

FY24 Annual Report



CONNECTED LIBRARIES. EMPOWERED COMMUNITIES. ENRICHED LIVES.



Minitex Staff Day 2024

MISSION

To strengthen libraries, cultural institutions, and the communities they serve.

VISION

Connected libraries.
Empowered communities.
Enriched lives.

VALUES

Inclusiveness
Service
Partnerships
Expertise

Minitex has had a productive year. We modernized MNLINK, our interlibrary loan system, maintaining access to a vast collection of library resources for all Minnesotans, for years to come. We expanded access to essential nursing and health databases for academic institutions, saving schools money and supporting student success. We championed collaboration, facilitating programs like the Minnesota Shared Print Program. Our commitment to professional development for library staff is evident through numerous conferences, workshops, and training programs. Looking forward, we are prepared to adapt to the evolving needs of Minnesotans. Our strategic plan focuses on fostering connections among Minnesotans and connecting people with the resources they need. We see a bright future ahead for Minnesota and the region, where libraries are vital centers for community, and where students, workers, and families thrive.

Highlights

MNLINK: Familiar service, fresh experience

We got our start more than 50 years ago finding a way to share library materials from the University of Minnesota with all Minnesotans. Today, MNLINK integrates all of Minnesota's libraries into a single, cost-effective resource sharing system. Over the past year, together with our partners in the library community, and at no direct cost to participating libraries, we've rebuilt the technology upon which MNLINK relies. As a result, Minnesota's library patrons will retain access to the combined collections



(tens of millions of items, in all) of more than 500 libraries and 25 library systems, via interlibrary loan. Read more about the new MNLINK, and more highlights from the past year, on Minitex News at z.umn.edu/mtx-2024.

Enabling academic success

Minitex provides essential services to academic institutions. This past year, we added something new: barrier-free access to the health-information databases nursing programs require for accreditation and students need to become tomorrow's life-saving caregivers. Offering these databases statewide (in addition to the dozens of other high-quality online resources available

Normandale Community College saved almost \$18,000, Bemidji State University saved \$57,000, and Concordia College Moorhead saved \$86,000.

through eLibrary Minnesota) saves schools money and improves their students' educational experience. Other databases, even when not offered statewide, are available to academic institutions at reduced prices through Minitex. It's not uncommon for a community college or university to save tens of thousands of dollars by working with Minitex. We support the K-12 community,

Read about how these and other libraries benefit communities across Minnesota: z.umn.edu/lib-profiles



Northfield Public Library Oasis serves patrons where they are



Minnesota Revenue Library supports fair tax system for all



Librarians at the center of student life: Southwest Minnesota State University

too. We offer schools resources like 24/7 online access to research librarians, digital encyclopedias, ebooks, and access to physical library materials, as well as our money-saving Cooperative Purchasing program and countless professional development opportunities.

It's all available to educators via a [single webpage](#). We've also begun curating [Curriculum Resource Packs](#) of free online

materials that align with Minnesota standards, including "Food, Nutrition, and Cooking," and "Sports and Sports History."

The [Minnesota Digital Library](#) added 15 digital storytelling projects in FY24. MDL's new offerings include four exhibits, two maps, three timelines, and six primary source sets on topics ranging from Military History to Women's Suffrage to the Main Streets of Minnesota.

Taken together with the resources we offer lifelong learners, including statewide resource sharing and Minnesota history through the Minnesota Digital Library, Minitex provides difference-making support for educational attainment, from infancy through adulthood.

Reflecting our state in the resources we offer

As Minnesota grows and changes, the resources we offer must change with it. In order to meet the needs of all Minnesota families, students, workers, and lifelong learners, including those who are new to our state as well those who have been here for generations, Minitex conducted a thorough audit of the databases and ebooks we offer. The [final report](#) will guide our efforts for years to come.

Working together to manage library materials

Beyond the services and resources Minitex provides, perhaps our most important mission is to serve as a locus for collaboration. The Minne-

sota Shared Print Program is an excellent example. The program brought together academic libraries from across Minnesota to ensure that nearly half a million scarcely-held books will remain available to Minnesotans for the foreseeable

future. Each of the program's 24 participants has signed a memorandum of understanding that commits their institution to retain specific books, freeing up space on the shelves at other libraries, while maintaining access to the books.

The Minnesota Library Access Center (MLAC) is a collaboration with a longer history. Housed in a pioneering high-density storage facility nearly 100 feet beneath Andersen Library, MLAC contains 1.5 million rarely circulating volumes from 20 libraries. Now, working with partners at the University of Minnesota, we are well on our way to the completion of its successor. The new, larger, facility will provide a new space for MLAC's collection (alongside others) while clearing the way for the preservation of Minnesota treasures by the University of Minnesota's Archives and Special Collections.

MLAC opens its doors to the public

While library staff members and educators across the state delight patrons and students with friendly, top-notch service, Minitex works



"Without MNLINK, my ability to learn would be greatly stunted."

mostly behind the scenes. This May we tried something new. We opened MLAC's doors to the public by participating in Doors Open Minneapolis, an annual event that invites notable spaces, typically off-limits, to offer public tours. We welcomed more than 850 visitors over the event's single weekend.

New paths to Minnesota history

To learn about Minnesota history, Minnesotans can visit the Minnesota Digital Library's website at mndigital.org. Soon, there may be another way to access MDL's collection. That's because Minitex staff, along with partners from Minnesota State University, Mankato; the Blue Earth County Historical Society; and the University of Minnesota have concluded a pilot project that tested

"My Grand Rapids library is my favorite place to go where I can have a window on the whole world and it doesn't cost me a dime!"

the use of Wikimedia Commons to increase the discoverability of content. It worked! Soon after adding images from their digital history collections to

the Commons, those images became the top Google search result for their search terms. In the project's next phase, Minitex will collaborate with the Digital Public Library of America to add the public domain images of 12 MDL contributors to Wikimedia Commons.

MDL's Scan for Keeps program enables Minnesota organizations to preserve their history by lending them digitization equipment, free of charge. Eight organizations took advantage last year. St. Paul's Highland Heritage Project scanned documents, transparencies, slides and negatives from their community archive. Stearns History Museum hosted a public scanning event in St. Cloud. They invited community members to bring personal photographs and other significant



Minitex Resource Sharing Director Gerri Moeller addresses a plenary session at Minitex Connect.

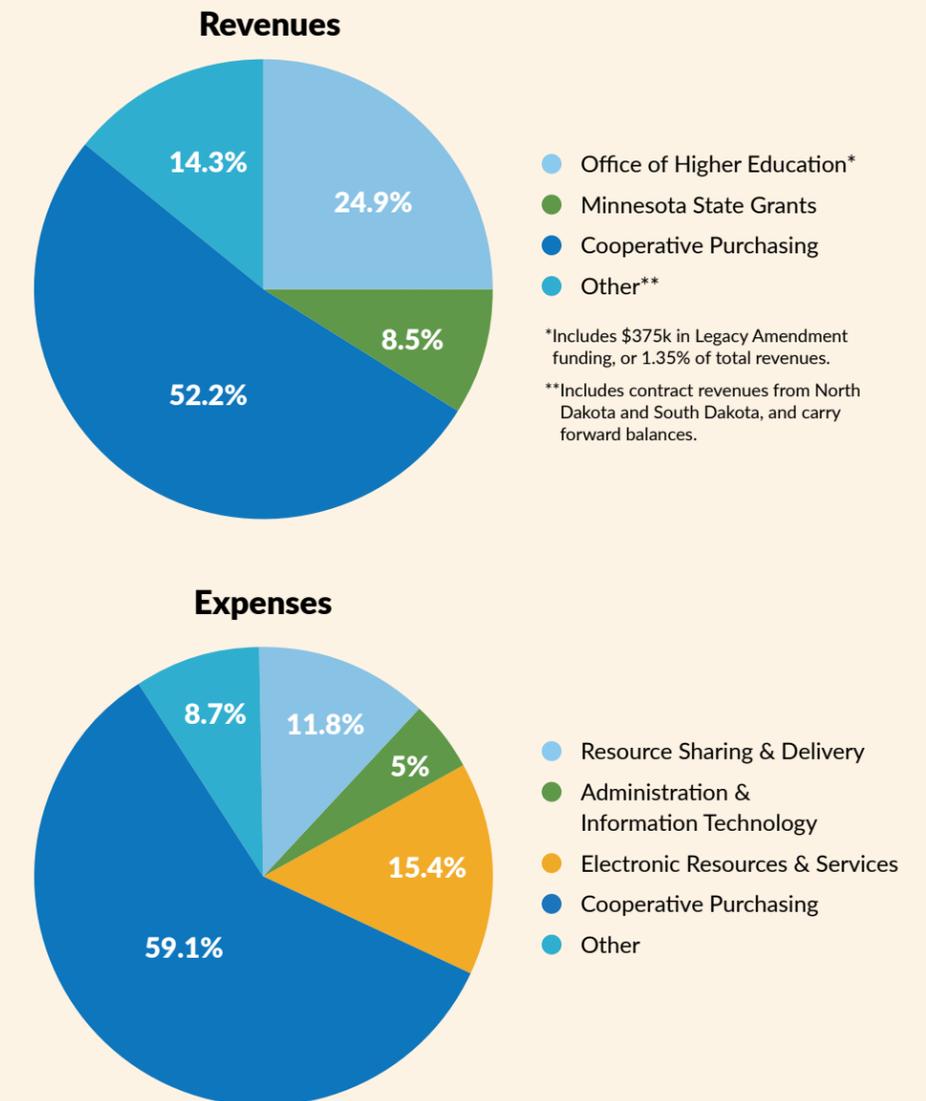
We also offered multi-part webinars on three important topics: “Parliamentary Procedure for Libraries,” a series aimed at helping libraries run more effective meetings, “Managing Digital Content Over Time,” introducing fundamental concepts for managing and preserving digital content, and “Spell it out: An E-Resource Licensing Lunch-and-Learn Series,” in which presenters shared their expertise on the many dimensions of licensing and license negotiation. Our numerous one-off sessions included webinars on topics such as voter education, collection management, and project management. Most recently, we launched Minitex 101, a self-paced series intended for library staff that guides learners through each Minitex service, leaving them better able to take advantage of all that we offer.

Planning for the future

FY24 was a successful year for Minitex and Minnesota’s libraries, and we want FY25 (and every year thereafter) to be even better. Last fall, we coordinated with our partners at the Minnesota Office of Higher Education, the Minnesota Department of Education, and the Minitex Policy Advisory Council, to initiate a strategic planning process to lead our work over the coming years. The result of that effort is centered on something that comes naturally to Minitex: Connection. To read a two-page summary of the plan, visit z.umn.edu/mtx-strategy.



Financial Overview



In FY24, Minitex maintained an annual budget of \$27 million, funded from multiple sources, including, the Minnesota Office of Higher Education, grants administered by the Minnesota Department of Education, the Minnesota Historical Society, state libraries and partners in North Dakota and South Dakota, and the Minitex Cooperative Purchasing program. Our partnership with the State of Minnesota yielded exciting new benefits for the library community this past year, in the form of \$650,000 in funding for nursing databases (see page 2, above) and a \$211,000 special projects grant which, among other benefits, strengthened the emergency readiness of Minnesota’s libraries and cultural heritage organizations (page 4). Our Cooperative Purchasing program continues to deliver cost savings for libraries and schools across Minnesota and the region. We leveraged our funding to implement a new MNLINK application for interlibrary loan, and to support cost increases in operations and e-resources databases.

Minitex Strategic Priorities



Connect People to Information



Connect People to Lifelong Learning



Connect People to Resources



Connect People to People

documents to be scanned, and gave them a digital copy to take home.

Preserving Minnesota history for future generations

Thanks to funding from the U.S. Institute for Museum and Library Services, Minitex and the Minnesota Digital Library were able to partner with the Minnesota Alliance of Local History’s Mutual Assistance Team to provide emergency supply caches across Minnesota. The caches contain supplies that can address the harmful effects of natural disasters on collections held by libraries, archives, county historical societies, and other cultural heritage organizations. Minitex also coordinated a training session about the supplies, and how to access and use them.

Accessible and high-quality professional development

Minitex had an incredible year when it comes to offering professional development opportunities for library staff and educators. In August and September, MDL held regional meetings in Pipestone and Roseau. In October, the Minitex Technical Services Symposium gathered at the Minnesota History Center to lean into “Creating a Sustainable Future in Technical Services.” In February, the Electronic Resources Minnesota (ERMN) Conference gathered online, featuring talks on e-resource access, the value of journal packages, and generative AI. Finally, in May, Minitex Connect convened at Hennepin Technical College on the theme of “Interlibrary Loan & the New MNLINK.”

Last fall, Minitex began a program to increase open-licensing expertise in Minnesota’s academic libraries. The program paid for 18 library staff, from 11 institutions, to complete the Creative Commons Academic Librarian Certification, a 10-week course requiring a commitment of 6-10 hours per week. Two participants from the College of Saint Benedict



and Saint John’s University went on to offer a new course to faculty, “Everything You (and your students) Need to Know About Using Creative Commons Licenses.”

Minitex’s free, self-paced online learning project, [23 Linked Data Things](#), was completed with the publication, in November, of “Reflections on the Future of Linked Data.” The project team, a group of nine authors from seven institutions, was led by Minitex’s Sara Ring. For her efforts, Ring was named by Library Journal as one of their 2024 Movers & Shakers. Nationwide, LJ honors just 50 librarians each year.

By the Numbers



AskMN

Online reference service
staffed by librarians 24 hours
a day, 7 days a week

- Minnesota librarians answered 39,757 questions; that's more than 100 questions per day.
- Minnesotans asked 33,120 questions.



eLibrary Minnesota

Encyclopedia, magazine, journal,
and newspaper articles, plus multi-
media, primary sources, and more

- Minnesotans found over 11.3 million full-text items in ELM last year.
- Curious Minnesotans searched ELM nearly 55 million times. That's almost 10 searches or every Minnesotan.



Resource Sharing & Delivery

The rich resources of Minnesota
libraries, available to patrons and
libraries in every corner of Minnesota

- In many cases, filling or delivering a Minnesota library patron's loan request is only possible through Minitex.
- In FY24, Minitex staff helped fill a whopping 158,937 item requests, and helped transport an additional 368,510 items between Minnesota libraries.



Minnesota Library Storage

High-density storage for
academic, public and
governmental libraries

- Minitex staff paged 21,062 items to fill patron and Google scanning requests



Ebooks Minnesota

Minnesota's statewide ebook
collection for readers of all ages

- The collection was viewed 279,584 times, an all-time high.
- Student checkouts rose 25% over the previous year.



Minnesota Digital Library

Historical content from
Minnesota's cultural heritage
organizations, all in one place

- MDL's digital collection topped 60,000 items.
- The collection represents 204 cultural heritage organizations from across Minnesota.



Minnesota Libraries Publishing Project

Online publishing tools for
independent authors, supported
by Minnesota's libraries

- Readership increased to 1.27 million page views, a 27% increase over the previous year.
- Minnesota writers initiated 140 book projects on MLPP in FY24.



Professional Development

Strengthening the knowledge, skills,
and efficiency of staff in libraries
throughout the Minitex region

- Minitex welcomed 3,857 attendees to 163 professional development opportunities in FY24.

Cooperative Purchasing



Discounted prices on a wide
variety of products for libraries

- Minnesota libraries saved \$3.2 million by purchasing electronic resources and library products, such as security systems, through Minitex.

Minitex

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 OFFICE OF
HIGHER EDUCATION

 **LIBRARIES**
UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

Minitex is an information and resource sharing program of the Minnesota Office of Higher Education and the University of Minnesota