2023 IMPACT REPORT

EveryLibrary Institute

Working at the intersection of public policy and libraries
Positive **Impacts** for Libraries

From innovative research into the public perception of libraries to fighting book bans in schools to crafting pro-library legislation, the EveryLibrary Institute is at the forefront of public policy issues affecting our sector.
Bold Actions in the Fight Against Censorship

**FightForTheFirst.org** is the only anti-censorship digital platform that is focused on local activism.

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**Public Libraries**
From New Jersey to Alabama to Wyoming and Texas, FightForTheFirst.org is the pro-bono activism and awareness site that local campaigners need.

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**School Libraries**
The right to read does not stop at the schoolhouse door. We are proud to support dozens of local education coalitions as they oppose censorship in K-12.

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**LGBTQ+ Attacks**
When the censors go after LGBTQ+ books, that is an attempt to erase people. Fight For The First goes beyond books to let every person’s story be told.
Fight For The First
Defending the First Amendment in libraries

DEFENDING THE FIRST AMENDMENT IN LIBRARIES
We power pro-library campaigns in fifteen states.

FL, TX, AND UT COALITIONS
EveryLibrary provides the digital backbone to key statewide coalitions.

EDUCATION COALITIONS
School libraries are at the heart of dozens of our campaigns.

MORE THAN A HASHTAG
We have been on the ground supporting long-term campaigns since the start of this crisis.
Fighting for the Right to Read and the Rights of All Stories to Be Told

On Fight for the First, our joint initiative with EveryLibrary, we help local pro-library advocates get organized and be more effective in their campaigns.

Since Fight for the First Launched in March 2023:

- 73 Campaigns for 64 libraries and schools
- 172 direct actions like email campaigns and rallies
- 55,324 signatures from over 50,000 people
- 7 libraries saved from closing!

Launch a local campaign now at FightForTheFirst.org
Libraries for All Act

Model Legislation

ELI wrote a new state legislative framework for collection development and display policies that affirm the rights of racial, sexual, and religious minorities to have their books in their public libraries. The Libraries for All Act applies state-level public accommodation and human rights laws to library policy to create affirmative pathways that ensure that a collection is relevant to protected populations as well as being interesting to the majority.
EveryLibrary Institute 2023 Impact Report

Beyond Talking Points

Obscenity Law Brief for State Library Associations

When dozens of state legislatures tried to criminalize librarianship, ELI wrote the brief for state library associations on the legal and ethical issues behind the attacks and a guide to building new coalitions among affected professions to oppose these bills.

Pre-Need Memo for Library Boards

The First Amendment is a complex topic for volunteer library boards, especially when their legal counsel is new to the topic. ELI answered the need for straightforward, factual, unbiased information to help library lawyers help their boards stay within the law and support the rights of their patrons.
Asking the Right Questions
Innovative Research

Tracking Every Book Ban Since 2021

Dr. Magnusson’s “Database of Book Bans and Challenges in the United States” continues to be the authoritative source for information on attempts to censor books in schools and public libraries.

This unique project informs research, reporting, and activism across the country.

Understanding Post-COVID Reading

We helped the Freckle Survey ask Americans, “Where did you get that book?”

In 2023, over 23% of readers said the library was their source for reading materials. This continues a post-COVID trend and informs library leaders, publishers, and vendors about the state of our industry.

Unpacking Per-Capita Spending

Libraries exist in a funding ecosystem alongside other municipal and state services.

Our landmark “Funding Our Priorities” survey analyzed spending data from the Census, IMLS, FBI, and other sources to look at how we prioritize libraries in relation to other public sector activities.
Focused Questions Inform Campaigns

We asked parents across the country what they think about book bans, the role of librarians, and the right to choose their own books.

What we found will help change the conversation in communities and schools in 2024.

- 92% believe their child is safe in the school and public library.
- 73% agree or somewhat agree that book bans at the public library infringe on their right to make decisions for their children.
- 57% of respondents say that banning books from the school library is not an appropriate way to prevent children from learning about certain topics.
- 62% agree that book bans from school libraries infringe on their right to make decisions for their children.
Our Three-Part “Parents Perception” Survey Series with Book Riot

The findings from our Parents’ Perception Survey Series helps support a new approach to media relations, engagements with boards, and outreach to elected officials.

It is vitally important to have current data and insights in order to fight back against mis- and disinformation about book bans, libraries, and librarians.
Thought Leadership

1. Base-Building Crusaders
2. Anti-People (LGBTQ, BiPOC)
3. Classic Anti-Tax and Anti-Government Movements
4. Anti-Public Education and Anti-Union
5. Spiritual Warfare or Moral Panic
Preparing Librarians for Success

EveryLibrary Institute staff crafted and presented over 80 in-person and online training events for librarians and library boards to help them anticipate and respond to a changing library landscape:

We always use a “flipped classroom” model which allows us to work with - not talk at - our cohorts.

- 6 state library partners
- 85 training events
- Over 8,000 contact hours
- 4.8 out of 5 average quality rating
Expansive Policy Portfolios

We published two issues of *The Political Librarian*, our open-access public policy journal, to bring new voices to important discussions about the issues impacting our sector.

The EveryLibrary Institute’s convenings and discussions talk about emerging policy and funding issues which libraries should be focused on.

In 2023, we engaged with innovators and thought leaders across the sector on opportunities like the state **Digital Equity Plans**, Health in All Policy (**HiAP**) Planning, and **Civic Engagement** through the CivixNow Coalition.
Effective Coalitions
ELI Works Beyond Traditional Library Circles to Build Relationships

Funding our Libraries
As the only library organization involved in the National Special Districts Coalition (NSDC), we are at the table to changing federal policy about local government.

Future of Democracy
ELI sits on the National Voter Registration Day steering committee to ensure that libraries are at the center of civic engagement and voter rights.

Digital Equity
We work to anticipate funding for Digital Equity through active involvement in the SHLB Coalition and NDIA, the National Digital Inclusion Alliance.
Democracy is Our 2024 Agenda

EveryLibrary Institute relaunches VoteLibraries, our nonpartisan training and support platform for public and academic libraries who want to support civic engagement, voter registration, and ballot access.

ELI is committed to placing libraries at the center of civic engagement and election administration on campus and across communities this election cycle.
We are grateful to our generous philanthropic and mission-driven donors.

Our work would not be possible without the capacity-building support of these strategic funders.

If you identify our work as effective and useful, please consider donating today. You can make a tax-deductible donation online or contact our Executive Director, John Chrastka, to talk about ways to put your hopes for America’s libraries to work.

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Effective National Leadership

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The EveryLibrary Institute board members are committed, talented individuals from across the library and publishing sectors.

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Staff Team

Our staff and interns are aligned to support the future of libraries in schools, communities, and campuses.

John Chrastka, Executive Director
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Martha McGehee, Project Manager
Sanobar Chagani, Democracy Projects Coordinator
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