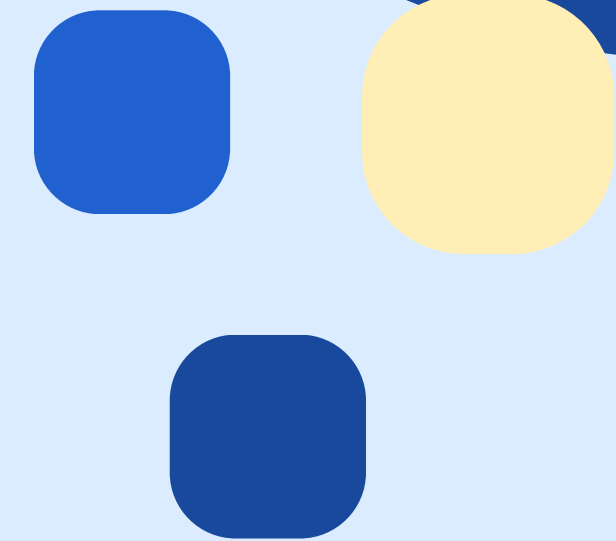
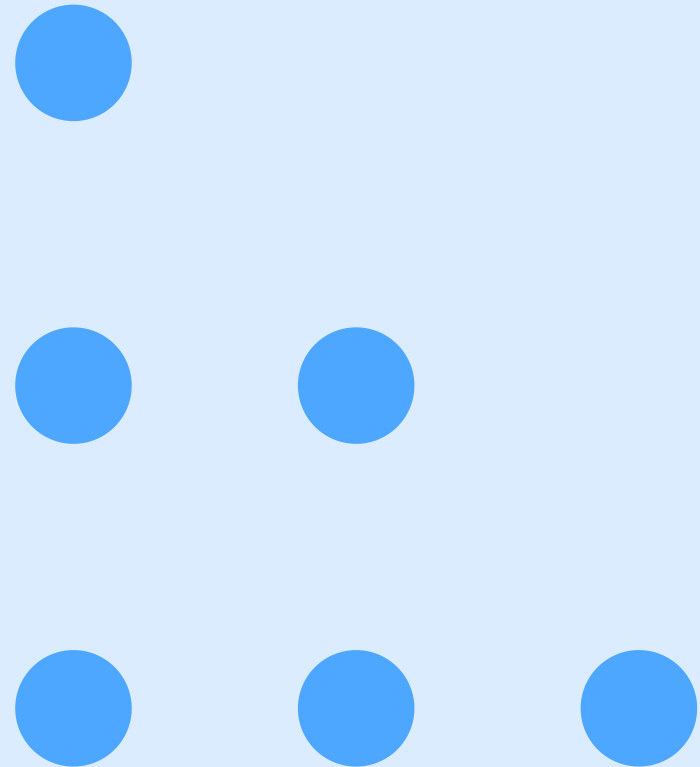




2024 Annual Report

Reaching Across Illinois Library System





Dear Readers,

Greetings from RAILS! One of my favorite parts of working at the library system is getting to know more about the libraries that we serve. These conversations always unlock the amazing work that we do. And sometimes, we get to tell our libraries a little bit about RAILS.

This report is a celebration of the impact we've made together in 2024, and how RAILS' mission, "We Connect Libraries," continues to guide us in harnessing the transformative power of libraries. RAILS staff members work hard to support our member libraries and every day we strive to help you serve your communities. We're excited to share some of the ways we've worked to support you this year and things we're especially proud of!

Working together is the key to achieving great things, and I'm inspired by the work we do as an organization and in the broader library community.

Thank you for your partnership. Here's to another fantastic year ahead!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Monica Harris". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "M" and "H".

Monica Harris
RAILS Executive Director

Our Mission & Goals

We Connect Libraries



provide leadership
in ensuring
sustainable and
equitable
resource sharing



model best
practices in
equity, diversity,
accessibility,
and inclusion



assist you in
preparing for
the future



strengthen the
Illinois library
community
and expand
services to all



Our Board



Representing Academic Libraries

Gwen Gregory

Northern Illinois University

Representing Specialized Libraries

Catherine Yanikoski

Engineering Systems, Inc.

Representing School Libraries

Monica Caldicott

Community High School District 128

Representing Public Library Trustees

Jean Carroll

Thomas Ford Memorial Library

Jennifer Cutshall

Homewood Public Library District

Dianne Hollister

Bloomington Public Library

Jennifer Hovanec

Villa Park Public Library

Carolyn Sennett

Wilmette Public Library District

Karen Voitik

Shorewood-Troy Public Library District

Alex Vancina

New Lenox Public Library District

At-Large Representatives

Rene Leyva

Fossil Ridge Public Library

Amanda Kowalcze

Frankfort Public Library District

Julie Milavec

Downers Grove Public Library

Emily Porter

OSF Saint Anthony Medical Center



Our Staff

98 staff members at **five** service centers

Locations:
Bolingbrook
Burr Ridge
Coal Valley
East Peoria
Rockford



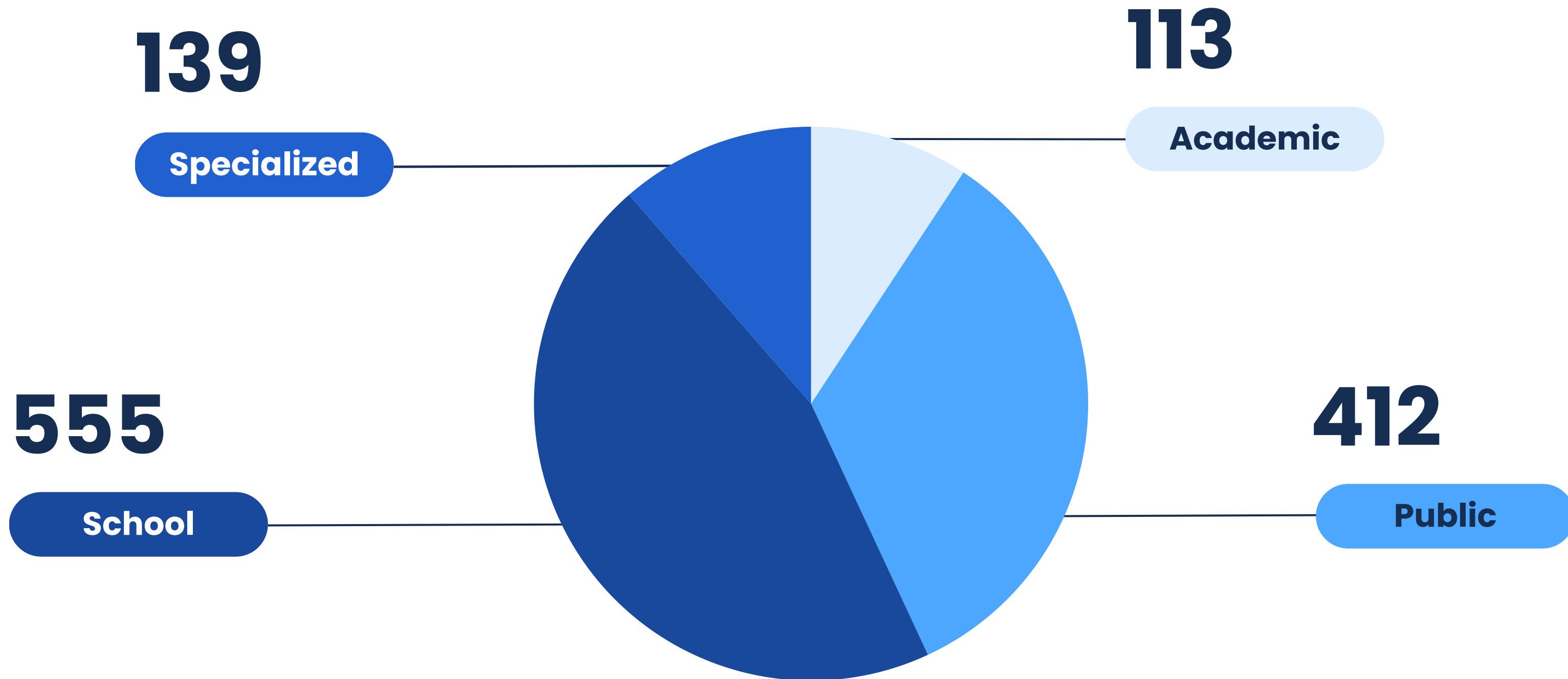
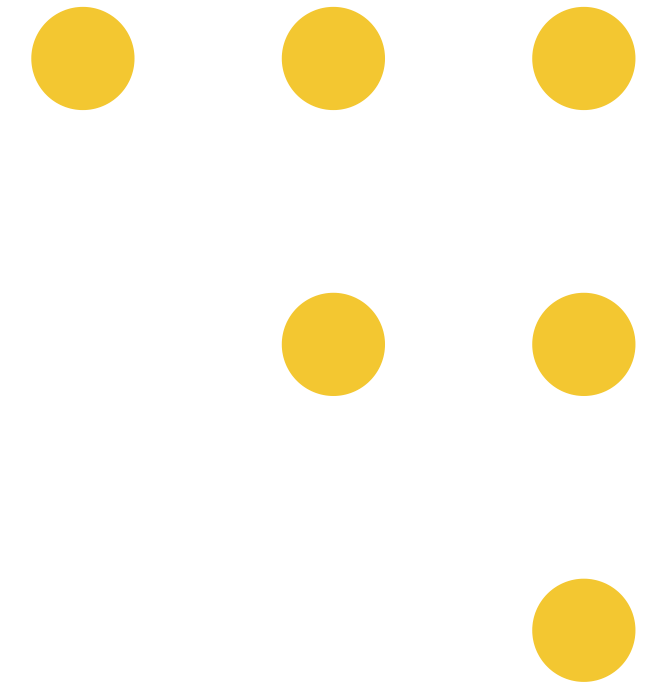
What We Do

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- Communications
- Consulting & Continuing Education
- Data Services
- Deals & Discounts
- Delivery
- E-Content
- Explore More Illinois
- Find More Illinois
- Support Services

Our Members

Total Libraries: 1,219



Communications

Connecting libraries with resources and, most importantly, each other.

\$104,204.15 in
My Library Is... Grants



Launched
Can't Shelve This
Podcast



190,553
RAILS E-News opens



12,001 total email
list subscribers



2,216,594 visits to
railslibraries.org



63 RAILS site visits



5,854 followers and
24,973 reactions on
social media





Consulting & Continuing Education

Became a certified **PDH*** provider for schools

Saved libraries **\$76,610** through HR Source memberships

Offered EDI** training through **Freedom Lifted**

Added **44+ hours** of webinars to our archive

6,448 registrations for RAILS CE events

Distributed **\$10,185** in RAILS CE Event Grants

Consulting:
the reference desk for librarians—ask us for help!

Continuing Education:
learning for library staff and trustees

*professional development hour

**equity, diversity, inclusion

Data Services

Data helps us tell compelling stories about the impact of our work.

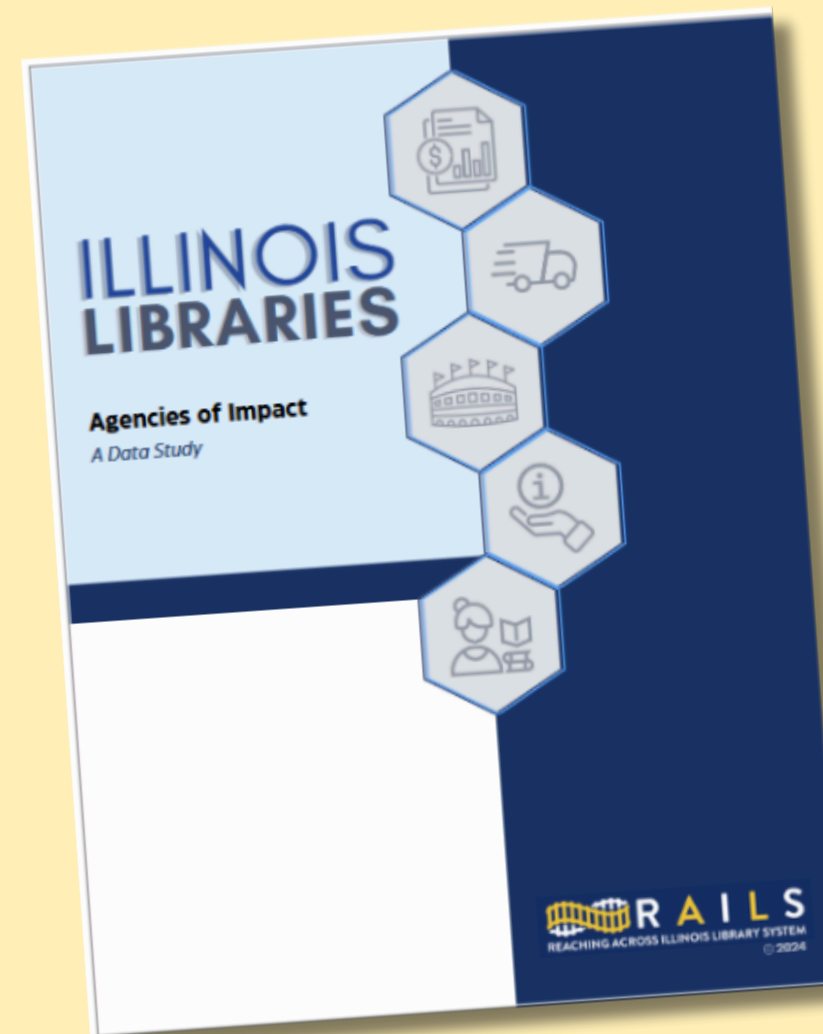
First Data Internship Completed!



School Library Advocacy Through Education (SLATE) Data Dashboard

View information about school
library staffing, budget, and
collections

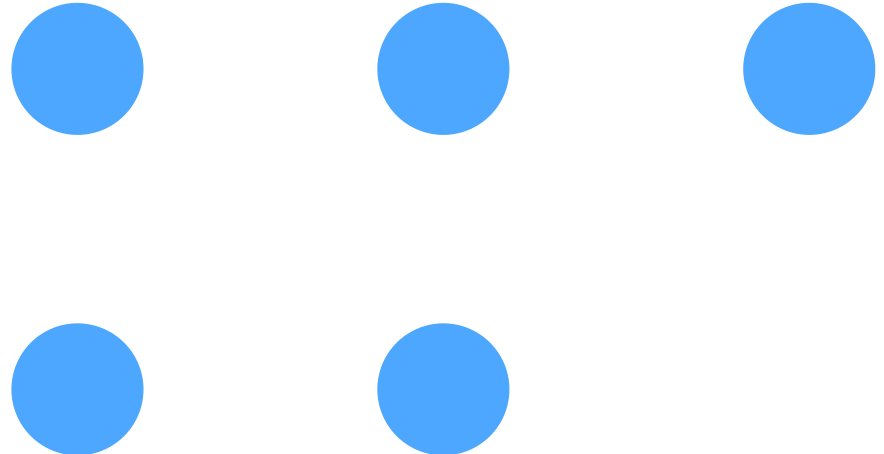
6,104 views



Illinois Libraries: Agencies of Impact, a Data Study

Stats and infographics
showing the quantifiable
impact of Illinois libraries

2,800+ copies
distributed



Deals & Discounts

RAILS handles the research, purchasing, and invoicing.

Your library saves money.



388 participating libraries



1,792 subscriptions managed

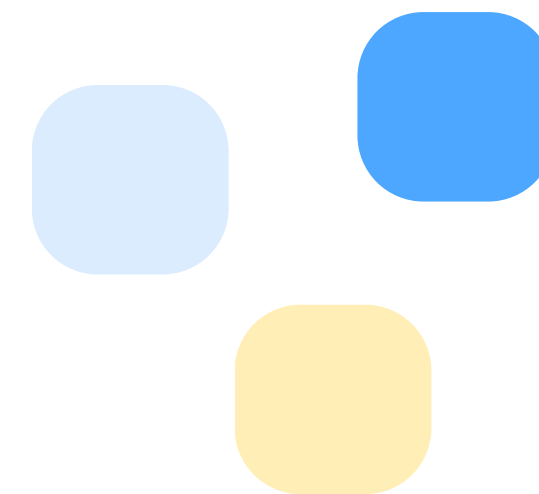


140+ vendor products

\$2.1 million+ in savings

Delivery

We travel across 27,000 square miles to deliver materials to libraries in northern and west-central Illinois.



7.9 million
items
delivered



117,400
library
visits



21 new
vehicles
ordered



drove
1.1 million
miles

E-Content



77,354 items in the collection
14,910 titles added in 2024
897 participating libraries

open to all
no library card needed
20,704 views in 2024



Explore More Illinois

Our cultural pass program that provides participating library cardholders with access to discounts at local attractions.

100% free

for libraries and library users

447

participating libraries

24/7

availability online

32,581

reservations made



EXPLORE MORE
ILLINOIS



Find More Illinois

Our interlibrary loan platform that provides access to a growing number of library holdings in one place.

86

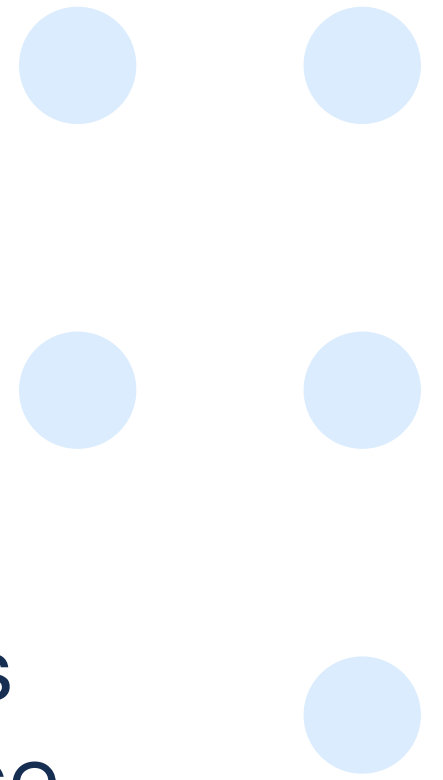
participating
libraries

**7.6
million**

items in
the catalog

14,487

transactions



Support Services

Our support staff works hard to make sure that we can function seamlessly and do our best work to help you.

Admin

Manages the Annual Certification process



Finance

Manages partner organization accounting and billing for RAILS programs



HR

Manages talent recruitment and acquisition



IT

Manages infrastructure that allows us to have a strong virtual presence



Technology Services

Supports cataloging and operations at our member libraries.

Distributed **\$2.25 million** in LLSAP Grants

Launched **BroadbandForLibraries.com**

Distributed **\$20,514** in RAILS Catalog Membership Grants

Created the **iCAMP mentoring program** for catalogers

Cataloged **836 items** in **22 languages** through the World Language Cataloging Services Program

What's Coming in 2025



Sort delivery materials in house to reduce costs



Update the strategic plan for **2026–2029**



Update the Illinois **resource sharing** map



Save the date:
Monday, October 13

Here's What You Can Do



make a
Library Learning
(L2) account



attend or
view CE
events



subscribe to
our weekly
RAILS E-News



network &
share best
practices



Stay in Touch!



railslibraries.org



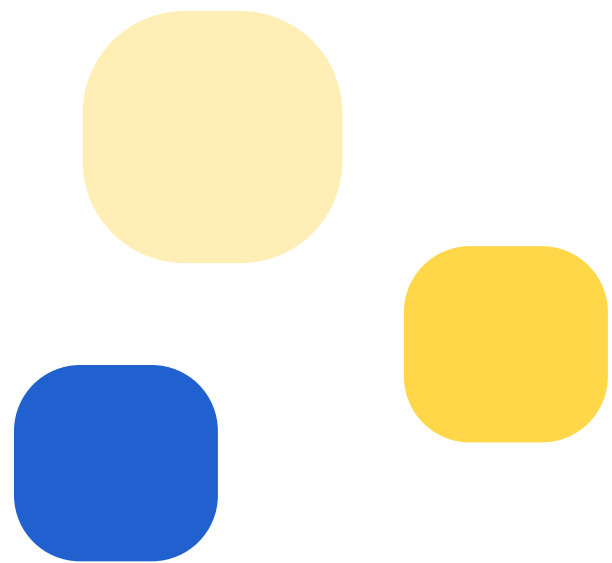
630.734.5000



communications@railslibraries.org



[@railslibraries](https://www.instagram.com/railslibraries)





**Thank you
very much**

