLUTIONS

Library lending is enshrined in the Copyright Act, and libraries provide broad access to information by lending materials without restriction. But the advent of digitization has uncovered weak points in current policy that must be addressed.

We support digital lending that uses technology to mirror the library's right to loan legally acquired books under controlled conditions while respecting copyright.



FIGHTING CORPORATE CONSOLIDATION

Consolidation among corporate publishers is affecting the quality, value, and price of the digital collections available to libraries.

To ensure a fair digital future, librarians need access to a competitive marketplace of high-quality publishing partners and distribution platforms so they can meet the growing needs of their communities.



PROMOTING A TECHNOLOGY- FORWARD FUTURE

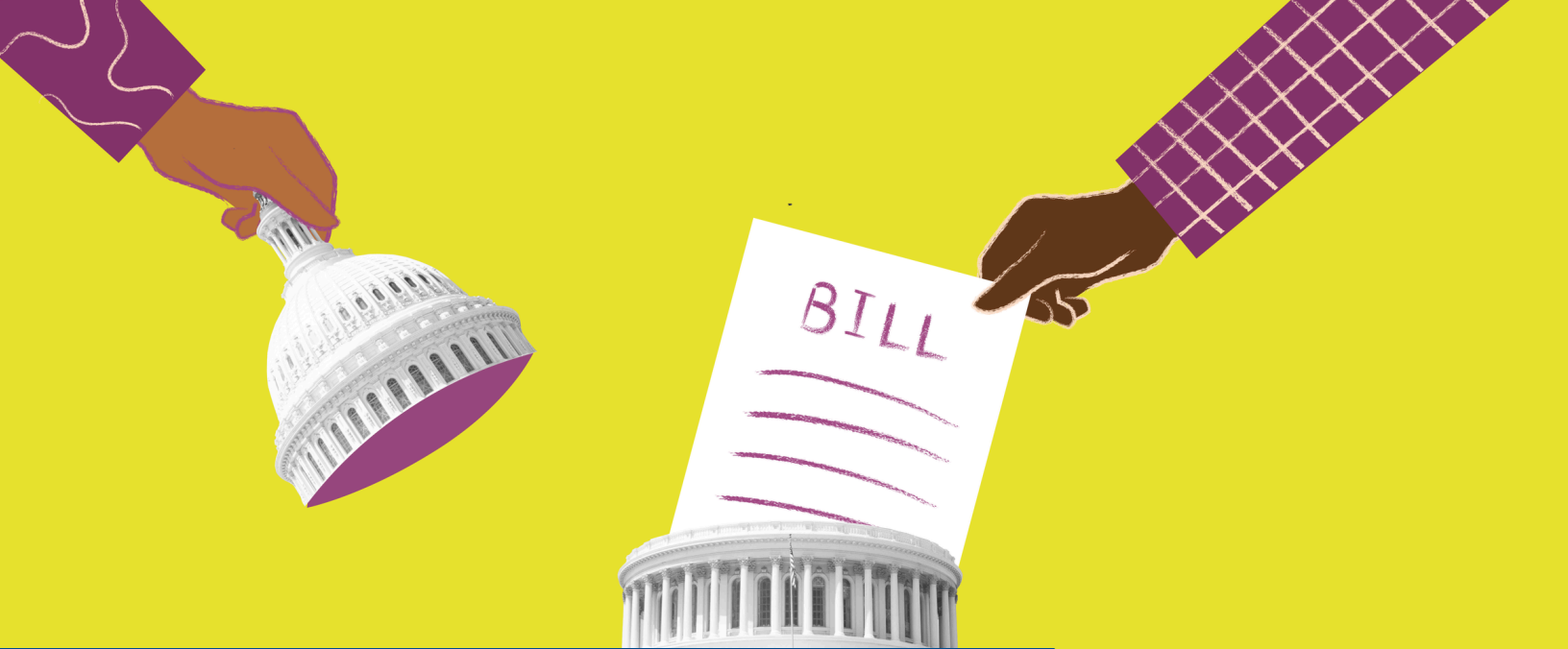
Technological innovations hold both promise and peril for libraries and public life.

Librarians can and should engage with the technologies that have the potential to shape the future – including artificial intelligence, machine learning, publishing platforms, Web 3.0, surveillance technologies, and those that will emerge in the coming years.



OUR STRENGTHS

- **Our first-mover mindset** that fuels our capacity to identify emerging issues, generate original research, and frame critical policy conversations,
- **Our focus on digital rights policy** to shape the future of libraries,
- **The ways we activate and support like-minded organizations** to find innovative yet practical solutions,
- **The energy, clarity, and fun** we bring to complicated issues,
- **Our strong relationships across the digital policy space** that enable us to leverage the interconnected expertise of librarians, students, academics, policymakers, legal professionals, community members, and our talented team, and
- **The support and community** of the Engelberg Center on Innovation Law & Policy at NYU School of Law, which is an incubator for groundbreaking projects that connect academic research with our everyday lives through research, policy, and education.



IMPACTFUL ADVOCACY

In 2023, Library Futures solidified its role as the vanguard in the advocacy and legal battles for digital rights and equitable library access.

These efforts include amici curiae briefs (friends of the court documents) in two landmark cases: *Netchoice v. Paxton*, before the Supreme Court, and *Hachette v. Internet Archive*, before the Second Circuit Court of Appeals.

Other projects included the *Hachette v. Internet Archive* liveblog and discussion event with esteemed experts and multiple policy papers, including "Digital Ownership for Libraries."

- 5 Legislative and policy advocacy efforts
- 4 Informative publications and papers
- 3 Major advocacy campaigns
- 3 Policy papers



EDUCATION AND ENGAGEMENT

Throughout 2023, Library Futures held 17 diverse and impactful events, spanning from keynotes and educational learning circles to innovative campaigns and discussions on issues that threaten libraries in the digital age.

We sparked new conversations with events like the *Athena Unbound* book discussion, published by MIT Press, and the “March for Libraries” campaign. Additionally, we promoted collaboration and technological innovation through forums such as the Library Leaders Forum and Creative Commons Open Culture VOICES.

- 17 Noteworthy events
- 3 Keynotes and lectures
- 2 Campaigns launched
- 2 Online workshops



TRAILBLAZING RESEARCH

In 2023, our research initiatives influenced pivotal policy discussions and informed strategic decisions at the intersection of civil liberties and information access.

From legislative measures like our STOP CSAM letter to discussion on the preservation of video games attended by hundreds of supporters, our work made a difference. Our student fellows contributed to crucial policy discussions with pieces like "Mapping the Bronx: Where Digital Redlining Denies Access and How Libraries Can Help."

5 Research projects

5 Research-based events

3 Policy discussions influenced by our research



LOOKING FORWARD

EXPANDING OUR INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

A new cohort of interns will join us, bringing new perspectives and energy to our team.

RESEARCH AND ADVOCACY

We continue to support our projects in research and advocacy, including a new initiative to establish a national public domain day.

COALITIONS AND COMMUNITIES

We're building new and existing coalitions in open standards, Controlled Digital Lending, intellectual freedom, publishing, and digital rights for libraries.

ADVISORY BOARD

Igniting a community of experts around our issues, we will support a five-person board of advisors to provide expert guidance to the organization.

MORE EVENTS

Events bring our community together and drive change. Expect exciting events in person in NYC and online!

Join us by subscribing to [our newsletter here](#)





PRESS AND COVERAGE

“The legislative ebook campaign by US library advocacy groups – in which Library Futures plays a vital role – provides encouragement for library services elsewhere struggling with the obstacles devised by the publishing industry.” CILIP: The library and information association

NOTABLE PRESS AND EVENTS COVERAGE

- **PEN America:** Pen America files amicus brief
- **CILIP:** Front line of library advocacy is close to home
- **Information Today:** The eBook Study Group: A New Way to Fight for Libraries
- **The Guardian:** The US library system, once the best in the world, faces death by a thousand cuts
- **CT Examiner:** High Licensing Costs Threaten E-Book Library Collections Across State
- **ACLU:** Coalition Letter to Leader Schumer on Opposition to STOP CSAM Act
- **WIRED:** The Internet Archive’s Literary Civil War

Member of the press? Please email us:

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If you represent a nonprofit organization, library, consortium, community group, bookstore, or another organization that wants to lend their support, please email info@libraryfutures.net.

Library Futures is fast, smart, fun, and collaborative. We tackle serious policy issues with stellar research and even better puns. Remember that super-smart friend in college who asked amazing questions in class, helped you ace your final, and threw the world's best party afterward? **That's us.**



DONATE TODAY.

We're a small organization with a big reach!

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