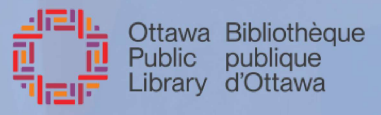


Photo: Ottawa Public Library

# The Impact of Ottawa Public Library\*

\* Part of the national study investigating the Impact of Canadian Urban Libraries, led by the Canadian Urban Libraries Council/Conseil des Bibliothèques Urbaines du Canada (CULC/CBUC).



# Executive summary

Ottawa Public Library has participated in the largest ever study conducted on the impact of public libraries with the aim of understanding the role that the library plays for individuals and for the community. This report presents findings specifically about Ottawa Public Library.

## Delivering impact across all service pillars

Overall, Ottawa Public Library exhibits a well-rounded Impact Profile, with demonstrated emotional, intellectual, creative, and social impact.

The highest impact scores are seen in the Intellectual and Emotional dimensions, particularly in the parameters of *'Knowledge'* and *'Well-being'*. The Social dimension generally score lower, though the Collections stand out as inspiring *'Empathy'* through insights into the lives of others.

## Programs are less used, but seen as highly impactful

Programs is the least used service pillar, attended by 19% of users, compared to Collections used by 97%.

Those who do use Programs experience them as very impactful across all four dimensions, where especially the Social dimension stands out.

And while only 19% have had the chance to attend Programs in the past year, even more users, 33%, find Programs relevant.

## Broad support among both users and non-users

Although not all citizens of Ottawa engage with their local public library, a large majority of both users and non-users find the library to play an important role, with 72% of non-users agreeing that a public library is one of the most valuable resources a city can offer its community.

This is also supported by the finding that non-use of library services does not stem from dislike of the library. Results indicate that non-users are simply focused on other things or getting their needs fulfilled elsewhere.

## Highlighting human stories from the community

Throughout the report, we highlight stories from library users. Amanda borrows as many books as she wants without spending money, and she brings her son to storytelling programs to learn new parenting strategies and develop his speaking skills. Barbara finds that the library plays a key role during a transformational time in her life as a new mother dealing with isolation at home. Carlos feels seen by the staff while navigating a major life change.

# Contents

1	Measuring impact	3
2	Use of library services	11
3	Impact Profiles	15
4	Perceived impact and feedback from users and non-users	27
A	Appendix: About the study	35

1

# Measuring impact

## MEASURING IMPACT

# Ottawa Public Library is part of a national impact study of urban libraries

The Canadian Urban Libraries Council/Conseil des Bibliothèques Urbaines du Canada (**CULC/CBUC**) is leading a first-of-its-kind national study to better understand the role and value of Canadian urban libraries in their local communities and for the country at large.

Being part of this impact study, **Ottawa Public Library** aims to understand the role that the library plays in the local community. This means uncovering the positive impact created for users every day – as well as measuring perceptions among non-users.

We are excited to share the findings of the study, hoping to ignite new discussions and inform strategic development and positioning for both Ottawa Public Library and urban libraries across Canada.

Ottawa Public Library's participation in this study was generously supported by



*It depends*

IS IT A 3IRD

# We measure impact by asking the right questions

## Placing the individual experience at the heart of the inquiry

Information such as the number of people using the library, how many books are borrowed, and the popularity of certain books only tells us so much. But what imprint does the library leave on local communities? How do users engage with library services, and to what purpose?

Going beyond conventional metrics, this study aims to understand how library services impact and influence the lives of the people engaging with them.

## Inspired by The Cultural Value Project and building upon Toronto Public Library's social impact study

The CULC Impact Study builds on foundations laid by the comprehensive British research project *The Cultural Value Project*<sup>1</sup> as well as by the pioneering social impact study initiated by Toronto Public Library.<sup>2</sup>

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1. Grossick G. & Kaszynska P. (2016): *Understanding the value of arts & culture*. Arts and Humanities Research Council.

2. Toronto Public Library (2023): *Enabling Torontonians to grow and thrive*.



Photo: Taylor Flowe



### Emotional Impact

The emotional dimension measures *how we feel*.

**Impact parameters:**  
*Well-being, Immersion, Emotional engagement*

### Intellectual Impact

The intellectual dimension measures *how we think*.

**Impact parameters:**  
*Knowledge, Reflection, Perspective*

### Social Impact

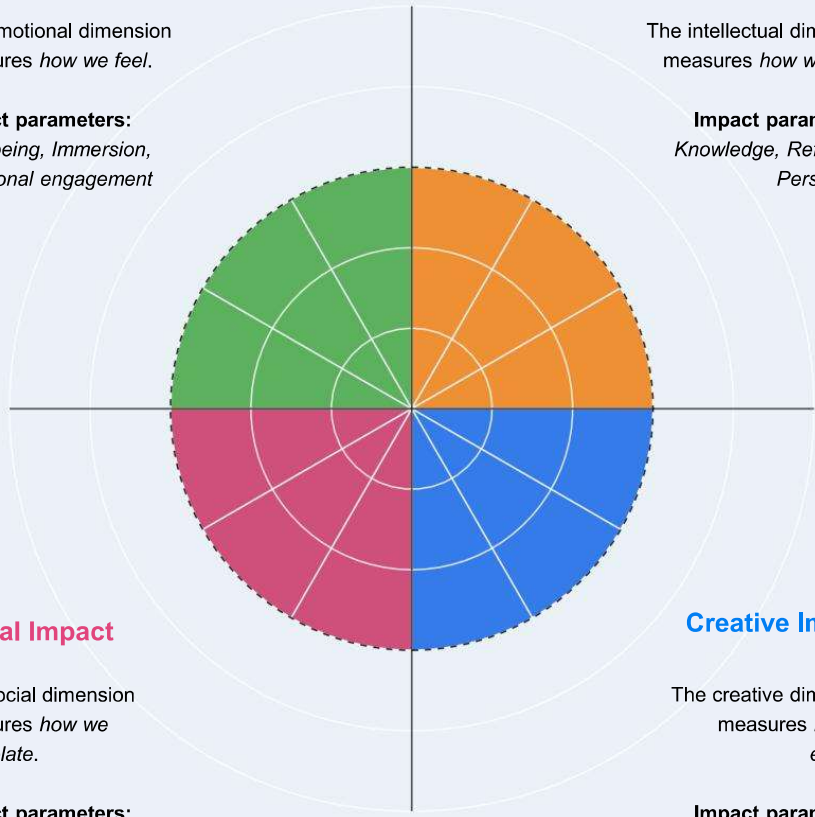
The social dimension measures *how we interrelate*.

**Impact parameters:**  
*Relations, Empathy, Community*

### Creative Impact

The creative dimension measures *how we engage*.

**Impact parameters:**  
*Inspiration, Skills, Expression*



○ Profile Average

## MEASURING IMPACT

# How to read the Impact Profiles

Impact is measured along **4 dimensions with 3 parameters each**, designed to capture different aspects of the library experience.

- Library users **score each parameter on a scale** from “Not at all” (1) to “To a very large extent” (5).
- The values reported in the **Impact Profile** of a given library service express the **average ratings** across all users of that particular service.
- Parameters measure **the presence or absence of positive impact**. A low score on a given parameter is not reflective of negative impact. Rather, it indicates that library users have generally not experienced a specific type of impact.
- Likewise, Impact Profiles are expected to **differ across library services**. The nature of some services may influence many parameters at once, while others exhibit distinct ‘peaks’ in a few key impact parameters only.
- A score of 1 indicates that all users respond “Not at all”, whereas a score of 5 indicates that all users report the maximum rating. In practice, these extremes are unlikely to occur. **Ratings usually vary between scores of 2-4.**

MEASURING IMPACT

# Backed by CULC and 26 individual library systems



MEASURING IMPACT


# Key facts about the CULC National Impact Study

A nationwide quantitative survey makes up the foundation of the impact study. Fielded in the period May – July 2025, this survey was conducted among the general population as well as among library users.

The study is the largest of its kind, with participation from a total of 26 CULC libraries across the country. The massive data collection garnered a total of 18,315 responses from all over Canada.

This report is based on responses from 885 users of Ottawa Public Library along with 120 non-users.



 For more details on data collection and the CULC Impact Study dataset, please refer to 'Appendix B: About the study'.



# Defining library users and non-users

Throughout this report, icons in the subheadings indicate whether the slide presents insights about 'users', 'non-users', or both.



## Library users

Library users are known by many names across different parts of the country. Common descriptors include: patrons, visitors, guests, borrowers, clients, and customers.

Likewise, there are several ways to define a 'user'. Criteria may include holding a library card, using the library's services frequently, or having interacted with the library recently.

Following the definition from the Toronto Public Library social impact study, users of a given library are those who have used at least one of that library's services within the past 12 months.

Throughout this report, survey respondents who report that they have used library services within the past year are referred to as 'users'.



## Relevant non-users

Based on the definition of users, non-users whose responses are relevant to a given library are then one of the following:

- respondents who have not used any library services in the past year but who reside in an area close to the library, as identified by their postal code.
- respondents who have previously used this library's services, but not in the past 12 months, and who have not used other library services in the meantime.

Throughout this report, these survey respondents are referred to as 'non-users'.



For more details on data collection and the CULC Impact Study dataset, please refer to 'Appendix B: About the study'.



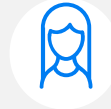



# Meet the people we have interviewed

Based on the quantitative survey, we recruited and interviewed 6 survey respondents from Ottawa to understand their lived experiences with the library and its services.

The interviewees were carefully chosen to represent different groups in the Ottawa community, with one being francophone.

On the right, you will find a brief introduction of each individual interviewed for this Impact Study, described with a pseudonym and demographic background, rather than their real name, in order to protect their anonymity.

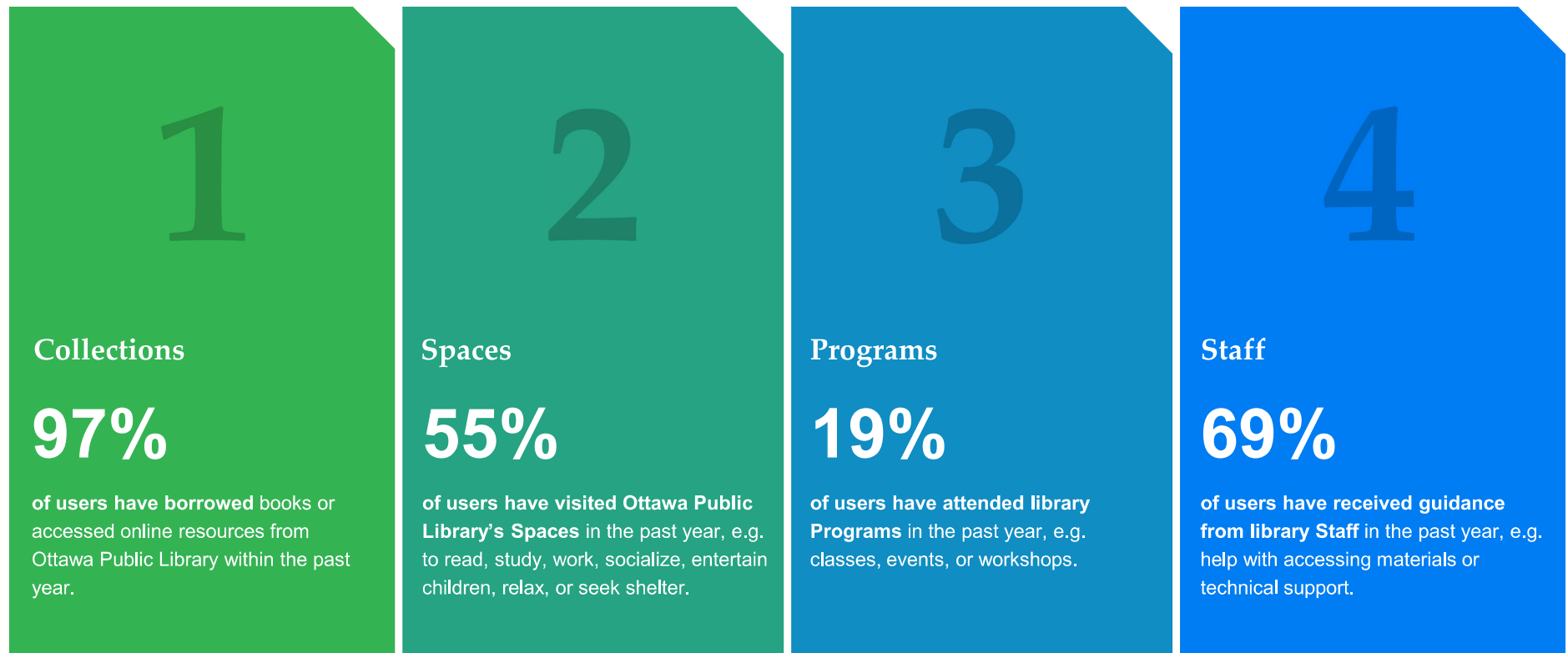
The pseudonyms will be used throughout the report when sharing stories of how people in Ottawa experience and engage with the library.

 <p><b>Barbara</b> Woman, 63 years old User Born in Canada Retired No children in household</p>	 <p><b>Carlos</b> Man, 43 years old User Has lived in Canada for less than 1 year Unemployed Children in household</p>	 <p><b>Amanda</b> Woman, 35 years old User Born in Canada Employed full-time Children in household</p>
 <p><b>Léa</b> Woman, 50 years old User Born in Canada Francophone Employed full-time No children in household</p>	 <p><b>Robert</b> Man, 69 years old Non-user Born in Canada Employed full-time No children in household</p>	 <p><b>Kevin</b> Man, 25 years old User Unemployed No children in household</p>

2

## Use of library services

## User engagement with library services in the past year



n: 885

# User engagement patterns

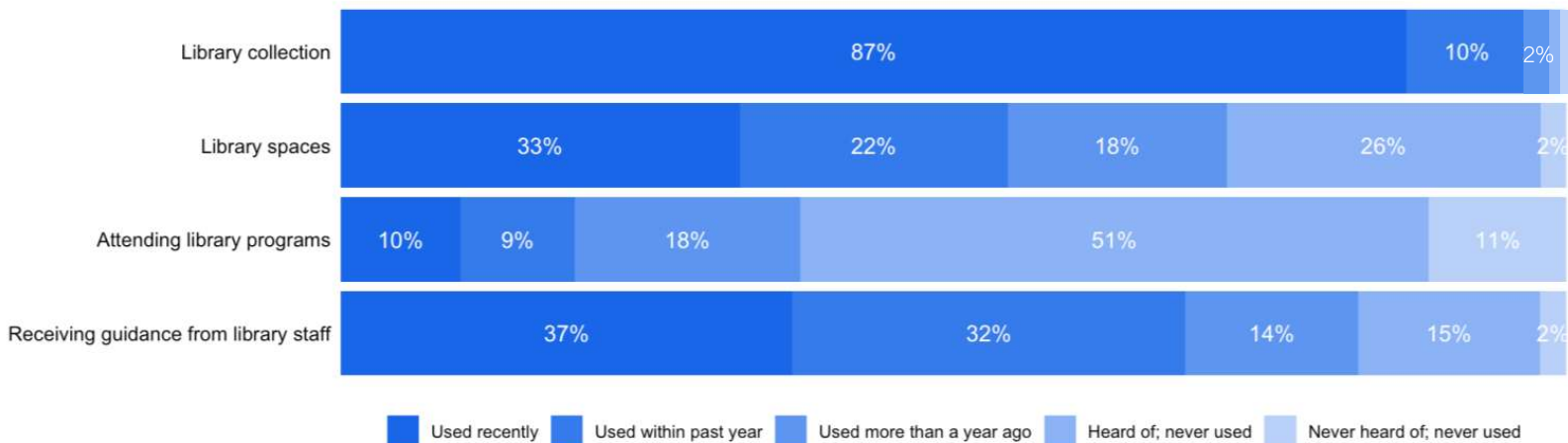
The frequency of library use varies considerably across different Ottawa Public Library service pillars. This is illustrated by usage patterns among those who have engaged with at least one library service within the past year.

The library Collection is the most popular service with 97% of users having borrowed books or accessed online services in the past year. This is followed by seeking Staff guidance (69%) and making use of library Spaces (55%). Library Programs and events have the lowest usage. Programs have been attended by 1 out of 5 users in the past year, and more than half of the users have never attended.

## Usage of library services

*How have you used your library's services either online or in-person?*

*For each library service, please select the category that best describes your use of that service.*



n: 885

# Perceived relevance of library services by users and non-users

## Users

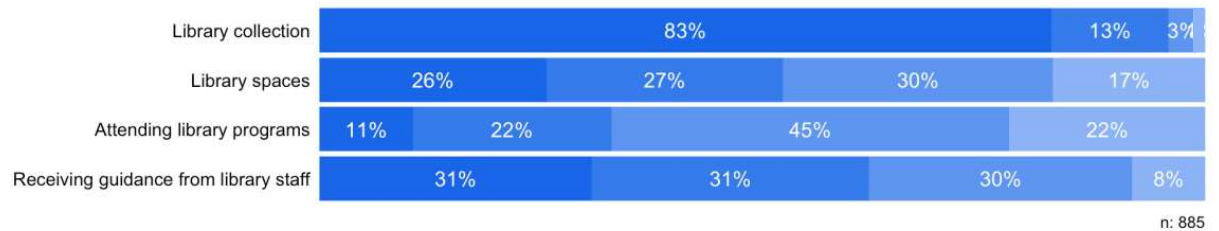
- Among library users, the perceived relevance of Ottawa Public Library's services quite closely mirrors their actual use of each service.
- Although Programs rank lower than other services, more users would potentially like to engage: 33% of the users find library programs very or fairly relevant, but only 19% have actually attended a program in the past year.

## Non-users

- Among non-users not currently using Ottawa Public Library's services, 43% imagine that the library Collections could be very or fairly relevant to them in the future. 38% could imagine receiving guidance from Staff.

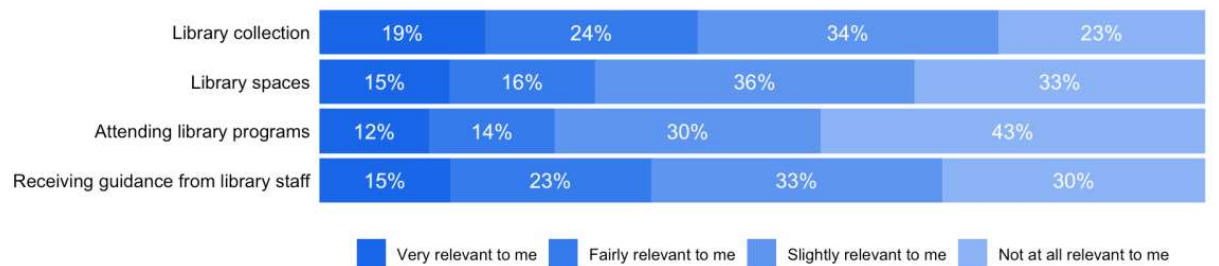
### Users' perception of library services

How do you feel about the following services offered by your library?



### Non-users' perception of library services

Could you imagine the following services offered by your library being relevant to you in the future?



3

# Impact Profiles

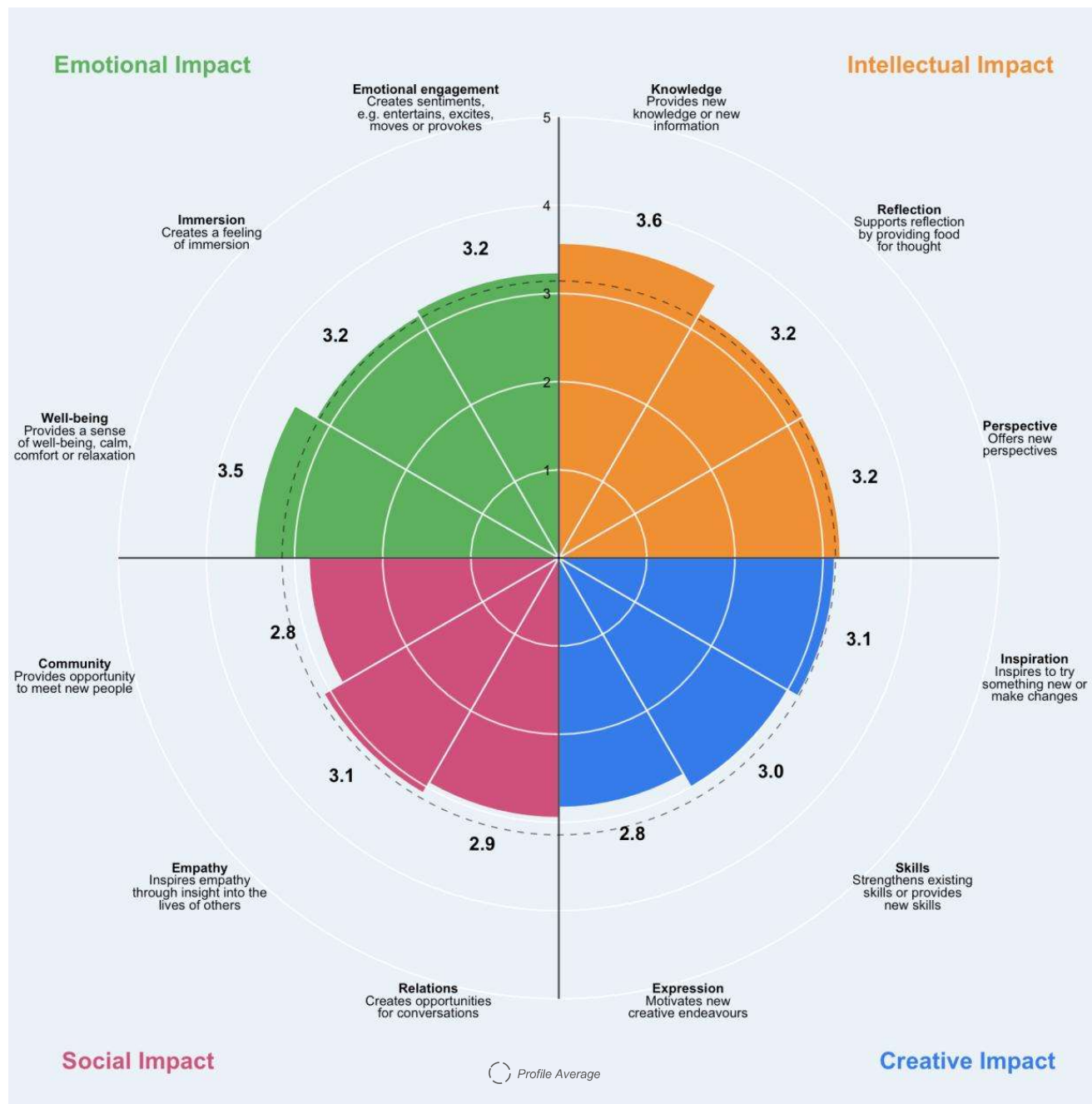
# Overall impact

Profile Average: 3.1

Across all library services and all impact dimensions, Ottawa Public Library has an average impact score of 3.1, reflecting a well-rounded impact profile.

This is based on 885 Ottawa Public Library users who have used either Collections, Spaces, Programs, or Staff within the past year.

Most impact parameters measured have a score of at least 3.0, averaged across library services. However, 'Relations' fall below at 2.9 while 'Community' and 'Expression' fall below at 2.8.



## What is the impact of Ottawa Public Library?

Growing up in a smaller town with less than 20,000 citizens, Léa spent her childhood in the library which opened her eyes to other cultures, perspectives, and views on the world. As a lawyer, Léa finds that the library has played a central role in nurturing her curiosity by providing access to a wealth of knowledge which ultimately led her to pursue a career in law.

“As a child in the 80s, I spent almost all my free time in the public library. The library opened my mind to the outside world and to other cultures.

I successfully completed my postgraduate studies in law at the university, and I largely attribute this success to the fact that I had access at a young age to a public library that was remarkably well-equipped at the time, especially in an isolated area.

I am immensely grateful to the caring librarians who have helped me and guided me throughout my life.”

Léa



Photo: Ottawa Public Library

# Collections

Profile Average: 3.4

The Impact Profile of **Collections** is based on 853 users who have borrowed books or accessed online resources from Ottawa Public Library within the past year.

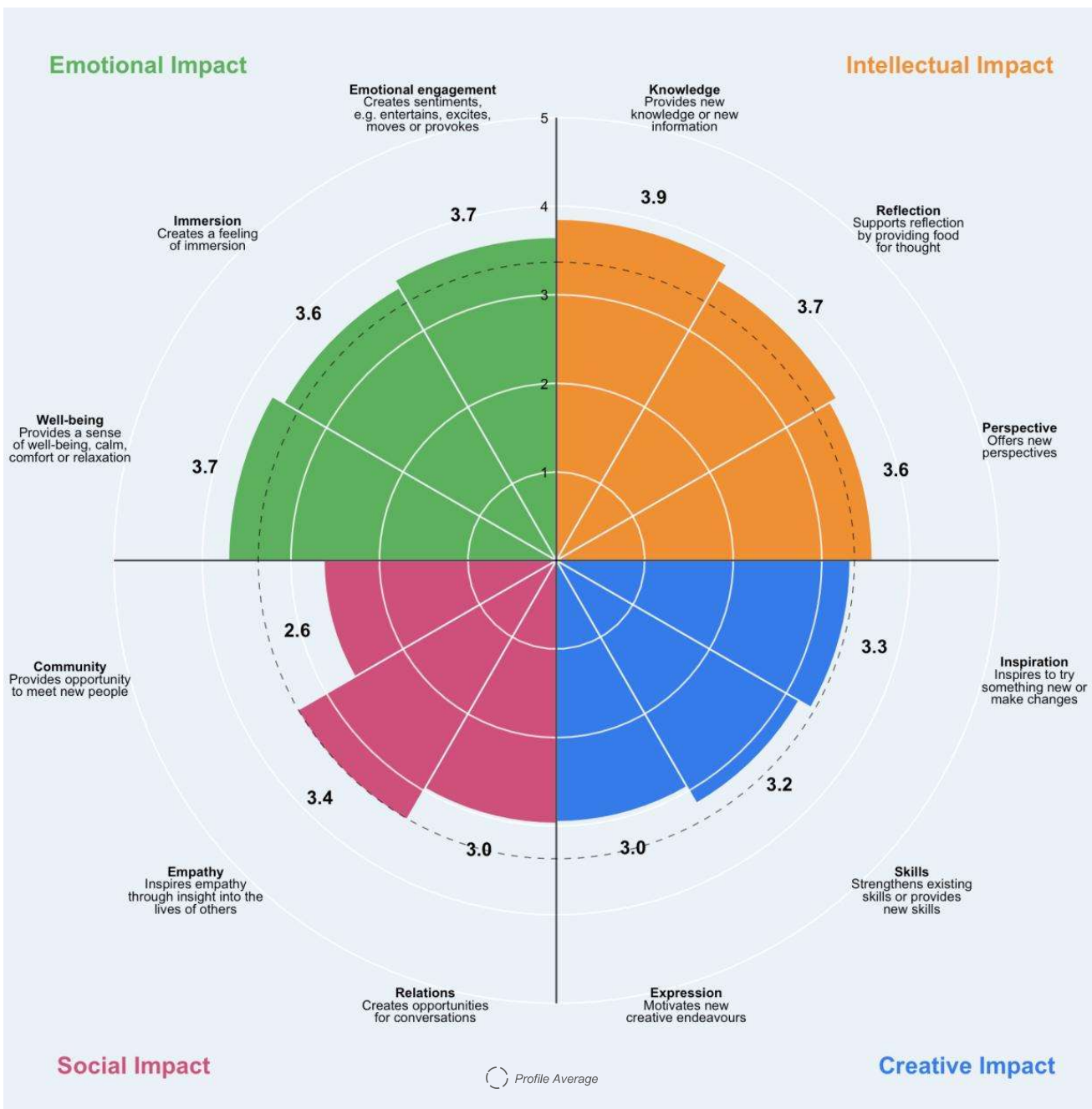
With a profile average of 3.4, this service scores at the higher end of the expected range.

## Overall impact of Collections

- Users generally experience the greatest impact along the Emotional and Intellectual dimensions, with the 'Knowledge' parameter scoring highest at 3.9.

## Key nuances

- Within the Social dimension, there is a distinct peak in the 'Empathy' parameter. This aligns with qualitative findings on the library Collections building empathy for others by providing perspective. The 'Community' parameter sits at the lower end of the scale.



## What do Collections mean to Amanda?

Amanda was introduced to the library when she worked as a private nanny and was encouraged by the family she worked for to bring the kids there, which sparked her interest in the library. Today, she and her son enjoy going to the library to pick out books to bring home. Reading books at home has taught him to rhyme and has helped instill a love of books that Amanda hopes will be lifelong.

"If I didn't have access to the library's collection, I would go to thrift stores or bookstores to buy books, but that's a significant expense. The library offers diverse opportunities without any financial burden. I usually borrow books from the library with my library card, and at home, my son and I pick out the ones we like together. We read them at home, and the books from the library have actually helped my son start rhyming and connecting images to words, which really aids his language development. He is almost three this year."

Amanda

# Spaces

Profile Average: 3.1

The Impact Profile of **Spaces** is based on 477 users who have visited Ottawa Public Library's Spaces in the past year.

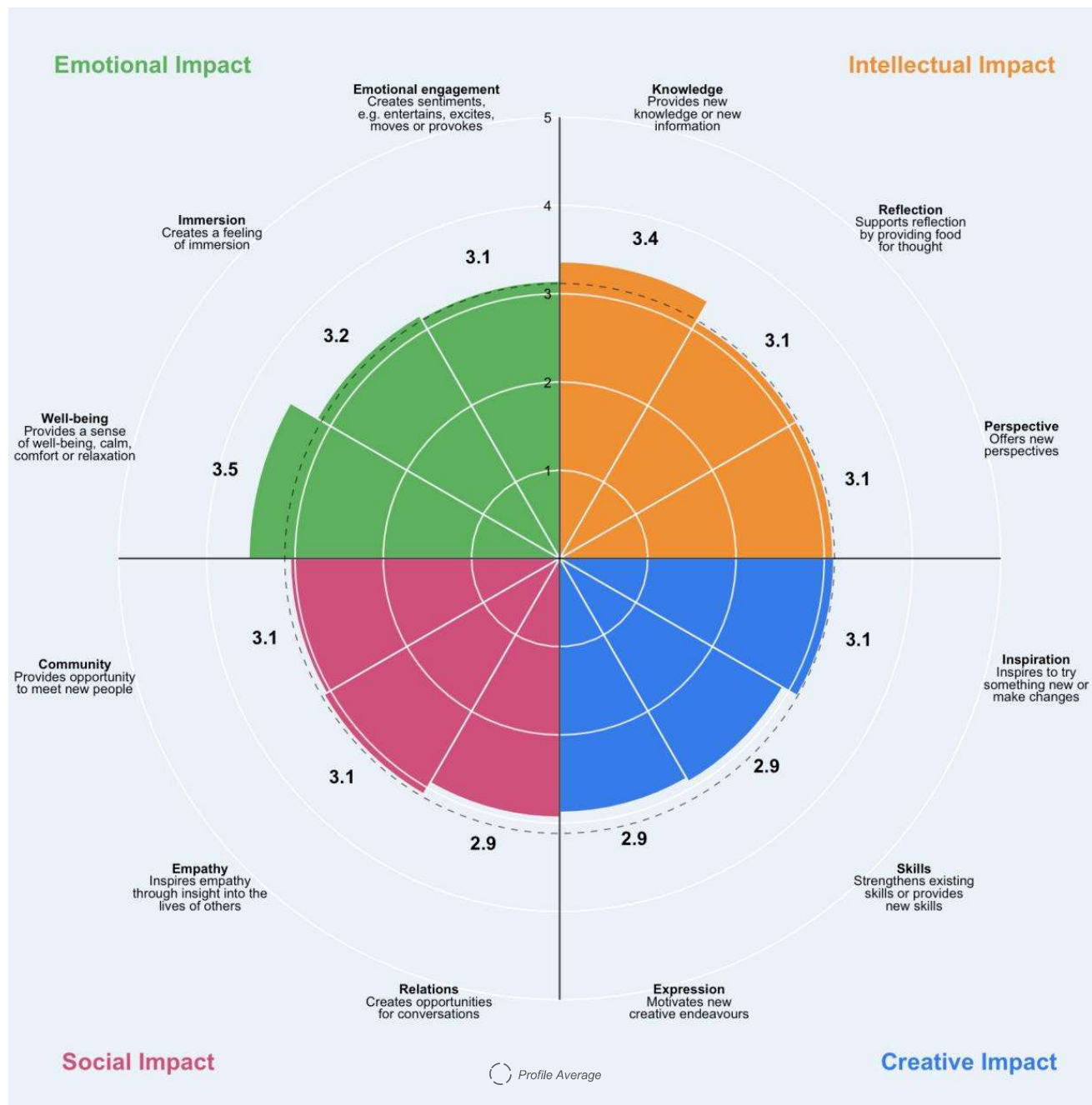
With a profile average of 3.1, this service scores around the middle of the expected range.

## Overall impact of Spaces

- Users generally experience the greatest impact along the Emotional and Intellectual dimensions, with the 'Well-being' and 'Knowledge' parameters scoring highest at 3.5 and 3.4, respectively.

## Key nuances

- Like making use of Collections, visiting Spaces has a primarily emotional and intellectual impact on users. However, Spaces elicit a more moderate impact on those dimensions compared to Collections.



## What do Spaces mean to Barbara?

Barbara is a big reader, a mother of two, and retired. Barbara started listening to audiobooks during COVID and now feels addicted. As a young mother, Barbara struggled with feeling isolated when she was at home with her two kids. The library became her go-to spot, where she found a new community, much needed during a big transformational period of her life. While her husband was at work, she got out of the house and expanded her world at the library.

"It worries me that the sense of community in our society is deteriorating and that people are becoming more selfish. As a young mother, the library was a wonderful place for me because it got me out of the house. Raising kids while my husband was at work could be a lonely experience, especially with two little ones at home. The library is important because it provides a welcoming and non-judgmental space where you can connect with people through tough periods of your life."

Barbara

# Programs

Profile Average: 3.5

The Impact Profile of **Programs** is based on 170 users who have attended Ottawa Public Library's Programs within the past year.

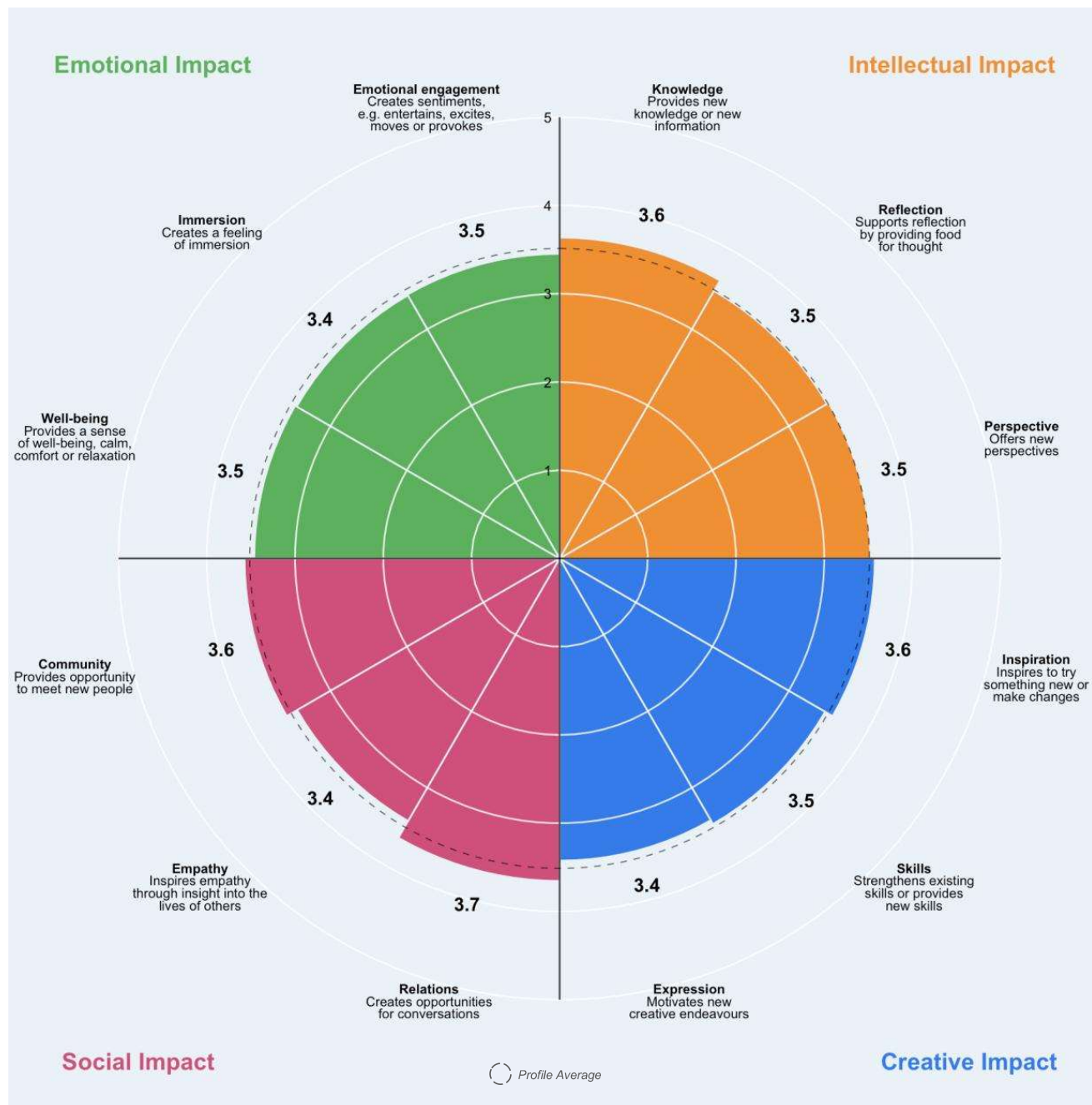
With a profile average of 3.5, this service scores at the higher end of the expected range.

## Overall impact of Programs

- Programs are used by fewer people than the other services. However, those who do participate generally experience quite a strong all-round impact with no scores below 3.4.

## Key nuances

- Even though Programs is the least used service, it has the highest profile average score of all (3.5). The Social dimension stands out in this compass and compared to other services, suggesting that engaging with other people is a key impact driver for Programs.



## What do Programs mean to Amanda?

As a mother, Amanda has found purpose in attending programs with her son. She used to bring the children she nannied for, starting when one child was only one year old, and now she goes with her son on weekends. These programs let her spend time outside the house, learn new parenting strategies, and learn about child development. During a story telling program, staff used sound effects and body language to make stories engaging, helping children develop their language.

*“During the story telling for the babies and toddlers, they [Library staff] would add the sound components, actions and words, learn the sign, they are still learning, remind you [and] the dance – you can do this at home, it is modelled there for you.”*

Amanda

# Staff

Profile Average: 2.7

The Impact Profile of **Staff** is based on 606 users who have received guidance from library staff within the past year.

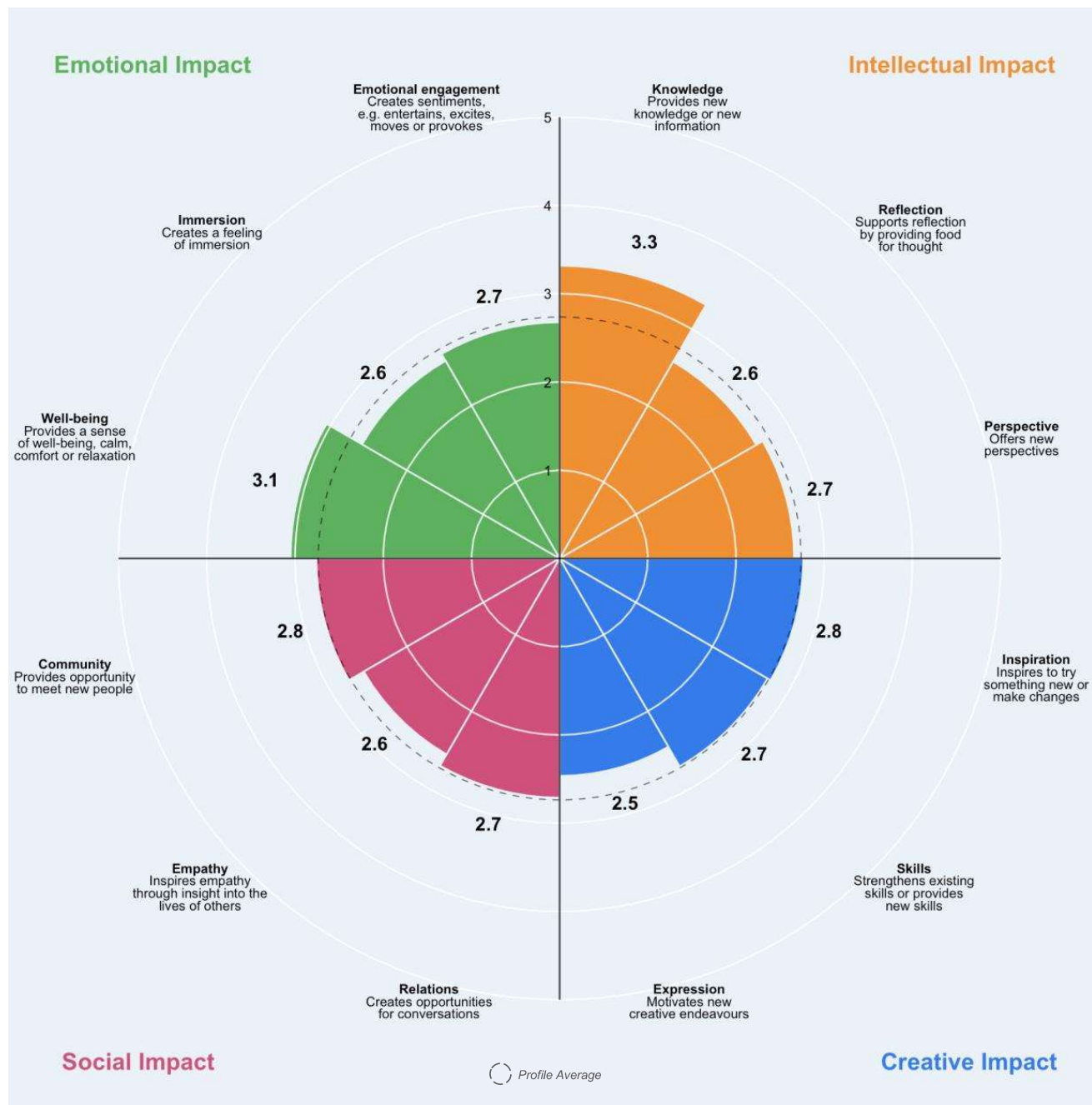
With a profile average of 2.7, this service falls at the lower end of the expected range.

## Overall impact of Staff

- Users generally experience the most impact within the Emotional and Intellectual dimensions, with 'Knowledge' and 'Well-being' scoring highest at 3.3 and 3.1, respectively.

## Key nuances

- The Profile Average score of Staff (2.7) is lower than those of other library services. Still, the peaks indicate core support offered by Ottawa Public Library's Staff as a source of knowledge, information, well-being and comfort.



## What do Staff mean to Carlos?

When starting a new chapter of his life in Ottawa, the Staff played a central role in helping Carlos obtain a library card and explore all the opportunities the library had to offer, thereby helping him navigate a significant life change. He felt shy because he was not confident in expressing what he needed assistance with in English, but the Staff acted proactively and helped him, making him feel seen and acknowledged and enabling him to get off to a good start in a new place.

"I hesitated to ask the staff for help getting a library card, so I delayed it a few times. On my third visit, I finally decided, 'OK, today I have to get a library card.' The staff member immediately realized I needed more than just information. She knew as soon as she saw me, and I really appreciated that. Without her help, I wouldn't have the card today."

Carlos

4

## Perceived impact and feedback from users and non-users

# Reasons for not using library services

## Reasons for not using library services

Do you have any particular personal reasons for not using public library services?

Please select all that apply:



n: 120

## Library non-use does not stem from unawareness or dislike of library services

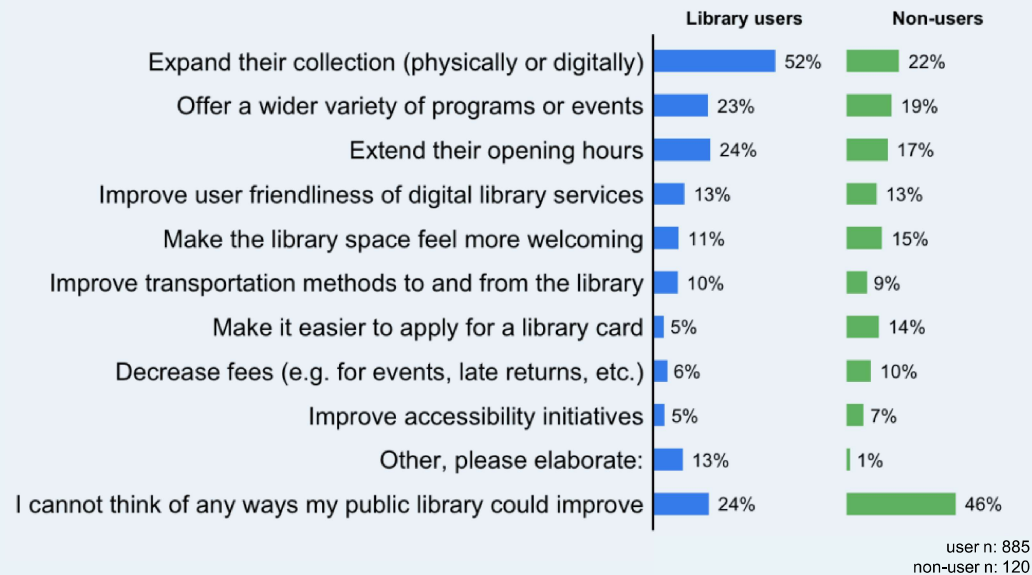
- Non-users are generally aware of what Ottawa Public Library has to offer, but they do not feel an urgent push to use library services.
- In fact, most non-users report that they do not use library services simply because they do not currently need the services (41%), are too busy (28%), lack motivation (11%) or for “no particular reason” (29%).
- Fewer than 1 in 10 non-users feel in doubt about what Ottawa Public Library has to offer. Few to none have a dislike for libraries or adverse past experiences with them.

# Library service feedback, users and non-users

## Suggestions offered by users and non-users

If you could decide ways for your local public library to improve, what would they be?

Please select all that apply. I think my public library should...



**Many non-users do not have improvement suggestions, but ease of applying for a library card might hold some potential**

- 46% of non-users are unable to suggest improvements to library services. However, 14% of non-users wish it were easier to apply for a library card. Only 5% of users have this same wish.
- For users of Ottawa Public Library, the most prevalent feedback relates to extending the Collection, opening hours, or catalogue of Programs on offer. More than half of the users would like to see an expanded Collection.
- About 1 in 4 users do not find that any of the listed options need improving.

## Inputs from a user and a non-user

"There's no French keyboard on the computers which prevents French speaking users from conducting their book searches properly – especially if the title has accents, for instance. This means I can't access the books I should have access to because I'm unable to find them myself."

Léa, user

"I am a member of the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul, a Catholic organization that helps the poor, and I really want to ensure that the less fortunate have access to all the information the rest of us have. I want to make sure people can access information and work things out for themselves without being trapped in generational poverty. While my church currently fulfills many of my social needs, I see the potential for libraries to offer similar value to vulnerable people."

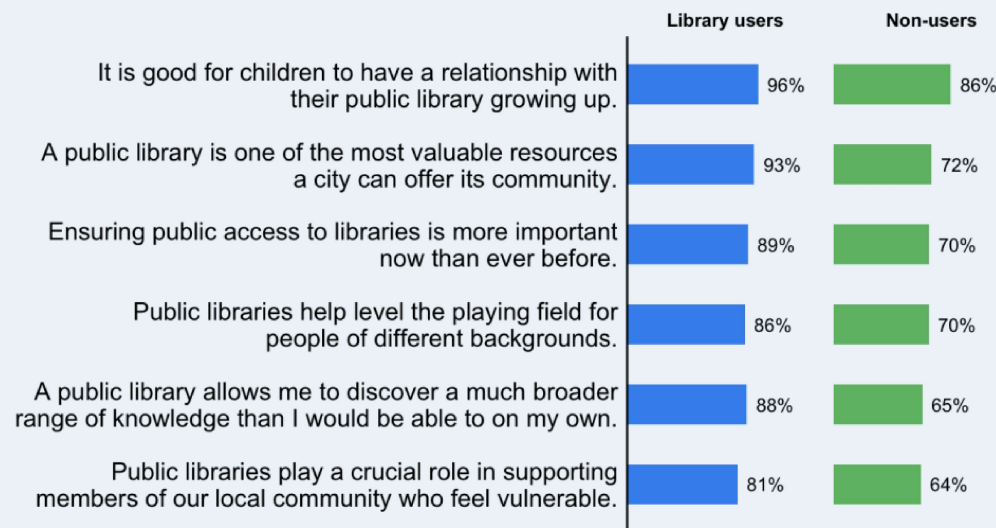
Robert, non-user

# Library impact perceptions, users and non-users

## Perceived library impact on individuals, communities, and society

Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements.

Percentage “Agree” or “Strongly agree”:



user n: 885  
non-user n: 120

**Libraries are highly valued institutions by both users and non-users alike.**

- Whether asked about their individual needs, support for their local community, or about the role of libraries in society, a large majority of both users and non-users agree on the importance of public libraries.
- Even among non-users, almost 3 in 4 agree that a public library is one of the most valuable resources a city can offer its community.

“Public libraries have had a deeply positive impact on my life, especially during times when I didn’t have a quiet place to study or read at home. For many students and individuals living in noisy or crowded environments, finding a peaceful, safe space to focus can be a real challenge. The library became that haven for me.

I remember spending long afternoons at the local branch during exam season, surrounded by others quietly immersed in their books. It wasn’t just about the silence – it was the sense of belonging, of being in a space where learning was encouraged and respected. The quiet study rooms and open reading areas helped me stay focused in ways I never could at home.

I’ve also seen friends benefit from library spaces, using them to complete college applications, prepare for interviews, or just escape distractions for a few hours. Public libraries aren’t just about books – they’re about access and opportunity. And for many of us, that quiet space is life-changing.”

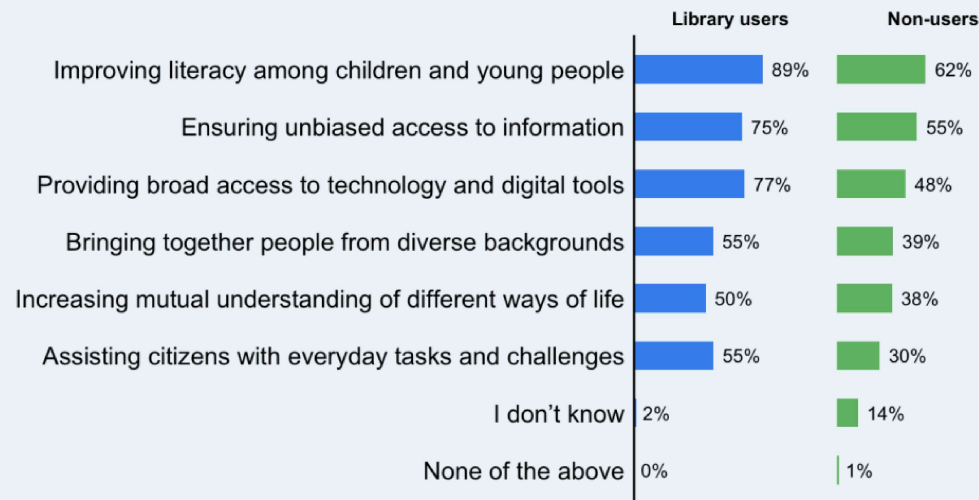
Kevin

# Areas of library impact according to users and non-users

## Areas with most significant library impact

*In which of the following areas do you believe that public libraries have significant positive impact?*

*Please select all that apply:*



user n: 885  
non-user n: 120

## Users and non-users alike believe in significant positive library impact

- Nearly all users of Ottawa Public Library believe that public libraries have significant positive impacts within at least one of the listed areas.
- Around 90% of the users believe that this positive impact is most significant within early literacy.
- Crucially, non-use does not equate to disbelief in library impact. On the contrary, 85% of non-users believe that public libraries have significant positive impact in at least one area.
- Many respondents have selected multiple different areas – especially among users – indicating a conviction that public libraries deliver value broadly.

*It depends* × IS IT A 3IRD

# Perceived impact of technological services

The majority of library users believe that technological services offered by Ottawa Public Library have a positive impact for people in the local community.

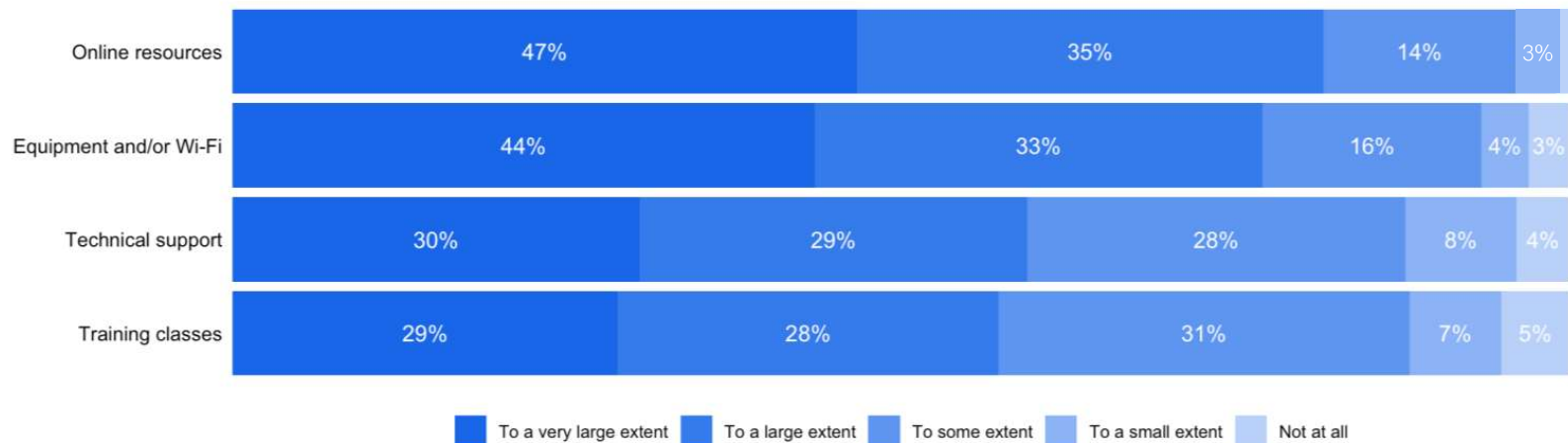
Most prominently, 82% of users find that online resources have a large or very large positive impact.

Although rated somewhat lower, tech support and training classes are nonetheless believed to have a large or very large impact by more than half of users.

## Impact of technological services according to current library users

*Public libraries offer various digital and technological services.*

*To what extent do you believe that these services have a positive impact for people in your community?*



n: 885

A

# Appendix: About the study

## APPENDIX

# The team

**IS IT A BIRD** was established in 2011 and counts +30 employees. We are specialists in turning deep human understanding into new business opportunities.

We are on a mission to humanize business by offering our clients opportunities to shift perspectives and drive transformational change that resonates beyond the bottom line.

As part of Implement Consulting Group, we work as a transformation collective, born out of a genuine wish to turn plans into impact and dreams into progress.

For this collaboration, we put together a team across IS IT A BIRD, Implement, and It depends to enable the best possible impact study.

## IS IT A 3IRD

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**LinkedIn:** [company/is-it-a-bird](https://www.linkedin.com/company/is-it-a-bird)

**It depends** is an unconventional research consultancy, specialized in untangling the messy human experience. Our advanced quantitative methods make sense of human attitudes, needs, and behavior.

We were founded in 2023 by data scientists who left the traditional consulting industry to deliver more truthful, more efficient, and more actionable human insights. Since then, we have delivered tailored market research across more than 40 countries.

Our high-touch project team is led directly by our founding partners and comprises experts in social research and data science. Based in a former butcher's shop in Copenhagen, Denmark, we provide full-service research consulting.

## *It depends*

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**LinkedIn:** [company/itdepends-dk](https://www.linkedin.com/company/itdepends-dk)

# A national study for the CULC membership

## Objectives of the National Impact Study

The CULC National Impact Study was commissioned to demonstrate the social impact of Canadian urban libraries on a national scale, beyond conventional measures (e.g. foot traffic, check-out stats, event participation figures, etc.).

That is, making tangible the social, emotional, creative, and intellectual impact of libraries.

## Scope of the study

As a broad national study, this piece of research is designed to be relevant for the CULC membership at large. The point of departure is a similar study conducted for Toronto Public Library in 2023 – which has been scaled, standardised, and adapted to be feasible across a number of libraries at once.

A National Summary Report (publication early 2026) provides all CULC members with insights into public libraries' impact on Canadian library users at large, as well as perceived community-level and societal impact by both users and non-users. Steering group libraries are provided with standardised reports of results from their specific library context, based on slices of the national dataset.

## Quantitative survey

The core content of the questionnaire is based on the Toronto Public Library Social Impact Study, carried out by Seismonaut in 2023, and the work expands on the 'Experience Impact Compass', a framework open-sourced by the Experience Impact Agency.

For this study, additional impact measures and survey questions directed specifically at non-users have been developed in collaboration with CULC.

The quantitative Impact Study survey was fielded in the spring of 2025, yielding a total of 18,315 responses across Canada, excluding Toronto.

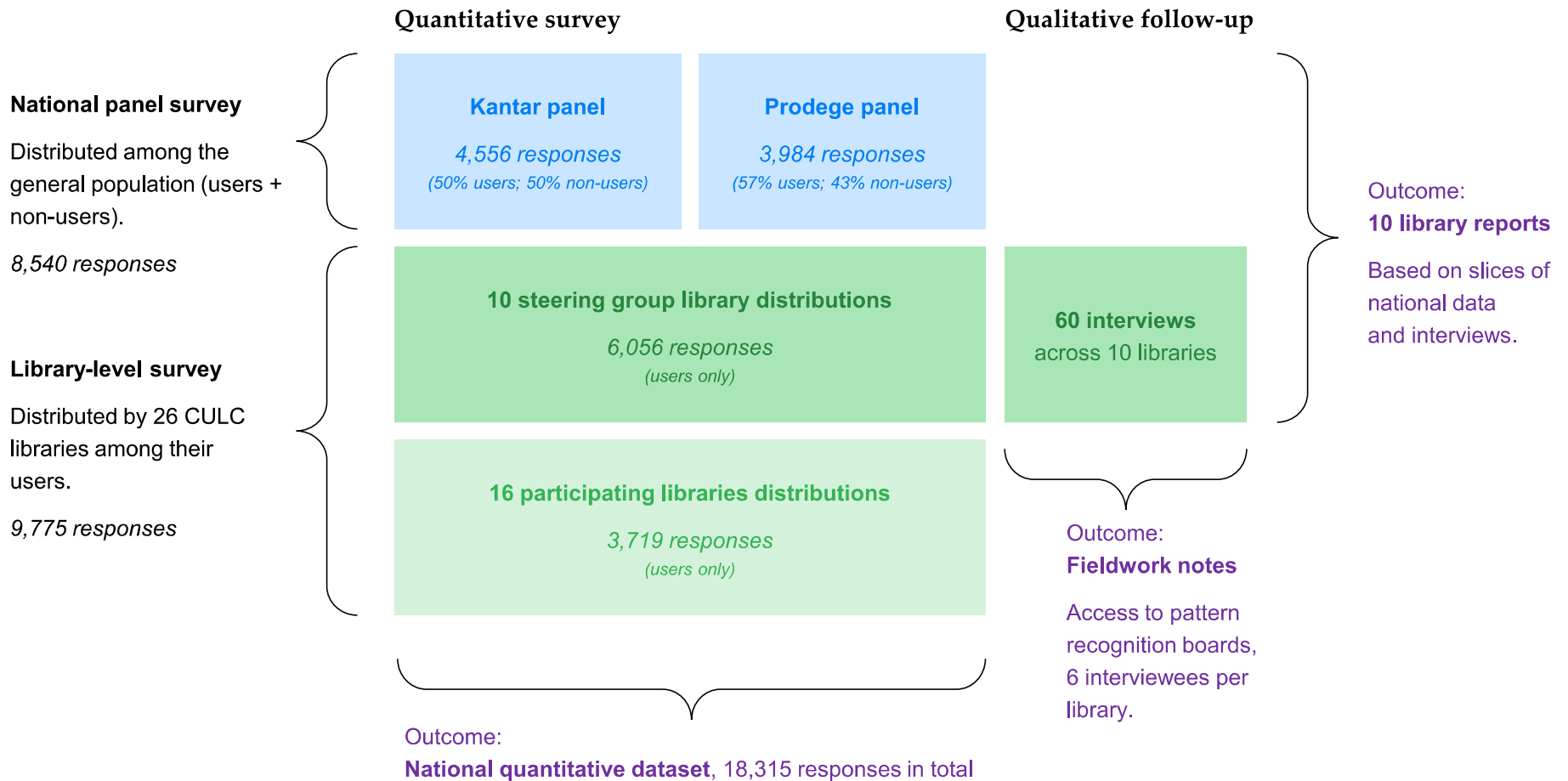
## Follow-up qualitative interviews

Informants for the follow-up interviews were recruited through an opt-in in the quantitative survey. These interviews were conducted as online sessions during July – September 2025.

To safeguard their privacy, respondents are mentioned by pseudonyms throughout the report.

See further details about research design on the following pages.

# Large-scale mixed-methods research design



# Questionnaire design and impact metrics

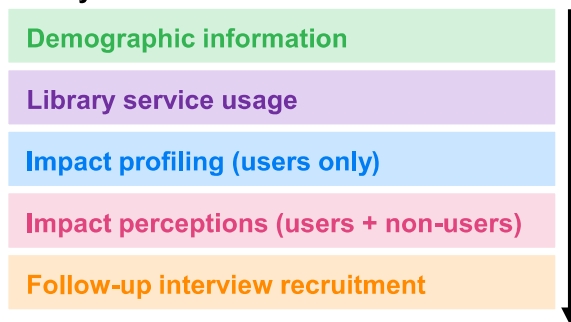
## Multilingual questionnaire

The questionnaire for the national survey is based on the questionnaire used in the Toronto Public Library Impact Study. The core content measures the Impact Profiles, based on responses from users of library services.

In collaboration with CULC, questions have been added regarding the perceptions of library impact more generally. These latter questions have been posed to both users and non-users.

The survey was fielded in both English and Canadian French versions, with responses collected during the period May to July 2025.

### Survey flow

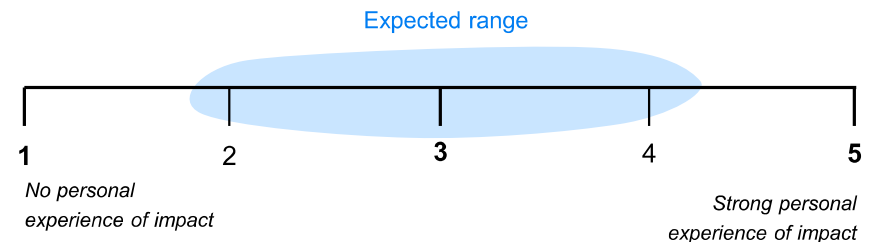


## Impact Profile metrics

As in the Toronto Public Library Study, Impact Profiles summarise the extent to which library users report experiencing different types of impact when interacting with library services. Each impact parameter is measured on a scale from 1 (“Not at all”) to 5 (“To a very large extent”).

For each library service, the Profile Average displays the average score across all 12 impact parameters. The Overall Impact Profile represents the average of impact parameter scores across all 4 library services measured (Collections, Spaces, Programmes, and Staff).

Although the experience of individual Impact Profile metrics is measured on a scale from 1 (“Not at all”) to 5 (“To a very large extent”), the extremes of the scale are unlikely to occur when aggregating user responses. Average ratings will usually vary between scores of 2-4 in practice, referred to as the “expected range”. As such, an impact score close to 4 on a given parameter indicates a highly positive experience.



*It depends* × IS IT A 3IRD

# Quantitative survey details

## Survey sampling details

Quantitative survey responses were collected during May to July 2025 using CAWI methodology across two distinct sampling approaches, resembling the Toronto Public Library Study:

- 1. Panel sampling.** National-level responses were collected across Canada, outside of Toronto, through Kantar and Prodege market research panels, subject to interlocked representativity quotas for geographical region, gender, and age group.
- 2. Library user base collection.** 26 CULC libraries distributed the survey to their own user bases by various means.

The combined CULC Impact Study dataset is composed of the panel dataset and each of the library user base collection datasets.

## Rounding

Due to rounding, percentages may not sum to 100%. Likewise, impact scores of e.g. 3.234 and 3.197 are both labelled as 3.2, but their positions on a graph will not be exactly the same.

## Weighting scheme

Similarly to the Toronto Public Library Study, data from the various sources involved have been weighted to mitigate skewed sampling. The nationally representative panel dataset serves as the guideline. Figures are generally quite stable whether weighted or unweighted.

### National panel dataset

The quota-sampled panel data are cell-weighted on demographic characteristics to produce a nationally representative sample of library users and non-users.

### Library user base collection datasets

These samples have been weighted using an iterative weighting scheme to more closely resemble the regional gender and age distributions of users in the panel sample, while ensuring no extreme weights (range: 0.5 – 2).

### Combined dataset

Library users in the combined dataset have been weighted to match the distribution of libraries in the panel sample. This weight ensures that the national results are not skewed by the addition of the library user base collection data.

# Geographic filtering

## Filtered panel sampling of non-users

By definition, users of a given library are people who have used at least one of the library’s services within the past year. Thus, non-users relevant to a given library are identified as one of the following:

- a) individuals who have not used any library services within the past year but who reside in an area close to the library, as identified by their postal code.
- b) individuals who have previously used this library services (more than 1 year ago) without having used any library services in the meantime.

Refer to the table of postal codes (FSA) to the right.

## Restricted library user base sampling

Calgary Public Library, Ottawa Public Library, Regina Public Library, and Saskatoon Public Library have opted to restrict their in-house user base data collection based on the postal codes supplied by the individual library systems.

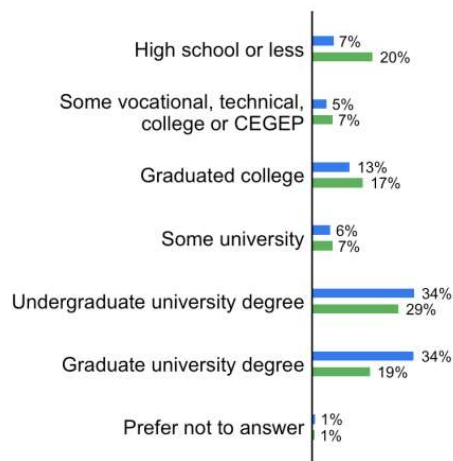
Refer to the table of postal codes (FSA) to the right.

<b>Calgary Public Library</b>	T2X, T2Y, T3Z, T3H, T3B, T3L, T2M, T2T, T3C, T3G, T3A, T1S, T2W, T2V, T2J, T2H, T3E, T2P, T2N, T2L, T2S, T2G, T2R, T2E, T2K, T3J, T3R, T3P, T3K, T4B, T3M, T2Z, T2C, T3S, T2B, T2A, T1Y, T1X, T3N, T1Z, T4A, T3T
<b>Edmonton Public Library</b>	T5A, T5B, T5C, T5E, T5G, T5H, T5J, T5K, T5L, T5M, T5N, T5P, T5R, T5S, T5T, T5V, T5W, T5X, T5Y, T5Z, T6A, T6B, T6C, T6E, T6G, T6H, T6J, T6K, T6L, T6M, T6N, T6P, T6R, T6S, T6T, T6V, T6W, T6X, T6Y
<b>Halifax Public Libraries</b>	B3H, B3J, B3K, B3L, B3M, B3N, B3P, B3R, B3S
<b>Hamilton Public Library</b>	L8B, L8E, L8G, L8H, L8J, L8K, L8L, L8M, L8N, L8P, L8R, L8S, L8T, L8V, L8W, L9A, L9B, L9C, L9G, L9H, L9K
<b>Bibliothèques Montréal</b>	H1A, H1B, H1C, H1E, H1G, H1H, H1J, H1K, H1L, H1M, H1N, H1P, H1R, H1S, H1T, H1V, H1W, H1X, H1Y, H1Z, H2A, H2B, H2C, H2E, H2G, H2H, H2J, H2K, H2L, H2M, H2N, H2P, H2R, H2S, H2T, H2V, H2W, H2X, H2Y, H2Z, H3A, H3B, H3C, H3E, H3G, H3H, H3J, H3K, H3L, H3M, H3N, H3S, H3T, H3V, H3W, H3X, H4A, H4B, H4C, H4E, H4G, H4H, H4J, H4K, H4L, H4M, H4N, H4P, H4R, H4S, H4T, H5A, H5B, H8N, H8P, H8R, H8S, H8T, H8Y, H8Z, H9C, H9E, H9H, H9K
<b>Ottawa Public Library</b>	K1A, K1B, K1C, K1E, K1G, K1H, K1J, K1K, K1L, K1M, K1N, K1P, K1R, K1S, K1T, K1V, K1W, K1X, K1Y, K1Z, K2A, K2B, K2C, K2E, K2G, K2H, K2J, K2K, K2L, K2M, K2P, K2R, K2S, K2T, K2V, K2W, K4A, K4B, K4C, K4M, K4P
<b>Regina Public Library</b>	S4L, S4N, S4P, S4R, S4S, S4T, S4V, S4W, S4X, S4Y, S4Z
<b>Saskatoon Public Library</b>	S7B, S7C, S7H, S7J, S7K, S7L, S7M, S7N, S7P, S7R, S7S, S7T, S7V, S7W
<b>Vancouver Public Library</b>	V5K, V5L, V5M, V5N, V5P, V5R, V5S, V5T, V5V, V5W, V5X, V5Y, V5Z, V6A, V6B, V6C, V6E, V6G, V6H, V6J, V6K, V6L, V6M, V6N, V6P, V6R, V6S, V6T, V6Z, V7X, V7Y
<b>Vaughan Public Libraries</b>	L3T, L4B, L4C, L4H, L4J, L4K, L4L, L4S, L6A, L6P, L6R, L6S, L6T, M2R, M3J, M9L, M9V



# Key respondent characteristics (1/2)

**Education level**



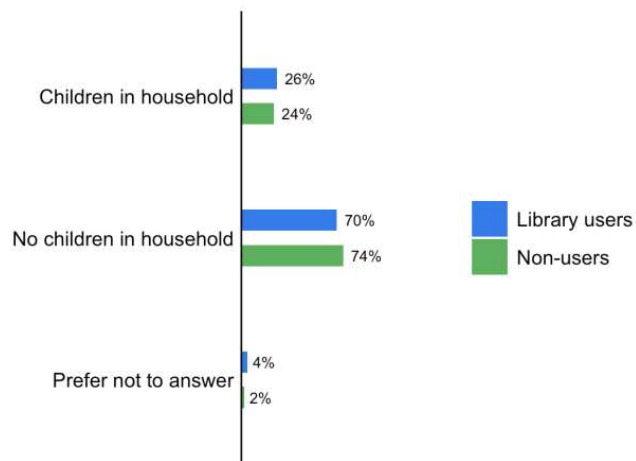
user n: 885  
non-user n: 120

**Household income**



user n: 885  
non-user n: 120

**Children**

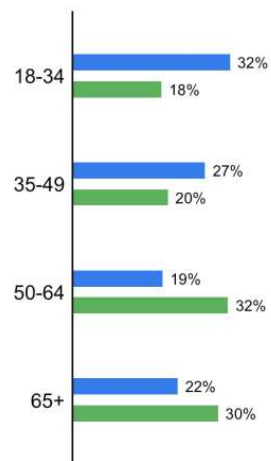


user n: 885  
non-user n: 120



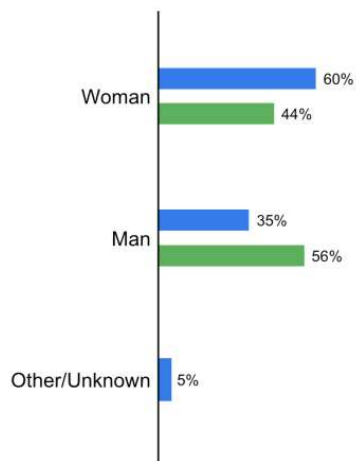
# Key respondent characteristics (2/2)

Age groups



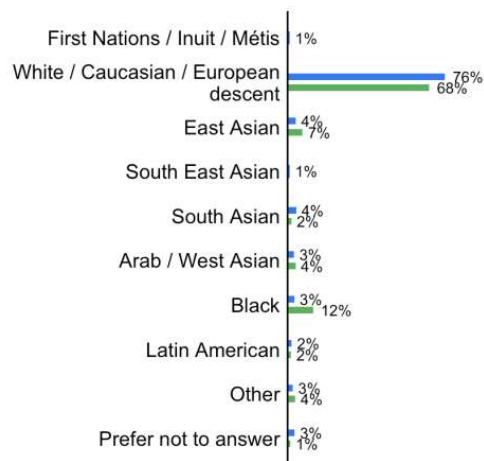
user n: 885  
non-user n: 120

Gender identity



user n: 885  
non-user n: 120

Ethnicity



user n: 885  
non-user n: 120

Library users  
Non-users

Old ways won't open new doors

# Addendum: National results

## Notes on the national results

### How to use and not use the national results

The aim and spirit of this impact study is illustrating the impact of public libraries across Canada. The research design and data collection methods do not facilitate between-library comparisons.

Comparisons to national averages are provided as an addendum to contextualise Impact Profile patterns. E.g. do Collections generally exhibit the same peaks across libraries? Are scores for Staff typically lower? Do Programs typically have more all-round impact?

These visualizations provide an idea of how individual library impact scores compare to the average library user across the country, but they should be interpreted cautiously.

The CULC Study Average cuts across users from very different library systems who are part of the dataset (10 steering group libraries, additional 16 active participants, as well as 27 other library systems who were covered in the panel sample).

The big-picture view is that libraries demonstrate impact in very similar ways across the country, regardless of the exact scores. Generally, there are only small differences between individual library scores and the national averages.

### The CULC Impact Study average

The CULC Impact Study average is calculated based on 13,491 user responses collected across 53 CULC member library systems.

Respondents from all library systems have been recruited through the national panels, and 26 library systems have supplemented the panel data collection by distributing the survey to their own user base.

Library users in the combined dataset have been weighted to match the distribution of libraries in the panel sample. This weight ensures that the national results are not skewed by the addition of the library user base collection data.



## ADDENDUM

# How to read the national results figures

Impact is measured along 4 dimensions with 3 parameters each, designed to capture different aspects of the library experience.

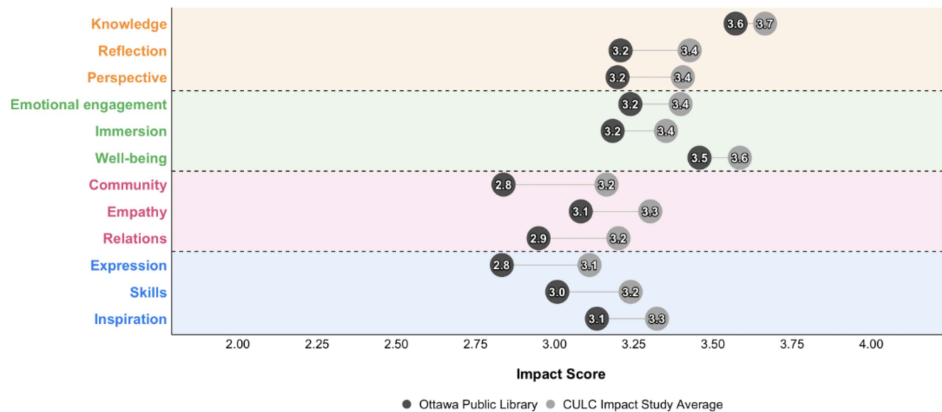
Parameters measure the presence or absence of positive impact. A low score on a given parameter is not reflective of negative impact. Rather, it indicates that library users have generally not experienced a specific type of impact.

National results are provided for Overall Impact, as well as for each of the four services: Collections, Spaces, Programs, and Staff.

Individual library deviations around the national CULC averages are generally small. A sizeable positive deviation on one or more parameters could indicate that the library has succeeded in generating above-average positive impact on these parameters.

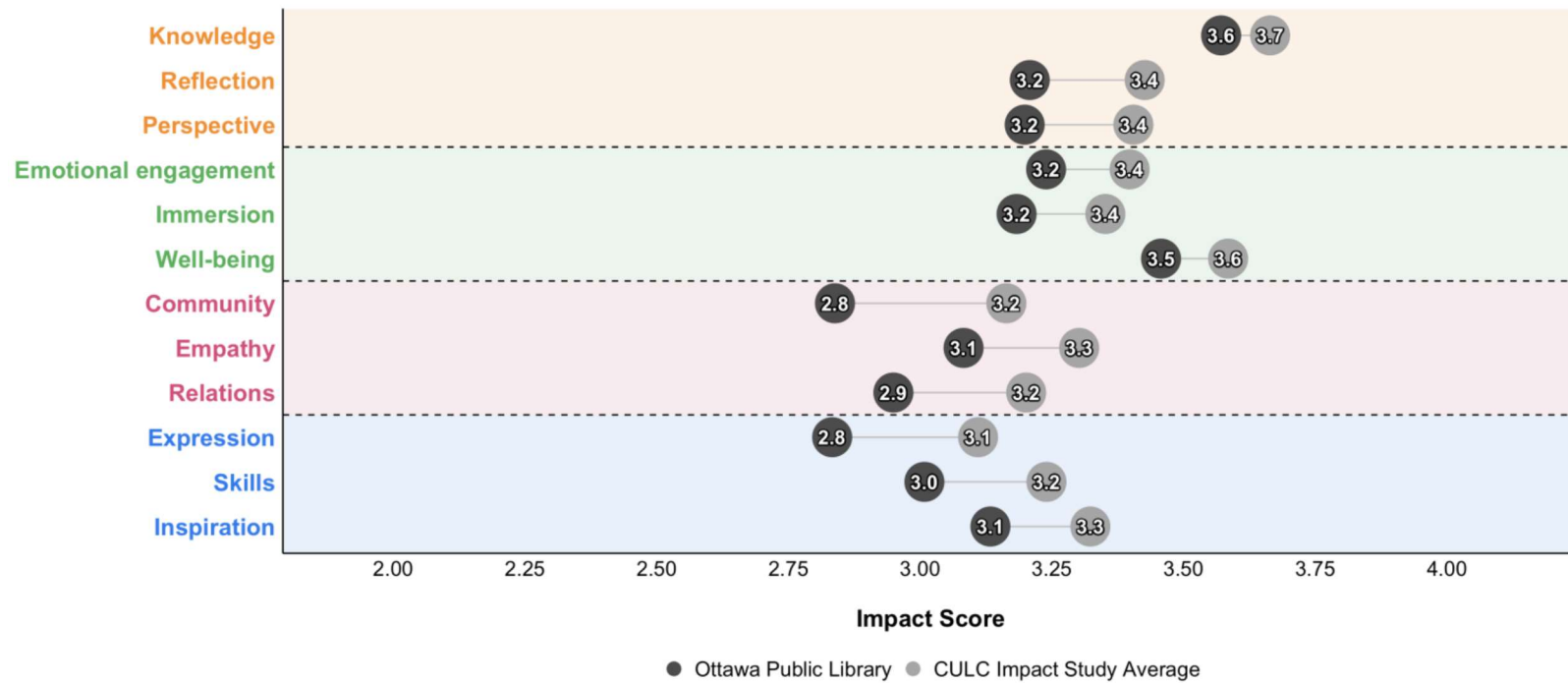
Where individual library scores vary in tandem with the national average, this highlights how public libraries and their users are in many ways more alike than they are different.

Please note that impact score labels are rounded to 1 decimal.



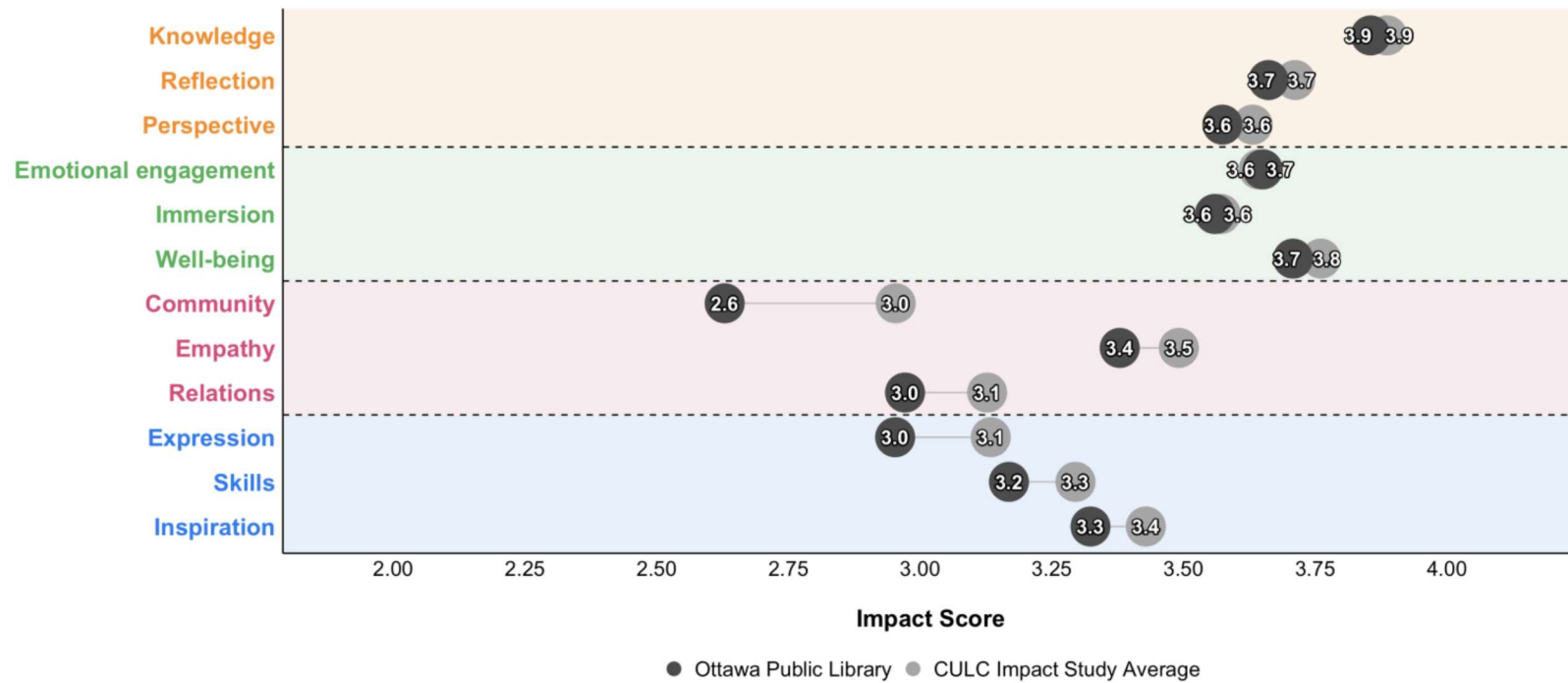
Note: Original scale (1-5) constrained to show the expected empirical range (2-4).

# National results – Overall



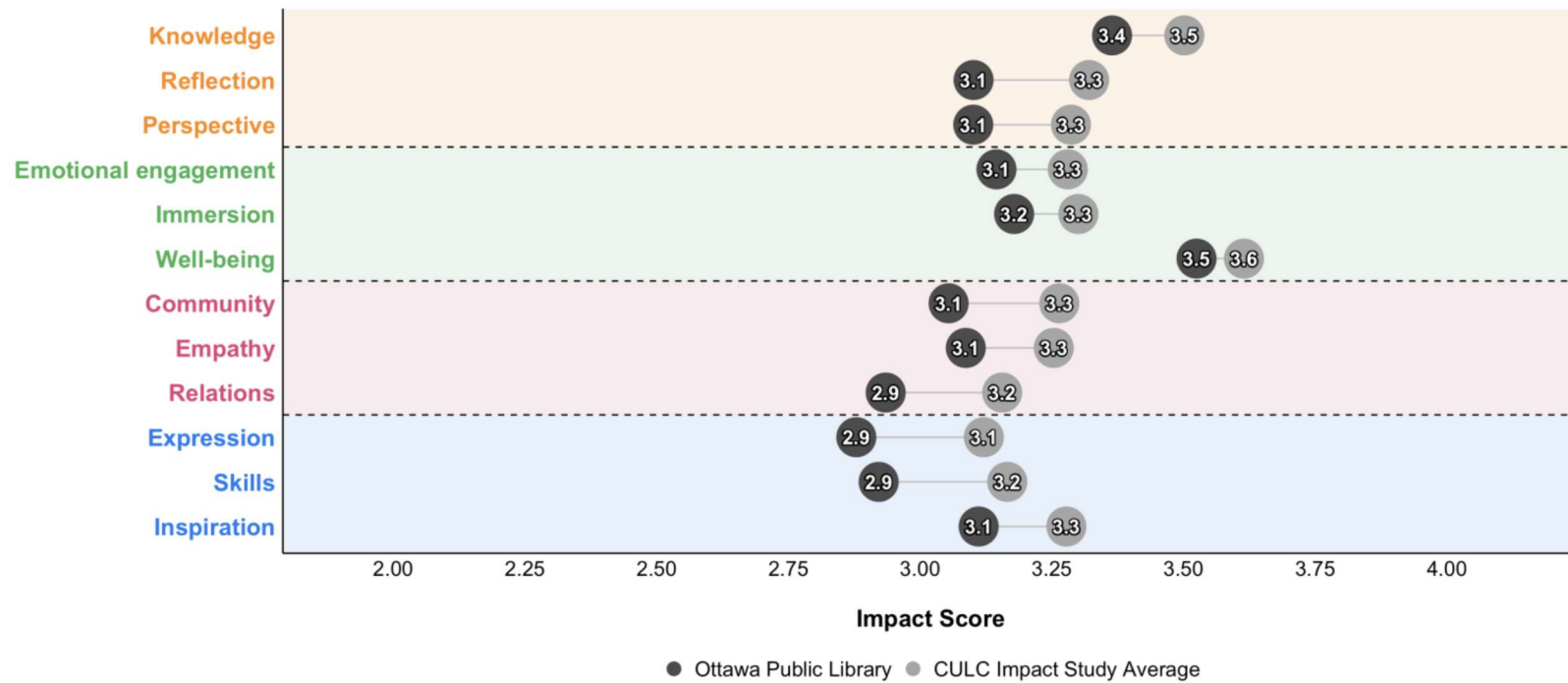
Note: Original scale (1-5) constrained to show the expected empirical range (2-4).

# National results – Collections



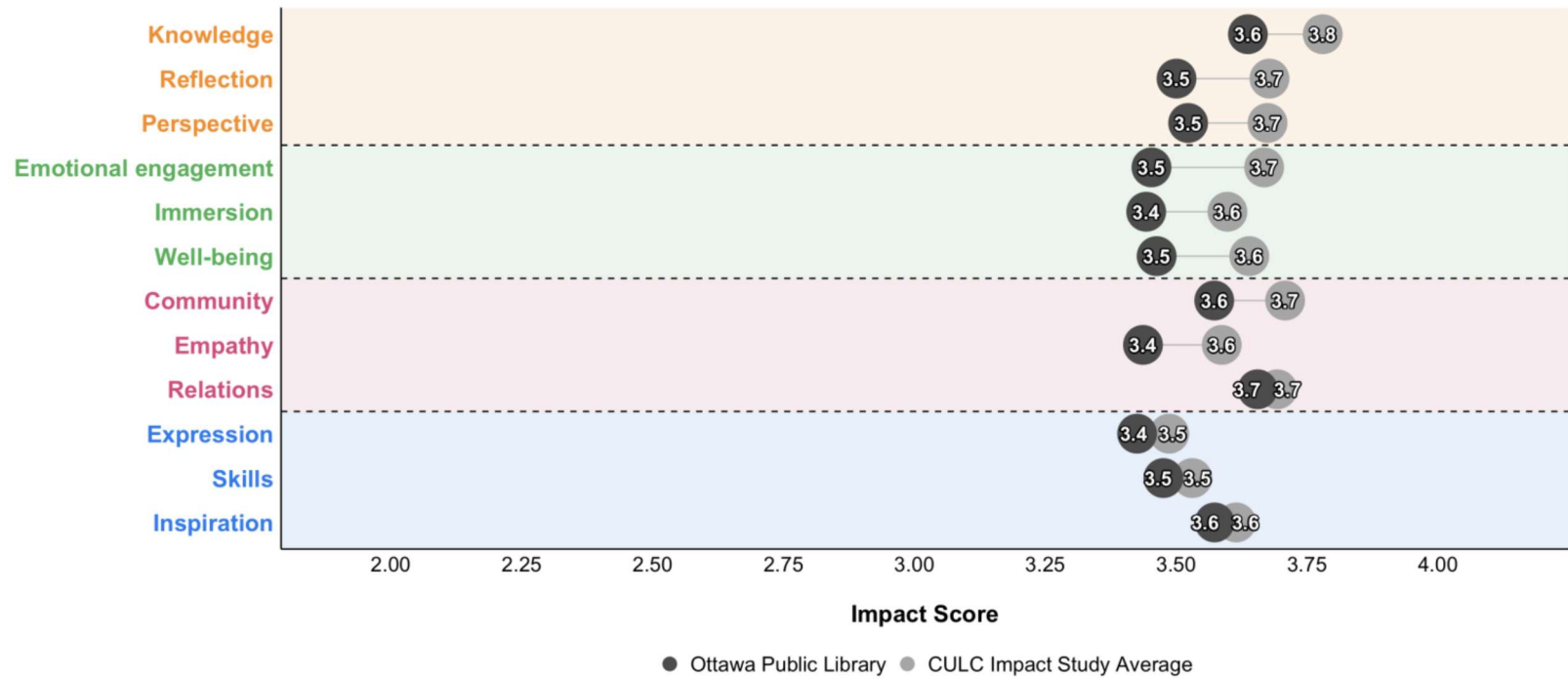
Note: Original scale (1-5) constrained to show the expected empirical range (2-4).

# National results – Spaces



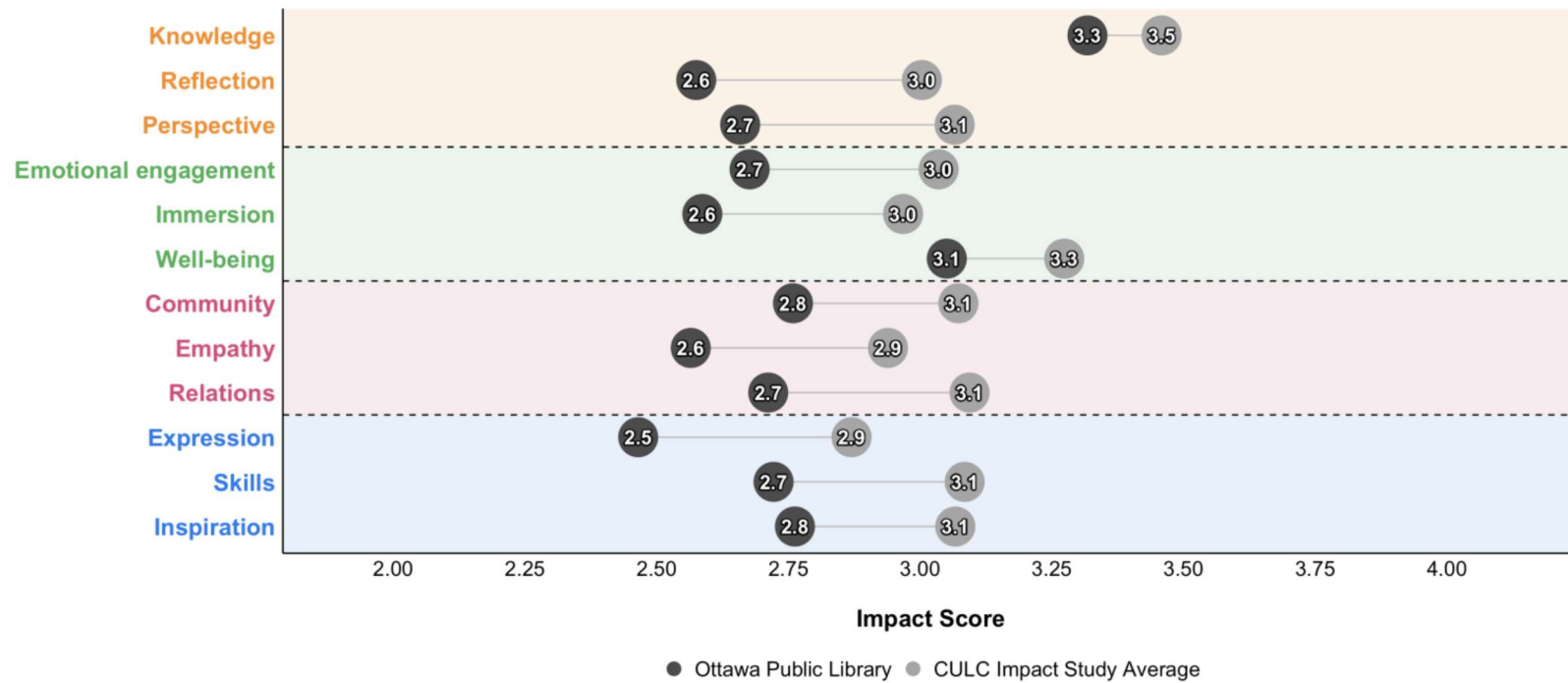
Note: Original scale (1-5) constrained to show the expected empirical range (2-4).

# National results – Programs



Note: Original scale (1-5) constrained to show the expected empirical range (2-4).

# National results – Staff



Note: Original scale (1-5) constrained to show the expected empirical range (2-4).