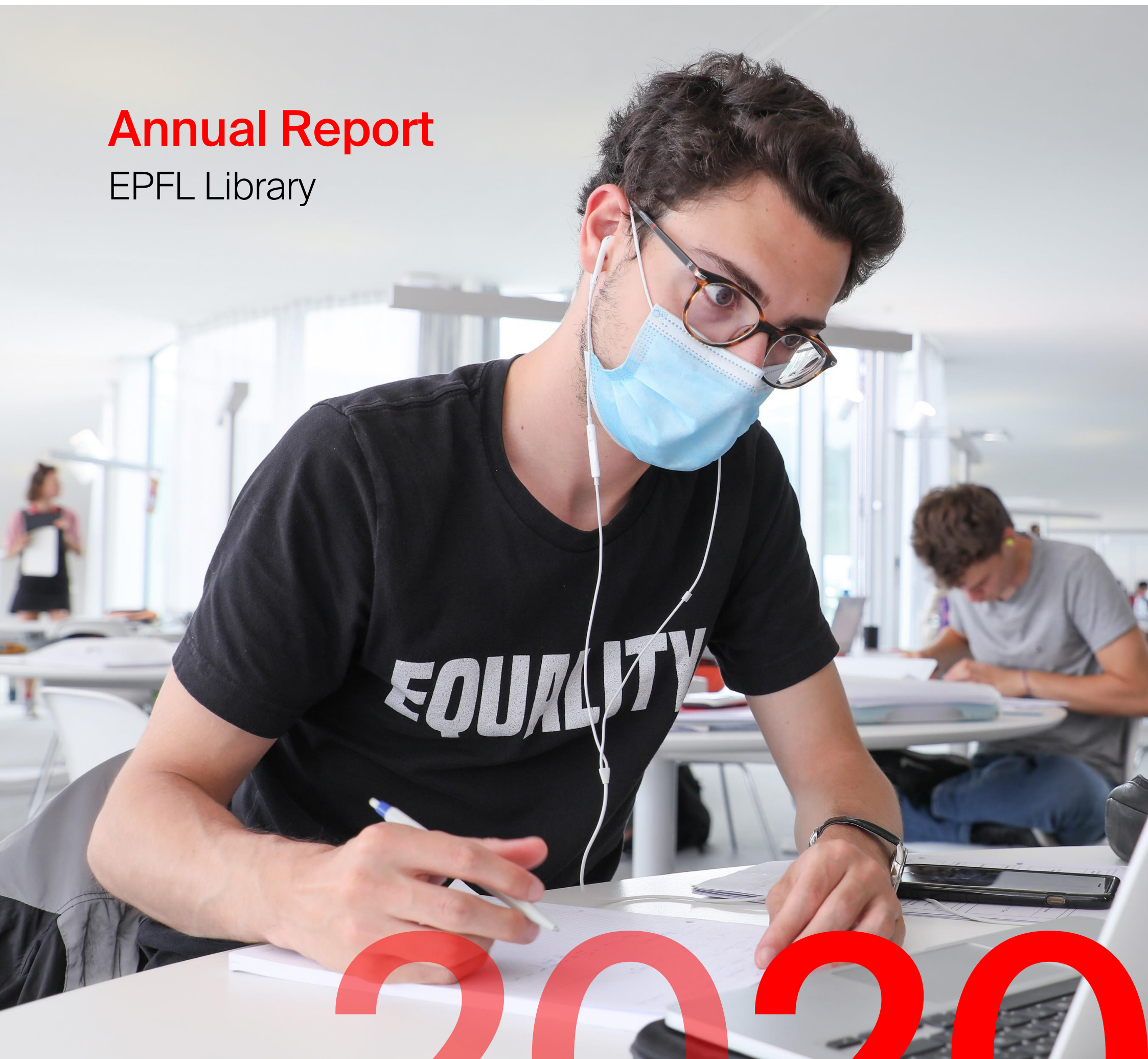# EPFL

Annual Report
EPFL Library

2020

Turning challenges into innovation

The Annual Report 2020 highlights the achievements of EPFL Library and tells the story of our engagement with, and impact to, EPFL community at large, during a year of extraordinary disruptions and unprecedented challenges triggered by COVID-19 outbreak.

Nonetheless, throughout 2020, the Library pursued its mission to serve EPFL community and beyond, significantly adapting its offer to ensure the continuity of operations and services, extending its capabilities for remote access and facilitating user engagement with digital content.

The Annual Report also acknowledges the sustained efforts and contribution of all Library staff during the prolonged period of ad interim management, which coincided with the reorganization of the library network, and the subsequent migration and implementation ALMA cloud-based library service platform.

Despite unparalleled disruptions which impacted most functional areas, the Library completed several ambitious projects, by working collaboratively and creatively, and by maximizing the opportunities created by the pandemic to accelerate digital innovation. The achievements noted in several areas of delivery have indeed led to a major step forward in terms of new service implementation. These accomplishments will help further inform the Library's strategies to support research, teaching, and learning, both in person and remotely.

Throughout this year extraordinaire, Library members have thrived to demonstrate their resilience, inventiveness, and agility, day after day, in order to ensure access to the best possible resources and continue provide high quality support to EPFL community.

Acting directors
Guilaine Baud-Vittoz
Caroline Bosia
Pascale Bouton

A year marked by coronavirus pandemic

Health restrictions and precautionary measures taken as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic completely disrupted the operation of the Library. General assistance, document and space provision, access to collections, and user services have all been impacted.

Back to the events that marked activities and life at the Library...

March 14

Library closure
The doors of the Library and the Rolex Learning Center close for an indefinite duration. All the events planned to celebrate the 10th anniversary of the Library and the Rolex Learning Center are cancelled or postponed.
Working from home becomes mandatory for all Library staff.

March 16

Services are maintained remotely
A dedicated Coronavirus information webpage is created and regularly updated to explain how to benefit from the Library remote services: online collection access, publishing support, research data management, citation and copyright support, etc.
Library staff swing into action to continue to offer a high-quality service.

March 18

First online training sessions
The Library training team offers an online version of its lectures in the Global Issues course. From now on, all semester training sessions are offered online.

May 4

New loan and digitization remote services
Loan and digitization services partially operate to support students, researchers and teachers. These services include free postal delivery of EPFL Library documents and of printed-out standards to private addresses, as well as sending digitized articles and book chapters by email. This service is made available to all students.

May 13

100 documents delivered by mail
More than a hundred documents are delivered by mail in less than 10 days thanks to the new remote loan service. It is handled by a small team of librarians who are permitted to work on campus.

August 19

Book pick-up without appointment
From now on, it is no longer necessary to make an appointment to collect reserved books. The Pick up a Book desk is open to everyone, from Monday to Friday, 8am-6pm.

September 1

Masks required
Wearing a mask becomes mandatory at all times in the Rolex Learning Center, including at workplaces.

June 9

New desk to pick up books
A dedicated desk allows picking up documents from the Library collections. The service is only available to EPFL members authorized to come to campus, by appointment only.

June 29

NEBIS network reopens
After more than 3 months of interruption, users may again request documents in the Library network NEBIS. All users, whether from EPFL or not, can make an appointment through the Pick up a Book service.

September 9

Welcome, new students!
Masked but smiling librarians welcome new students. The welcome week activities take place online and on site.

July 1st

Partial reopening of the Library and the Rolex Learning center
The Library and the Rolex Learning Center partially reopen on July the 1st. Access to on-site collections, spaces and workspaces is limited to EPFL students, reservations are mandatory. With exams postponed till August, the atmosphere at the Library remains studious throughout the summer.

Publishers make their online content available

The Library regularly updates the non-exhaustive list of useful resources, temporarily made freely available by publishers or already subscribed by the EPFL Library, to support researchers, students and lecturers during this "off-campus" period.

Fall semester

Meeting user needs
Despite disruptions, three service desks are open to all users, either from EPFL or external:

- Front desk
- Pick up a Book desk
- "Sciences et Techniques, Mathématiques" area desk: student assistants take over from librarians after the regular service hours

December 31   **Happy masked new year!**

Disrupted indicators

The closure of the Library spaces to the public for more than 100 days and the numerous restrictions on access to the collections had a significant impact on the figures of Library visits and usage.

- **Entries into the Library**

2019	2020	
827'962	470'052 →	**- 44%**

- **Document loans**

2019	2020	
76'254	38'859 →	**- 40%**

- **On-site desk requests**

2019	2020	
17'466	9'129 →	**- 48%**

- **Online desk requests**

2019	2020	
7'513	9'640 →	**+ 28%**

Keeping the bond

The prolonged lockdown from March to July significantly impeded the Library-internal communication. To address the lack of human interaction between colleagues, the Library launched a daily newsletter which kept people engaged and maintained an active bond throughout. The newsletter was conceived as a mean to inform people, but also provide an outlet for colleagues to express themselves in a humorous way about their day-to-day life during the semi-confinement.

1 day
at the Library

51
requests to the online
and on-site desks

17
hours of opening
from 7am until midnight

555
searches in BEAST,
the Library catalog

1'858
document **prints and scans**

1 year
at the Library
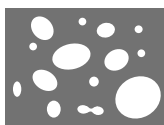
470'052
entries into the Library

2'454'278
article downloads from
subscription journals

38'859
document loans

CHF **4'944'292**
expenses for document
purchases and subscriptions

The Library pursues its continued commitment to **Open Science at EPFL level, as well as nationally and internationally:**

- participation in **international events** focused on raising awareness among researchers' communities, such as the Open Access Week and the Love Data Week;

- organization of **training** sessions highlighting the importance of Open Science in the academic context, for example "Code and data management in the open research context" and "Smart publishing";

- close **collaboration** with the new Open Science Advisor to EPFL Presidency;

- **direct support to EPFL Presidency** during the consultation phase of the Open Research Data national strategy;

- ongoing involvement in the **Swiss Research Data Management Community**;

- participation in the **Open Access Working Group (AKOA)**, the official group of experts, appointed by the Swiss Library Network for Education and Research (SLiNER), under the auspices of swissuniversities.

ACOUA project:
Academic Output Archive

The Library led a pilot project in collaboration with all EPFL Schools to develop and implement a tool for the long-term preservation of research data and code.

Infoscience
The institutional repository

Uploads	**7'278** new references
	3'588 new full texts
Downloads	**5'213'462**

As of December 31, 2020, the repository collects:

155'223 references, of which

59'108 with full text, of wich

47'663 are available in Open Access.

81%
of full text collected in Infoscience available in Open Access

The Infoscience administration team welcomed **additional forces** to strengthen its support to EPFL researchers.

Major improvements were made in order to **simplify the full text deposit** for the EPFL laboratories: ergonomic design, fine file management, copyright mention. A new and clearer reference display makes the consultation easier for the users.

The Library experts focused on the **quality of metadata**, which plays a critical role in the visibility of EPFL researchers' publications, improving for example the indexing in GoogleScholar and OpenAIRE.

Ongoing negotiations with scientific publishers

In the context of the national Open Access strategy, the Library is currently involved in the negotiations with scientific publishers, launched in 2019 by swissuniversities.

2 **Read & Publish agreements** enabled EPFL authors to publish **119** **Open Access articles** with no direct Article Processing Charges (APC): **92** with Elsevier and **27** with Springer-Nature.

- **Elsevier** | Read & Publish agreement
  Over a four-year period, EPFL authors can publish in Open Access at no cost in 2'056 journals (both hybrid and Gold OA) and obtain unlimited access to Elsevier articles.

- **Springer-Nature** | Read & Publish agreement
  Over a three-year period, EPFL authors can publish in Open Access at no cost in 2'058 journals (hybrid) and obtain unlimited access to SpringerLink.

3 **new agreements** were signed in December 2020 (effective 1st January 2021) :

- **Scientific.net** | Supporting Open Access agreement
  EPFL authors benefit from a 50% discount on publication charges in addition to full access to all titles.

- **Cambridge UP** | Read & Publish agreement
  EPFL authors can publish in Open Access at no cost in 330 hybrid journals and 40 Gold OA journals and obtain unlimited access to their Full Collection (403 titles).

- **Taylor and Francis** | Read & Publish agreement
  Over a three-year period, EPFL authors can publish in Open Access at no cost in 2'406 journals (hybrid and Gold OA) and obtain unlimited access to the collections Science & Technology and Social Science & Humanities.

Read & Publish pattern

Library subscription

Read articles

Publish in Open Access
and be compliant with EPFL OA Policy and funder's requirements

Financial support for Gold Open Access

CHF **187'856** invested

As a result of the signature of the Read & Publish agreements, a portion of the Gold Open Access publication fees is reported in the journal subscription expenses.

The Gold Open Access fund contributed to finance the publishing fees of:

74 articles

1 book

1 data paper

4 | Scientific publishing support

431 **requests** submitted to **publishsupport@epfl.ch**

777 **requests** submitted to **infoscience@epfl.ch**

New scientific publishing Fast Guides

On the occasion of Open Access Week 2020, the Library Publishing Support team shared new tools to help EPFL researchers and the scientific community with their publishing-related activities, including Open Access : the Publishing Support Fast Guides.

- **Open Access: The basics**
- **Make your research open**
- **Creative Commons licenses**
- **Publishing agreement**
- **Exceptions for educational purposes**
- **How to properly reuse a work**

ORCID Integration at EPFL

291 registered EPFL users
as of December 31, 2020

The Library developed the new web application ORCID Integration at EPFL, where any EPFL member can match their ORCID iD with their identity in the EPFL directories. Integrating ORCID into the EPFL ecosystem aims to facilitate the exchange of information about research activities and to reduce the burden of data entry associated with scientific publications and research activities.

5 | Research data management (RDM)

134 **requests** submitted to **researchdata@epfl.ch**

73 **support and expertise requests**

25 **preparations** and **33** **DMP reviews** (Data Management Plan)

A dynamic community of Data Champions

Since the 2019 call to build a community of Data Champions, about 30 PhD students and researchers volunteered to promote good RDM practices on campus. At reporting date, the community has grown to more than **50 Data Champions**.

Research Data Management Horror Stories

In anticipation of the 2020 Love Data Week, the Research Data Management team published the RDM Horror Stories videos.
These humorous videos show how bad practices in Research Data Management can turn into real nightmares.

Participants in 2020

- **617** BA students
- **407** MA students
- **400** PhD students
- **126** researchers

126
Training sessions
Workshops, seminars, and presentations

208
Training hours

including **48** **one-to-one training sessions,**
some of which via Book a Librarian,
the appointment scheduling platform of the Library.

The new Coffee Lectures

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Library teaching team developed the Coffee Lectures: a **new concept** of online training courses.

In total, **222 attendees** took part in these short 15-minute online training sessions which introduced participants to tools, methods or concepts related to research data management, information retrieval, scientific publishing or copyright issues.

The training sessions took place once a week between November 3 and December 9, 2020:

- **Learn the basics of Git in under 10 minutes**
- **Pro-tips to enhance your research equations**
- **Unpaywall: Find Open Access content easily**
- **Pubmed – a first encounter**
- **To quote or to paraphrase, that is the question**
- **Creative Commons Licenses**

100% of interviewed participants answered that they would like to take part in further Coffee Lectures!

92% of interviewed participants consider the online and short format appropriate for the topics covered in theses sessions.

100% of online training

At the start of the COVID-19 outbreak, the Library pivoted all training sessions online.

The Library teaching team conducted a survey among participants to gauge effectiveness the new online training offer. **22%** of training participants who took part in the remote training sessions answered the survey. The complete report is available online.

Following this survey, **the Library continued to offer all its training sessions live and online throughout the year**.

75% of participants think that online training allows to acquire the same skills as in conventional on-site training sessions

90% of participants would like to attend further Library training sessions, whether online or on site
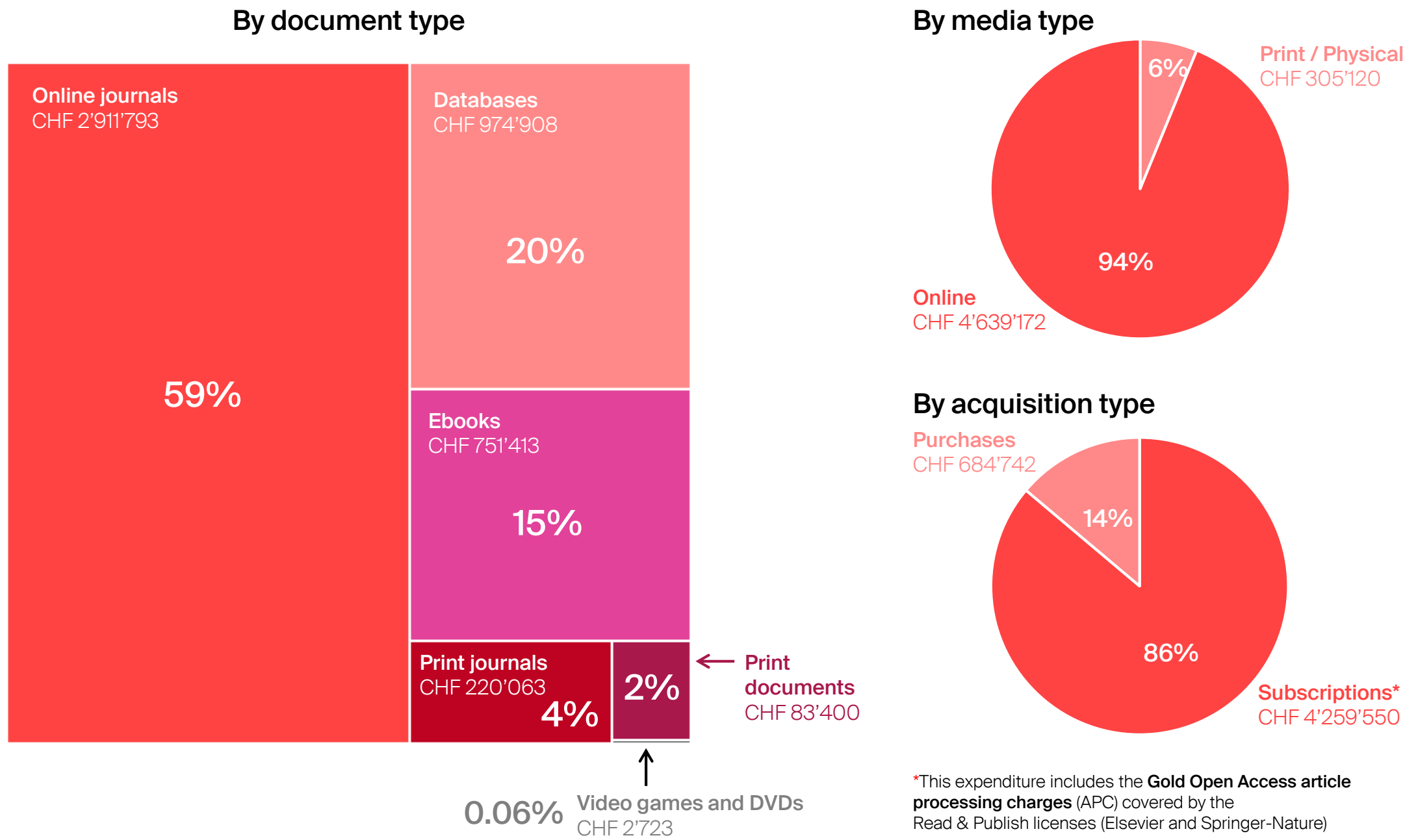
Flexibility
is the main advantage of online training

Interactions
between training librarians and participants during training sessions are particularly appreciated, whether online or on site

Expenditure distribution for document acquisitions (CHF)

By document type

Online journals
CHF 2'911'793

59%

Databases
CHF 974'908

20%

Ebooks
CHF 751'413

15%

Print journals
CHF 220'063

4%

2% ← **Print documents**
CHF 83'400

0.06% **Video games and DVDs**
CHF 2'723

By media type

6%

94%

Print / Physical
CHF 305'120

Online
CHF 4'639'172

By acquisition type

Purchases
CHF 684'742

14%

86%

Subscriptions*
CHF 4'259'550

*This expenditure includes the **Gold Open Access article processing charges** (APC) covered by the Read & Publish licenses (Elsevier and Springer-Nature)

Ebook collection

New ebooks
The Library further developed its online document offer with **60 new ebook collections** across EPFL disciplines. Worth noting, **300 ebooks** in Architecture and Urban planning, including titles from Walter De Gruyter and Taylor&Francis publishers.

Patron-driven acquisition (PDA)
Through its on-demand acquisition model, based on users' needs, the Library made available **32'000 titles**, of which:

→ **91** titles have been purchased (CHF 6'400)
→ **174** titles have been rent on short-term (CHF 1'860)

Mathematics collection

The Library subscribed to the Art and Science XV collection on the JSTOR platform: **166 specialized journal titles**, supplementing the range of JSTOR titles already subscribed by the Library.

Preservation and dissemination of 100 years of EPFL theses

The Library preserves and disseminates all EPFL theses published over the past century.
The Library added **401 theses** to Infoscience, the institutional repository: all full texts are available online.

New swisscovery platform

The Library joined swisscovery, a new platform facilitating access to hundreds of millions printed and electronic documents, while enhancing personal data protection.

Thanks to the new network, users now have direct access to the collections of from **475 Swiss scientific libraries**, including those of the universities of Geneva and Fribourg.
Loan terms have been improved: some loan periods have been extended and all renewals are executed automatically.
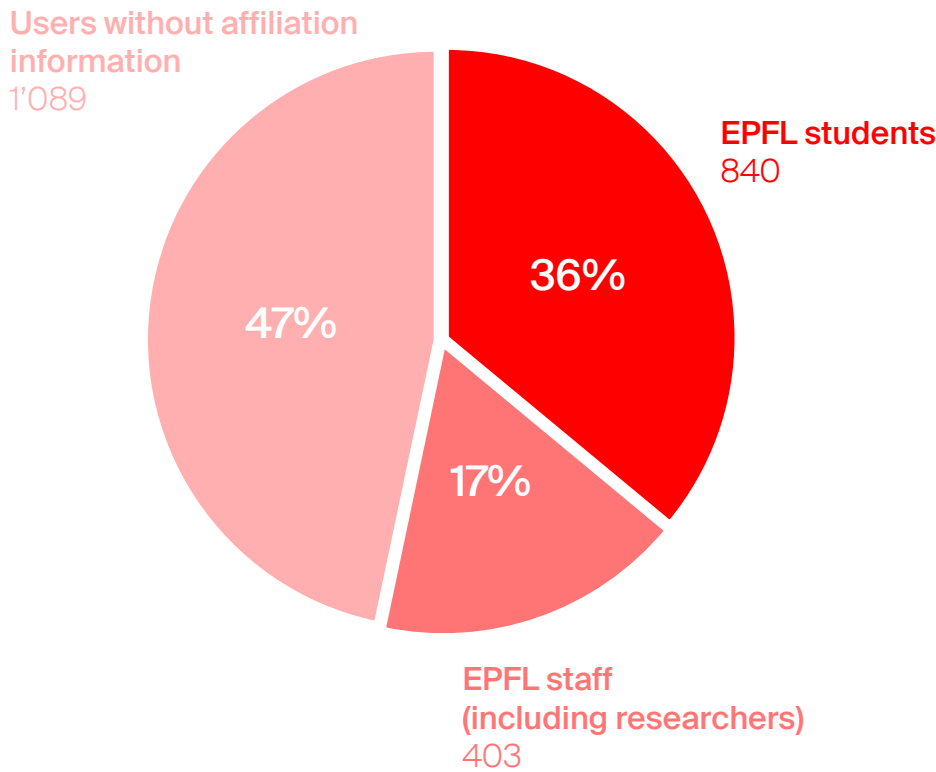
For EPFL members, the Library bears the cost of book requests from other libraries in the network (in the case of on-site pick-up) and covers the digitization request fees.

Swisscovery is directly accessible from BEAST, the EPFL Library catalog.

To benefit from this service, users must create a reader account online: the registration is available to all users and free of charge.

As of December 31,

2'332
users had at least 1 interaction with the Library concerning questions related to the new system (registration, loans, orders, etc.).

Users without affiliation information
1'089

EPFL students
840

47%

36%

17%

EPFL staff (including researchers)
403

Migration to ALMA cloud-based library service platform

At the end of 2020, the Library moved from ALEPH ILS (Integrated Library System) to ALMA.

This transition was prepared throughout the year, as it involved significant changes that impacted all Library activities and staff.

The software migration was scheduled by the swisscovery network, which absorbed the former NEBIS network. The deadlines followed one another at an intense pace over several months: tests, configurations, participation in expert groups, creation of training material, etc.

Switching to ALMA required stopping both the acquisition of resources and their referencing in BEAST from October 20 to December 7, 2020. This technical interruption provided librarians with an opportunity to train with the new tool, which includes the integrated management of both printed and electronic resources.

Besides the video supports offered by the network, an intensive training program for the Library teams was set up. Towards the end of the year, ALMA training took up a large part of the librarians' time: Workshops, self-training, demonstrations – the Library staff spent several days preparing for the change. As an example, more than **45 hours of training** were organized, allowing each employee to acquire the necessary skills to fulfill their tasks around document provision.

On December 7, 2020, the activities related to document cataloguing resumed. The first documents were borrowed by users through ALMA.

9 | Public spaces

Furnishing: Further steps

The efforts to redesign public spaces, initiated in 2019, were continued, to provide a more welcoming environment to users:

- **installation of micro work environments**: addition of **3 individual alcoves** in the "Sciences et Techniques, Mathématiques" area, and **8 individual study carrels** in the basement;

- **testing table dividers functionalities for 16 work places** in the quiet zone;

- **new equipment in the meeting room** RLC A1 230, used for training sessions up to **15 people**: videoconference tools, modular tables, whiteboard, soundproofing;

- **installation of 5 height-adjustable tables** with **10 high stools** in the "Hodler" area.

As the campus resumes its on-site activities, greater use of these devices is expected.

10 | Internal lifelong learning

COVID-19 created a unique conditions for providing and monitoring continuing education opportunities:

- wider accessibility to many conferences. For example, **15 staff members** had the opportunity to attend at least one session of the Liber 2020 conference, that was traditionally attended by library managers.

- increase of training offered online and for free

44 staff members (out of 50) have attended at least one webinar, training or conference (excluding ALMA training)

Expenditure decreased by **75%** compared to 2019

4 professional trips abroad (beginning of 2020)

2 "**heures de l'apéro**" (internal peer-to-peer training):
- Remote user training: experience feedback (Zoom)
- Metadata in libraries: evolutions (Zoom)

1 workshop "Implicit biases", providing a platform to discuss discrimination issues.

New virtual tour

September
Library Mystery

In an effort to engage users with the Library, a new virtual tour of the Library was released.
The Library Mystery tour is plenty of riddles to be solved. The users can remotely discover the different spaces, collections, services and anecdotes about the Library.

A hybrid Welcome Week

September
Library Discovery

Because of the pandemic, many activities organized to welcome new students did not take place.
The Library team created the Library Discovery video to remotely introduce students to the collections and services available to them.
In addition, several presentations and a LAB "Apprendre à étudier" were organized online and on location.

Online community

7'476 **followers** on **@EPFLlibrary** accounts on social media*

295'227 **views** of videos and stories published by the Library on social media*,

including **130'000** on Instagram stories.

202'532 website visits: go.epfl.ch/library

*cumulative on December 31, 2020

Online exhibition

April
Athanase Kircher: a baroque scientist

The Library launched its second virtual exhibition about rare books on the platform plume.epfl.ch. The exhibition is dedicated to Athanasius Kircher, a German scientist of the 17th century.

The 17th century was marked by major scientific revolutions: the works of Galileo, Bacon, Newton, or those of Descartes or Pascal are illustrious examples. Athanasius Kircher fits fully into this Grand Siècle. His works reveal the passion, the originality and the thirst for discovery that characterize the intellectual atmosphere of his time.

	2017	2018	2019	2020
Collections				
Searches in the catalog	306'704	284'196	238'724	202'562
Document loans	83'895	80'395	76'254	38'859
Journal article downloads	2'420'250	2'363'765	2'657'650	2'454'278
Expenses				
Document acquisitions (CHF)	896'045*	4'851'218	4'665'763	4'944'292
Gold Open Access support (CHF)	142'809	195'498	193'048	187'856
Infoscience institutional repository				
Document downloads	n/a	7'710'815	5'851'754	5'213'462
New references	8'389	7'217	8'153	7'278
New fulltexts	3'120	2'890	3'691	3'588
Services				
Requests to the desks	26'862	24'912	24'979	18'769
On-site desks	18'810	17'110	17'466	9'129
Online desks	8'052	7802	7'513	9'640
User training sessions	124	132	125	126
User training hours	455	240	149	208
Attendance and study space usage				
Days of opening	363	363	363	256
Entries into the Library	1'535'668	983'748	827'962	470'052
Communication				
Website visits	171'671	233'006	258'569	202'532
Followers on social media (cumulated)	3'832	5'305	6'552	7'476

*decrease in expenditure due to the change in
the annual accounting allocation of the
expenditure for license subscriptions

- Launch of **ACOUA**: the long-term preservation tool for EPFL research data.

- Call for tenders for one or more tool(s) for the **dissemination of the EPFL's scientific output**: publications (migration of the current tool Infoscience) and research data (new).

- Study concerning the **dissemination of EPFL theses** under Creative Commons licenses.

- Participation in the creation of the **MOOC Excellence for Africa**.

- Continuing **negotiations** in favor of Open Access with scientific publishers.

- The furnishing of public spaces will continue with the creation of **new work places**.

- **Data Lab Manager / Data Stewardship** pilot project with the ENAC School.

- Creation of a community of **metadata**-related practices within the Library.

2020 Annual Report
EPFL Library

Bibliothèque de l'EPFL
Rolex Learning Center
Station 20
CH-1015 Lausanne

epfl.ch/campus/library
library@epfl.ch
021 693 21 56

@EPFLlibrary