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.
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...

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.
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.

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.

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.

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.

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

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

Fall semester

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: 827'962
  - 2020: 470'052 → -44%

- Document loans
  - 2019: 76'254
  - 2020: 38'859 → -40%

- On-site desk requests
  - 2019: 17'466
  - 2020: 9'129 → -48%

- Online desk requests
  - 2019: 7'513
  - 2020: 9'640 → +28%

December 31

Happy masked new year!

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.

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.

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.

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.

 infographic

**Infoscience**
**The institutional repository**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Uploads</th>
<th>7’278 new references</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3’588 new full texts</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Downloads      | 5’213’462             |

As of December 31, 2020, the repository collects: 155’223 references, of which 59’108 with full text, of which 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.
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.

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
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

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.

291 registered EPFL users as of December 31, 2020

Research data management (RDM)

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.

A dynamic community of Data Champions

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.

Research Data Management Horror Stories
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 the effectiveness of 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.

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

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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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Document Type</th>
<th>Expenditure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Online journals</td>
<td>CHF 2'911'793</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Databases</td>
<td>CHF 974'908</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ebooks</td>
<td>CHF 751'413</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Print journals</td>
<td>CHF 220'063</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Print documents</td>
<td>CHF 83'400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Video games and DVDs</td>
<td>CHF 2'723</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### By media type

- **Online**: CHF 4'639'172 (94%)
- **Print / Physical**: CHF 305'120 (6%)

#### By acquisition type

- **Subscriptions***: CHF 4'259'550 (86%)
- **Purchases**: CHF 684'742 (14%)

*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 rented on short-term** (CHF 1'860)

### 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.

### 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.
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.).

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.
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: videconference 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.

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 @EPFLibrary 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.
# Indicator trends

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Collections</th>
<th>2017</th>
<th>2018</th>
<th>2019</th>
<th>2020</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Searches in the catalog</td>
<td>306'704</td>
<td>284'196</td>
<td>238'724</td>
<td>202'562</td>
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<tr>
<td>Document loans</td>
<td>83'895</td>
<td>80'395</td>
<td>76'254</td>
<td>38'859</td>
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<tr>
<td>Journal article downloads</td>
<td>2'420'250</td>
<td>2'363'765</td>
<td>2'657'650</td>
<td>2'454'278</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Expenses</th>
<th>2017</th>
<th>2018</th>
<th>2019</th>
<th>2020</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Document acquisitions (CHF)</td>
<td>896'045*</td>
<td>4'851'218</td>
<td>4'665'763</td>
<td>4'944'292</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gold Open Access support (CHF)</td>
<td>142'809</td>
<td>195'498</td>
<td>193'048</td>
<td>187'856</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Infoscience institutional repository</th>
<th>2017</th>
<th>2018</th>
<th>2019</th>
<th>2020</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Document downloads</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>7'710'815</td>
<td>5'851'754</td>
<td>5'213'462</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New references</td>
<td>8'389</td>
<td>7'217</td>
<td>8'153</td>
<td>7'278</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New fulltexts</td>
<td>3'120</td>
<td>2'890</td>
<td>3'691</td>
<td>3'588</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Services</th>
<th>2017</th>
<th>2018</th>
<th>2019</th>
<th>2020</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Requests to the desks</td>
<td>26'882</td>
<td>24'912</td>
<td>24'979</td>
<td>18'769</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On-site desks</td>
<td>18'810</td>
<td>17'110</td>
<td>17'466</td>
<td>9'129</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Online desks</td>
<td>8'052</td>
<td>7'802</td>
<td>7'513</td>
<td>9'640</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>User training sessions</td>
<td>124</td>
<td>132</td>
<td>125</td>
<td>126</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>User training hours</td>
<td>455</td>
<td>240</td>
<td>149</td>
<td>208</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attendance and study space usage</th>
<th>2017</th>
<th>2018</th>
<th>2019</th>
<th>2020</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Days of opening</td>
<td>363</td>
<td>363</td>
<td>363</td>
<td>256</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entries into the Library</td>
<td>1'535'668</td>
<td>983'748</td>
<td>827'962</td>
<td>470'052</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Communication</th>
<th>2017</th>
<th>2018</th>
<th>2019</th>
<th>2020</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Website visits</td>
<td>1'716'711</td>
<td>2'330'066</td>
<td>2'585'669</td>
<td>2'025'32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Followers on social media (cumulated)</td>
<td>3'832</td>
<td>5'305</td>
<td>6'552</td>
<td>7'476</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*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.