

**COLLECTCONNECT
USER'S GUIDE
- FALL 2018 -**

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USER NAME AND PASSWORD

Click the **Forgot Your Username or Password?** link on the login page to retrieve a lost user name and/or password. A pre-populated email to Tech Support will open with a request for your library and state. You will receive a response within 24 hours. Alternatively, you can call Tech Support at 1-866-785-9935 to request immediate assistance.

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RECOMMENDED BROWSERS

All major web browsers are supported, including Edge, Internet Explorer, Chrome, Safari (when on a Mac), and Firefox. We recommend a screen resolution of 1024 by 768 or higher.

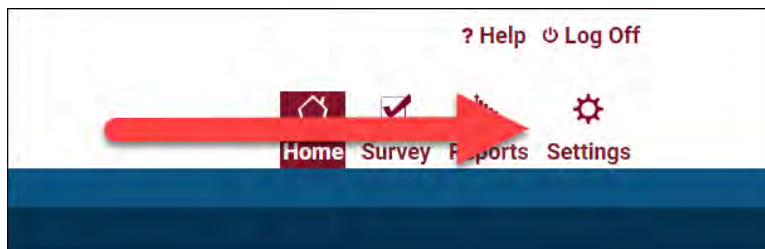
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TIME OUT

Your session will time out after 90 minutes of inactivity. Any information entered before the time out will be saved.

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SETTINGS



The setup screen lets you choose the data you want to use and what library you would like to use as the basis for comparison. You can only use one source of data at a time. Click on **Settings** at the top of any page in the system to go to the Setup page.

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SETUP

Select DataSource

At the top of the page, select the source of data you want to use from the **Database** drop-down menu (1). The following databases can be selected:

- **PLSC/Census:** PLSC stands for the Public Library Statistics Cooperative. It represents the joint efforts of the State Data Coordinator from all 50 states, the Institute of Museum and Library Services and the U.S. Census Bureau to build a national database that includes a common core of data for all public libraries in the United States. Some of the important attributes of this database include the ability to examine state and national averages, a rich set of categorical data elements such as legal basis code that can be used to filter in the peer finder, and its comprehensiveness.
- **PLA:** PLA stands for the Public Library Association. This database represents the annual Public Library Data Service's survey of libraries in the United States and Canada and is also available in printed form from PLA. It is a voluntary survey and usually includes approximately 800 of the largest libraries. The primary benefit of PLA data is that it is generally the most current of any of the databases and is very popular in the media.
- **States:** Most states also make their own annual statistical surveys available via CollectConnect. Each survey is confined to libraries within the state, but generally includes a much larger selection of data elements about the libraries in that state. Data elements from one state survey may not be comparable with similarly named data

elements from another, and CollectConnect does not allow them to be mixed in the survey. In addition, because of the differing fiscal years in each state, different state surveys may represent different time periods. PLSC and PLA data should be used to compare libraries across states.

Comparison Libraries

You can select a **Comparison Library (3)** to be your library of comparison in the Select Comparison Library area of the page. CollectConnect will look up the values for that library when you are choosing libraries by peers to provide a helpful point of reference. However, you don't have to choose a comparison library; if you do not, you simply will not retrieve the values to use as a reference when selecting peers libraries.

The State menu **(2)** can help you narrow your choice of libraries in the **Comparison Library** field.

Miscellaneous Options

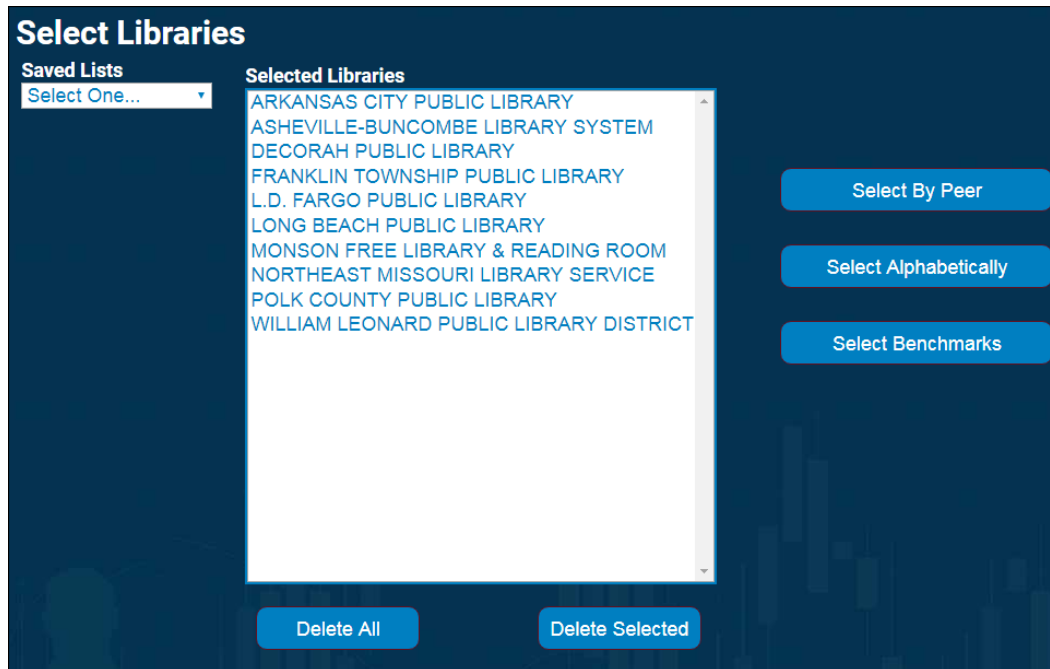
In the **Misc Options (4)** area, you can select the following defaults:

- **Always show this screen at startup** – Skip the setup section and go directly to the Select Libraries screen upon login.
- **Show Tool Tips** – Display tips when hovering over items
- **Show Notes** – Display any notes entered for a report
- **Always Include Mes Library** – Always use the Comparison Library selected on this page when running reports

Click **Next** to advance to the Select Libraries page.

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SELECT LIBRARIES



Selecting libraries to compare is the first step in using CollectConnect. The large box in the middle of the screen shows the list of any libraries you have already selected for comparison. Just to the right of it are three buttons (**Select by Peer**, **Select Alphabetically**, and **Select Benchmarks**) that will take you to new pages that give you special tools for choosing certain libraries. Just below the selected libraries box are two buttons that let you **Delete All** libraries or **Delete Selected** libraries. You can also **Save Lists** of libraries to use later.

Select by Peer

[Selecting libraries by peers](#) is one of the most powerful features of CollectConnect. Using this feature, you can quickly create a list of all libraries that meet criteria that you define. For example, using PLSC data, you can tell the system to only show those libraries in Ohio, Pennsylvania, and Indiana that are municipal libraries with a population less than 50,000 and with more than five branches.

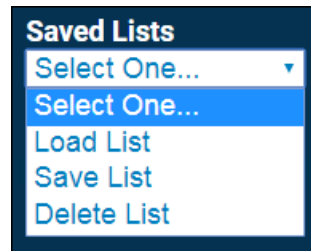
Select Alphabetically

If you already know the libraries you would like to compare, this option lets you [choose libraries by name](#).

Select Benchmarks

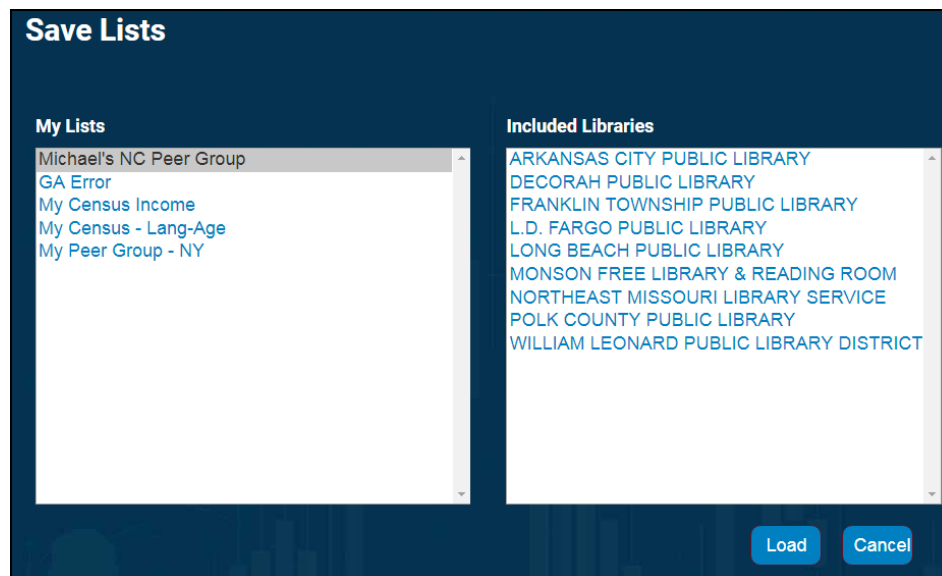
[Benchmarks](#) are statistical calculations based on groups of libraries that you define. An example of a benchmark could be the Average of the State of Texas, or the average of top circulating libraries. You can plot benchmarks on the graph as well.

Saved Lists

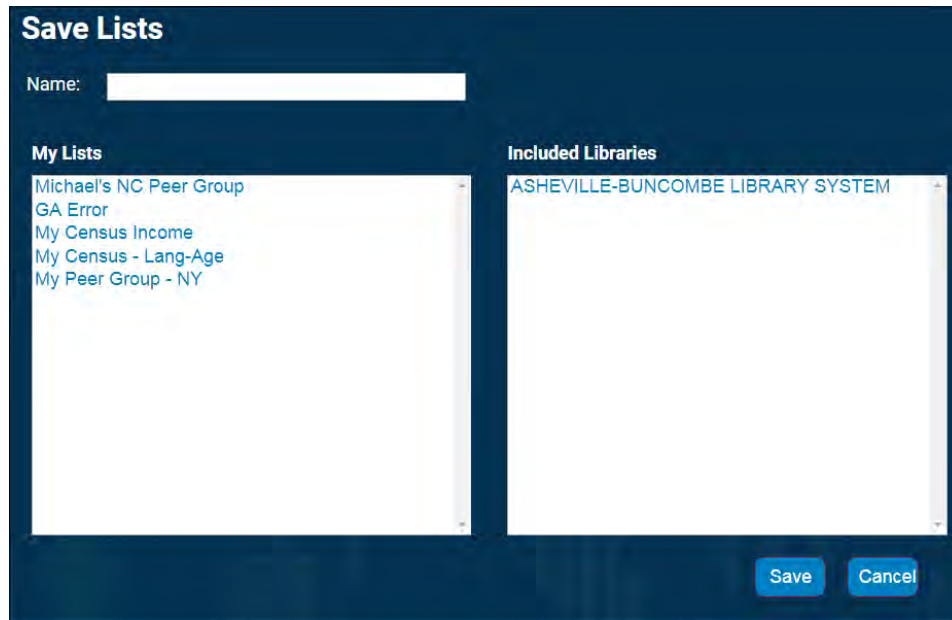


Saved lists are lists of libraries that you know you will want to reuse. If you frequently compare your library with the same libraries, you should create a list with those libraries in it.

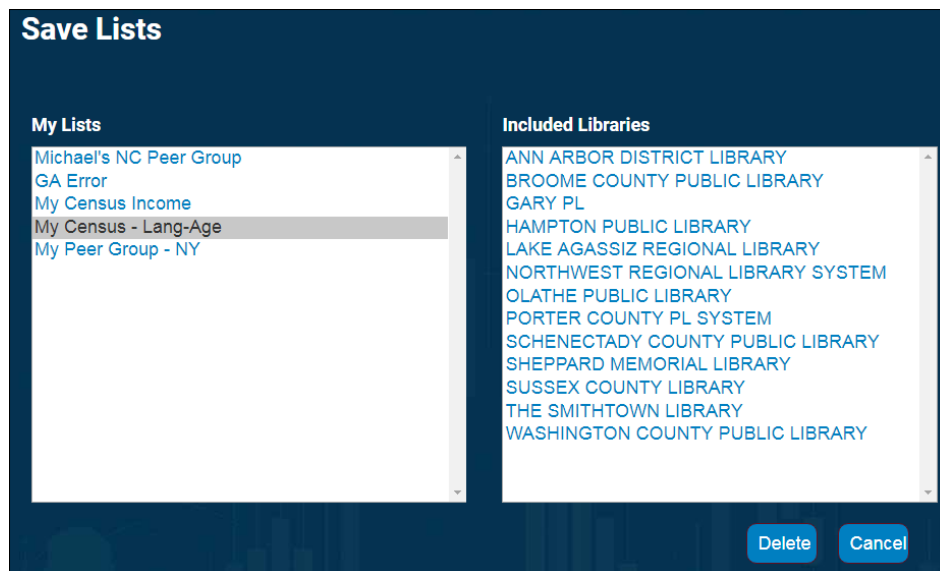
- **Load List** – Takes you to the Saved Lists page, which displays all the lists you have previously saved. Select an existing list from **My Lists**, and then click **Load** to view those libraries.



- **Save List** – Saves the list of libraries that are currently selected for use later on. Enter a unique **Name** for the list, and then click **Save**.



- **Delete List** – Delete a list of libraries you have previously created. Select the list you wish to delete from **My Lists**, and then click **Delete**.



Please note that you can select up to 15 libraries for comparison at one time. If you select more than 15 libraries, you will receive an error message.

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SELECT BY PEER

Selecting libraries by peers is one of the most powerful features of CollectConnect. Using this feature, you can quickly create a list of all libraries that meet criteria that you define. For example, using PLSC data, you can tell the system to only show those libraries in Ohio, Pennsylvania, and Indiana that are municipal libraries with a population less than 50,000 and with more than five branches.

Selecting libraries by peers is a two-step process. The first step (Peer Finder Setup) lets you select broad criteria using both [statistical data elements](#) and categorical data elements. The second step (Peer Finder) lets you fine-tune the list, adjusting your statistical data elements.

The screenshot displays the 'Select Libraries by Peer' interface, which is divided into two main sections: 'Available Criteria' and 'Selected Criteria'.

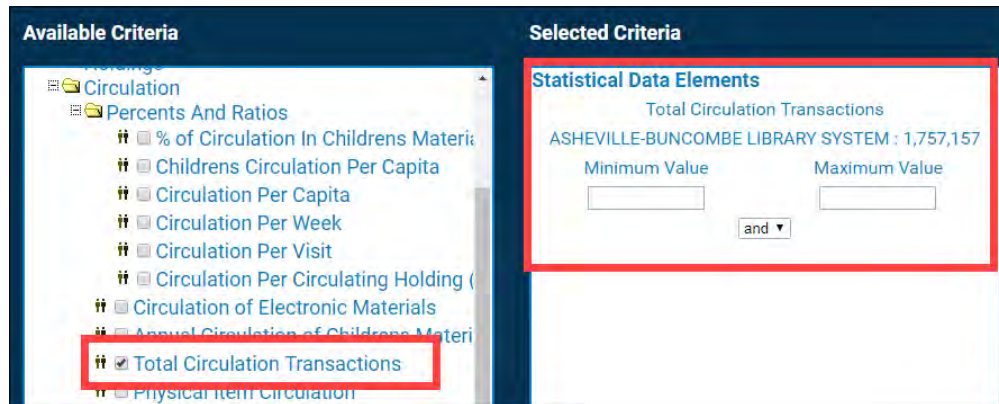
Available Criteria: This section shows a tree view of data elements. Under 'Statistical Data Elements', the 'General Information' folder is expanded, showing several criteria with plus signs (indicating they are collapsed) and minus signs (indicating they are expanded). The expanded criteria include: 'Population of The Legal Service Area', 'Total # of Service Outlets Including Number of Bookmobiles', '# of Central Libraries', '# of Branch Libraries', '# of Bookmobiles', 'Total Square Footage of Library', and '# of Registered Borrowers'. Other folders like 'Expenditures', 'Income', 'Staff', 'Holdings', 'Circulation', 'Programs', 'Interlibrary Loans', 'Electronic Measures', and 'Miscellaneous' are also visible but collapsed.

Selected Criteria: This section shows the criteria selected for the peer finder. It displays two criteria with their respective values and input fields for 'Minimum Value' and 'Maximum Value'. The first criterion is 'Population of The Legal Service Area' with a value of 'ASHEVILLE-BUNCOMBE LIBRARY SYSTEM : 254,836'. Below it are two input fields for 'Minimum Value' and 'Maximum Value', and a dropdown menu with 'or' selected. The second criterion is 'Total # of Service Outlets Including Number of Bookmobiles' with a value of 'ASHEVILLE-BUNCOMBE LIBRARY SYSTEM : 13'. Below it are two input fields for 'Minimum Value' and 'Maximum Value', and a dropdown menu with 'and' selected.

At the bottom of the 'Selected Criteria' section, there is a checkbox labeled 'Calculate on Percentage' followed by a percentage input field. At the very bottom of the interface, there are two buttons: 'Back' and 'Next'.

To select a data element, click the **plus sign** to expand the desired folder under **Available Criteria**. Select criteria as needed.

Several other items will appear with the data element. For example, if you choose Total Circulation as your variable, you will see the name of the library you selected under **Selected Criteria**, along with areas to enter a **Minimum Value** and a **Maximum Value**. These fields cannot be left blank.



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Statistical Data Elements

This information is provided as reference. Your criteria does not have to include the selected library's value. If you did not select a library on the setup screen, you will receive an error message. This message will also appear if you selected a Library, but there was no data for the variable that you selected.

If you selected a statistical data element, you will also see areas to enter a **Minimum Value** and a **Maximum Value**. Here are some tips for entering values in these fields:

- Both fields must contain data. If you don't want to set a maximum value, enter a large number, like ten million. Conversely, if you don't need a minimum value, enter a zero in the associated field.
- You must choose at least one statistical data element, but you don't have to choose any categorical data elements.
- Remember, the purpose of this feature is to narrow your query. If your range is too large, you can get back a list with thousands of libraries. In most cases, using more than 20 libraries results in unwieldy results.

When you've selected all the data elements you want to use as criteria and entered the minimum and maximum values for each, you can view and refine your results.

Click **Next**.

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Peer Finder

The Peer Finder lets you interact with the results of the criteria you set up previously.

The screenshot displays the 'Select Libraries By Peer Result' interface. At the top, a 'Results' section indicates 'Total of 6934 records returned for your search criteria.' Below this is a table with five columns: 'Library Name', 'State', 'Population of The Legal Service Area', 'Operating Income From Local Government', and '# of Central Libraries'. A red circle '1' highlights the 'Population of The Legal Service Area' column header. A red circle '2' highlights the total record count. Below the table is a 'Refine Criteria' section with a red circle '3' and a 'Refine' button. This section contains three filter groups: 'Population of The Legal Service Area' (Min 0, Max 30000), 'Operating Income From Local Government' (Min 0, Max 1000000), and '# of Central Libraries' (Min 0, Max 2). 'Back' and 'Next' buttons are at the bottom.

Library Name	State	Population of The Legal Service Area	Operating Income From Local Government	# of Central Libraries
ARLEY PUBLIC LIBRARY	AL	356	\$34,382	1
DOUBLE SPRINGS PUBLIC LIBRARY	AL	1,068	\$52,346	1
HALEYVILLE PUBLIC LIBRARY	AL	4,122	\$114,791	1
JASPER PUBLIC LIBRARY	AL	14,109	\$195,434	1
SUMITON PUBLIC LIBRARY	AL	2,423	\$62,766	1
ANNIE L. AWBREY PUBLIC LIBRARY	AL	5,970	\$88,901	1
ASHLAND CITY PUBLIC LIBRARY	AL	1,984	\$64,016	1
B. B. COMER MEMORIAL LIBRARY	AL	12,703	\$676,444	1
CHEROKEE COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY	AL	3,595	\$157,713	1
EARLE A. RAINWATER MEMORIAL LIBRARY	AL	5,068	\$140,706	1
LINCOLN PUBLIC LIBRARY	AL	6,438	\$180,045	1
LINEVILLE PUBLIC LIBRARY	AL	2,321	\$32,677	1
LUCILE L. MORCAN PUBLIC LIBRARY	AL	2,517	\$25,000	1

A column of data (1) displays for each of the statistical data elements you selected as criteria. If the entire title of the column is not visible, it can be expanded by clicking on its border and dragging it to the left or right. At the top, the number of libraries matching your query displays (2). Remember, for most purposes, more than 15 or 20 libraries are difficult to analyze; between five and six is typically optimal.

Below your results is a **Refine** area (3). Use this section of the page to further refine your results until you reach a number that you can meaningfully analyze.

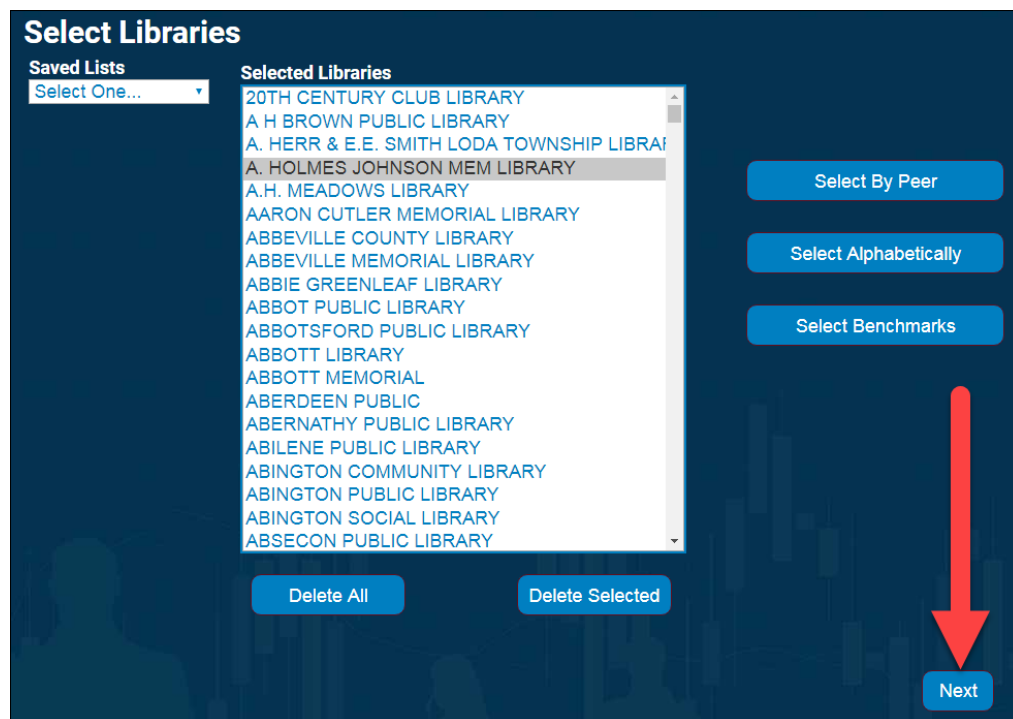
If no libraries appear in your results, no libraries met your criteria. Change your minimum and/or maximum values to refine them and expand your criteria.

Click the **Next** button to take the list of libraries created in the Peer Finder and return to the main Select Libraries screen.

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CREATE A GRAPH OR TABLE

The list you just created with Peer Finder will appear in the **Selected Libraries** box. Although it appears you can individually select libraries on this screen, all libraries will actually be used for calculation purposes.



Click **Next**.

Select Data Elements

The Select Data Elements page displays. This page lets you quickly locate data elements of interest. There are three sections on this screen:

- **Available Data Elements** – Click on the **plus sign** next to a data element to expand it further for selection.

- **Selected Data Elements** – Once you select a data element from the Available Data Elements area, it will appear in this portion of the screen.
- **Available Years** – A list of all of the years of data that are available for the particular data set you are using. You can select multiple years of data to show trending on any data element. To view all years, select **Check all years**.

Select Data Elements

Saved Lists
Select One...

Available Data Elements:

- # of Branch Libraries
- # of Bookmobiles
- Total Square Footage of Library
- # of Registered Borrowers
- Expenditures
- Income
- Staff
- Percents And Ratios
 - ALA MLS FTEs
 - # of FTE Librarians
 - # of Other Paid FTEs
 - Total Paid Employees
- Holdings
- Circulation
- Programs
- Interlibrary Loans
- Electronic Measures
- Miscellaneous
- Categorical Data Elements

Hide Elements

Selected Data Elements:

- Population of The Legal Service Area
- # of Bookmobiles
- ALA MLS FTEs

Available Years:

- 2016
- 2015
- 2014
- 2013
- 2012
- 2011

Check all years

Back Next

When selecting data elements, you should be judicious about selecting the same kind of elements. For example, if you select Total Expenditures and Total Expenditures per Capita, these two data elements will not display well together on a chart. Total Expenditures will return values in the hundreds of thousands or millions, while Expenditures per Capita will return values less than 20 in many cases. On the graph, it will appear as if there are no values for Total Expenditures per Capita.

Please note that although CollectConnect gives you the ability to show multiple libraries, multiple data elements, and multiple years, you can only choose any two of these at a time. This means that if you want to show multiple libraries and multiple data elements, you can only choose one year. If you want to show multiple data elements and multiple years, you can only choose one library.

In addition, the list of available data elements reflects the data elements for that dataset. However, previously collected elements and elements that were combined but are now separated, will be displayed with data for the appropriated selected year.

Click **Next**.

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Format

The Format page lets you setup how you want to display your results: in a **Table** or an interactive **Graph**. If you have selected a large number of libraries and/or data elements, the table display will probably be more useful.

Format

Type of Output: Graph Table

Title:

X-axis Title:

GroupBy:

Y-axis Title:

DataType:

Color Scheme:

Graph Type:

Decimal:

Labels: Yes No

Show Legend: Yes No

Below are the fields available on this page. Please note that if **Table** is selected for the **Type of Output**, the fields on the right side of the page will be grayed out.

- **Group By** – Controls how your results are organized into columns and rows, whether

displayed in a table or on a graph. If you group by **Libraries**, libraries will be placed in rows and data elements will be used as columns. If you group by **Data Elements**, data elements are placed in rows and libraries in columns.

If you are using a graph, it is usually better to group by Data Elements, as this is the default. However, if you are using a table, grouping by libraries is usually better.

- **Data Type** – CollectConnect can display 4 types of data. Only one type of data can be displayed at a time.
 - **Regular** – Regular data is what you normally expect to see. It consists of the actual values reported by the libraries.
 - **Rank** – Rank data displays what rank the regular value for that library is within that particular data element within the data set. Thus, a library that reports the same circulation data to their state (then up to PLSC) and to PLDS, would rank differently on circulation in each of these data sets because the number of libraries in each set is different.
 - **Percentile** - Percentile data is a broader way of expressing rank, but essentially expresses the same idea of position within a group. On large data sets like PLSC, percentile is often more meaningful than rank. For example, it is more meaningful to know that a library is in the 74th percentile on collection expenditures than that it is ranked 2,238. However, on smaller data sets of less than 500 libraries (and especially less than 100 libraries), rank is usually a better number.
 - **Standardized** – Although standardized data is for stat gurus, it is still a very useful type of data. Standardized data displays how many standard deviations away from the average a particular value is.

A simple example will help clarify standardized data. Five libraries spend an average of \$100,000 on collections annually. One of them spends \$75,000. Is that low? It depends on what the range of expenditures is among the 5 libraries. Compare these two scenarios:

	Scenario 1	Scenario 2
Library A	\$150,000	\$400,000
Library B	\$125,000	\$5,000
Library C	\$100,000	\$10,000
Library D	\$75,000	\$75,000
Library E	\$50,000	\$10,000

Both scenarios average \$100,000. However, in the first scenario, Library D spends less than most of the other libraries. In Scenario 2, Library D is spending significantly more than the other libraries, but Library A's huge expenditures skew the average significantly. The standardized data in each of these scenarios would look like this:

	Scenario 1	Scenario 2
Library A	1.41	1.97
Library B	-.71	-.62
Library C	0	-.59
Library D	-.71	-.16
Library E	-1.41	-.59

In Scenario 2, Library A is almost 2 standard deviations away from the mean. By definition of standard, 2/3 of all libraries will fall within 1 (plus or minus) of the mean. 95% of all libraries will fall within 2 of the mean. Any library with a value outside of 2 is very exceptional.

Library A in Scenario 2 is still inside the red portion of the bell curve on the right, but just barely. In Scenario 1, Library C is right on the average line between the two yellow sections.

One of the best applications of standardized data is comparing two data types that normally are not comparable together. For example, you can look at Collection Expenditures and Collection Expenditures per Capita on the same chart to see if a particular library stands out on either of these measures, as well as how far they stand out. Thus standardized data can help you quickly identify areas where a library stands out from others.

The following options can be defined on this page, or on the graph itself. You can use them to name the Axis on the

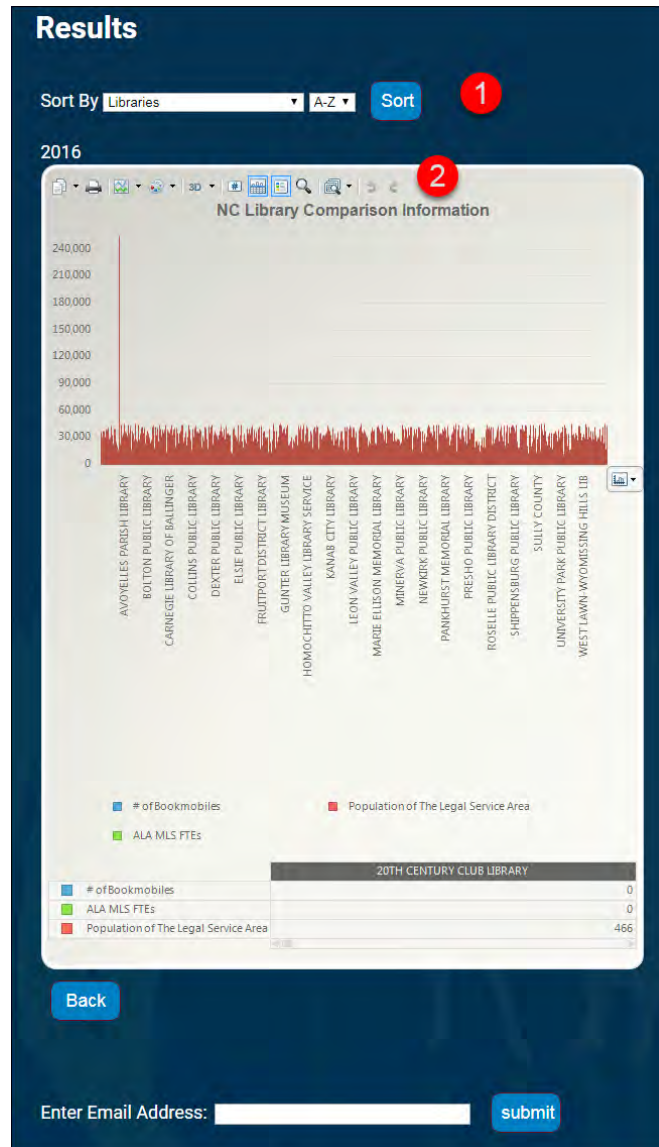
- **X-Axis Title**
- **Y-Axis Title**
- **Color Scheme**
- **Graph Type**
- **Decimal**
- **Labels**
- **Show Legend**

Once you've made your selections, click **Next**. A graph (or table) of your results displays.

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Graph

The graph is interactive and gives you tremendous flexibility in how your data appears. You can change colors, add labels, change fonts, and more directly from your browser.



Use the **Sort By** drop-down **(1)** to select criteria to sort your results. You can sort in ascending or descending order. Click **Sort** to re-sort the graph.

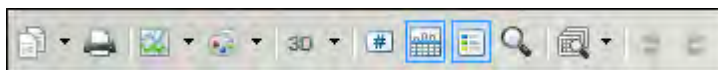
A gray toolbar **(2)** runs along the top of the graph. Whenever you hover your mouse over a bar on the chart, a tool tip will appear listing the **library name**, **data element**, and **value**. In addition, you can right click on the graph to view context-sensitive features.

Use the **Enter Email Address** field to send an image of the graph to yourself or someone else. Click **Submit**.

Please note that the tool tips for the chart reflect the same decimal precision as the Y-Axis. Therefore, values like Circulation per Capita may appear rounded to the nearest integer. To change the decimal precision, right click on the **Y-Axis**, then select **Properties**. Select **Scale**. From here, locate the **decimal** option and increase it from 0 to 1 or 2. Click **OK** to make the change.

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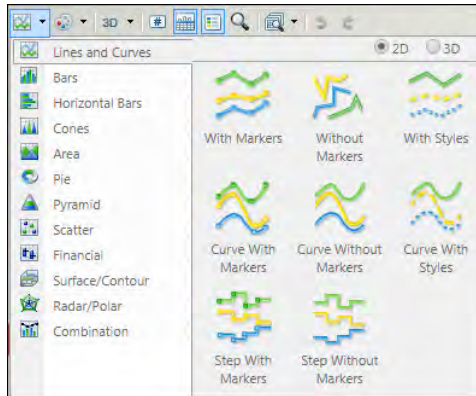
Toolbar Buttons



Use the toolbar buttons above to interact further with your chart. You can use these buttons to open a chart that you previously saved, open a template that saves your favorite formatting options so you can quickly apply them to a new chart, or even read comma-delimited text files that let you use your own data in the chart. Generally, however, it will be easier for you to use Microsoft Excel to create charts of your custom data.

Below is a list of all toolbar buttons, in order from left to right.

- **Copy to Clipboard** – Similar to saving your graph, you can copy it to the clipboard in one of several formats. Select **Bitmap** to copy pictures of the graph as it appears on your screen. If you choose to **copy text** to the clipboard, you can paste into Microsoft Excel so you can further manipulate it.
- **Print** – Select to print the graph.
- **Gallery** – The gallery lets you choose from many different chart types. You can choose bar, pie, line, radar, scatter, bubble, and more. Many of these options may not make sense for the typical data you'll find in CollectConnect. You can also right-click on a bar or a point on the chart to bring up this menu. This context-sensitive option lets you change one bar or point into a different type of chart, so that you can mix bar and line charts, for example.



- **Color** – Change the color scheme used in the chart.
- **2D/3D** – Turn 3D view on and off.
- **Point Labels** – Displays the counter above the bar in the chart



- **Data Grid** – Turn the grid at the bottom of the graph on or off.
- **Legend Box** – The legend box is turned on by default. If you can't see the legend, click this button to turn it off, then click it again to turn it back on.

- **Zoom** – Click to reveal a pointer. Drag around the area of the graph you want to zoom in on.
- **Undo/Redo** – Undo or redo your last move.

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Table

Below is an example of the same information presented in table form.

Results				
2016				
Libraries	State	# of Bookmobiles	ALA MLS FTEs	Population of The Legal Service Area
20TH CENTURY CLUB LIBRARY	NY	0	0.00	466
A H BROWN PUBLIC LIBRARY	SD	0	0.00	3,466
A. HERR & E.E. SMITH LODA TOWNSHIP LIBRARY	IL	0	0.00	1,461
A. HOLMES JOHNSON MEM LIBRARY	AK	0	1.00	13,181
A.H. MEADOWS LIBRARY	TX	0	1.13	35,628
AARON CUTLER MEMORIAL LIBRARY	NH	0	0.00	8,395
ABBEVILLE COUNTY LIBRARY	SC	0	2.00	25,417
ABBEVILLE MEMORIAL LIBRARY	AL	0	0.00	7,557
ABBIE GREENLEAF LIBRARY	NH	0	0.00	1,118
ABBOT PUBLIC LIBRARY	MA	0	5.81	20,187
ABBOTSFORD PUBLIC LIBRARY	WI	0	1.00	3,407
ABBOTT LIBRARY	NH	0	1.65	3,430
ABBOTT MEMORIAL	VT	0	0.00	894
ABERDEEN PUBLIC	ID	0	0.00	4,290

At the bottom of the table, you have an option to **Export to Excel** format. You can also **email** an Excel copy of the table to yourself or someone else.

Back
Export to Excel

Enter Email Address:

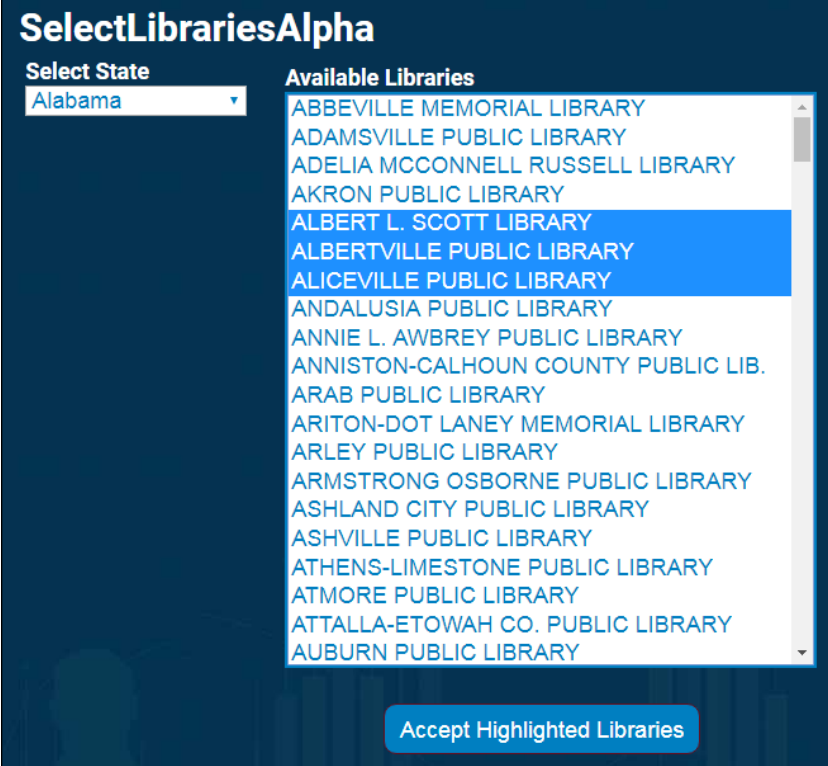
submit

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SELECT ALPHABETICALLY

If you already know the names of the libraries you want to compare yourself to, choose **Select Alphabetically** on the Select Libraries page.

The Select Libraries Alpha page displays. Select a **State** from the drop-down menu. A list of all available libraries in that state displays. From here, you can highlight the libraries you want to include, and then click **Accept Highlighted Libraries**.



The screenshot shows the 'SelectLibrariesAlpha' interface. On the left, there is a 'Select State' dropdown menu with 'Alabama' selected. To the right, under the heading 'Available Libraries', there is a scrollable list of library names. The name 'ALBERT L. SCOTT LIBRARY' is highlighted in blue. At the bottom right of the interface is a blue button labeled 'Accept Highlighted Libraries'.

Select State	Available Libraries
Alabama	ABBEVILLE MEMORIAL LIBRARY
	ADAMSVILLE PUBLIC LIBRARY
	ADELIA MCCONNELL RUSSELL LIBRARY
	AKRON PUBLIC LIBRARY
	ALBERT L. SCOTT LIBRARY
	ALBERTVILLE PUBLIC LIBRARY
	ALICEVILLE PUBLIC LIBRARY
	ANDALUSIA PUBLIC LIBRARY
	ANNIE L. AWBREY PUBLIC LIBRARY
	ANNISTON-CALHOUN COUNTY PUBLIC LIB.
	ARAB PUBLIC LIBRARY
	ARITON-DOT LANEY MEMORIAL LIBRARY
	ARLEY PUBLIC LIBRARY
	ARMSTRONG OSBORNE PUBLIC LIBRARY
	ASHLAND CITY PUBLIC LIBRARY
	ASHVILLE PUBLIC LIBRARY
	ATHENS-LIMESTONE PUBLIC LIBRARY
	ATMORE PUBLIC LIBRARY
	ATTALLA-ETOWAH CO. PUBLIC LIBRARY
	AUBURN PUBLIC LIBRARY

If you want to select libraries from multiple states, you will need to go through the process above for each state that you wish to pick from. If you know that you will frequently use these same libraries, save them in a list so that you can conveniently load the list instead of manually picking them each time you want to use them.

Please note that if you can't find a specific library in the list, there are two possible reasons. First, the library may report under one name and be commonly referred to as another. See if the library is listed under a different name. Second, the library did not contribute data to the database. For example, the PLDS survey is voluntary and not all libraries participate.

Once you have clicked **Accept Highlighted Libraries**, follow the [instructions on how to create a graph or table for your data](#).

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SELECT BENCHMARKS

Benchmarks are statistical calculations based on precise groups of libraries. For example, a benchmark may consist of the average of all libraries in a given state. It may also consist of the average of the largest libraries, such as the Average of the 99th Percentile for Population of the Legal Service Area. To select by this criteria, click on **Select Benchmarks** on the Select Libraries page.

The Benchmarks page displays. Please note that when you choose benchmarks on this page, you are not yet choosing the data elements for that benchmark. You are simply specifying how you want to identify the libraries to include in the benchmark. The actual data elements are selected on the data elements screen in a later step.

Benchmarks

Available Criteria

- Statistical Data Elements
- General Information
 - Percents And Ratios
 - Population of The Legal Service Area
 - Total # of Service Outlets Including Number of Branch Libraries
 - # of Central Libraries
 - # of Branch Libraries
 - # of Bookmobiles
 - Total Square Footage of Library
 - # of Registered Borrowers
 - Expenditures
 - Income
 - Staff
 - Holdings
 - Circulation
 - Programs
 - Interlibrary Loans
 - Electronic Measures
 - Miscellaneous

Available Benchmarks

- Sum For 1-10% of Population of The Legal Service Area
- Sum For 11-20% of Population of The Legal Service Area
- Sum For 21-30% of Population of The Legal Service Area
- Sum For 31-40% of Population of The Legal Service Area
- Sum For 41-50% of Population of The Legal Service Area
- Sum For 51-60% of Population of The Legal Service Area
- Sum For 61-70% of Population of The Legal Service Area
- Sum For 71-80% of Population of The Legal Service Area
- Sum For 81-90% of Population of The Legal Service Area
- Sum For 91-100% of Population of The Legal Service Area
- Sum For 1-25% of Population of The Legal Service Area

Type of Benchmark

Above Criteria Selected Libraries Only

Calculation Method

Sum Average Median

Selected Benchmarks

- Sum For 41-50% of Population of The Legal Service Area
- Sum For 71-80% of Population of The Legal Service Area
- Sum For 81-90% of Population of The Legal Service Area

Accept Highlighted Benchmarks

Delete Selected Back Next

First, select data elements from the **Available Criteria** section of the page. Once you select a checkmark in this portion of the screen, it will then display in the **Available Benchmarks** area. You can then highlight the rows you want to include in your benchmark, and then click on

Accept Highlighted Benchmarks. The benchmarks you selected will now display in the **Selected Benchmarks** portion of the screen.

If you select a statistical data element, the Available Benchmarks area will populate with all the possible benchmarks based on that data element. You will see 114 possibilities. 100 percentiles, 10 deciles, and 4 quartiles. Percentiles are represented as Average of 88-89% for Population of the Legal Service Area with the lower bound (88) being the actual percentile. Deciles are represented as Average of 80-90% for Population of the Legal Service Area and are inclusive of the lower bound (libraries in the 80th percentile) but not of the upper bound (libraries in the 90th percentile). Quartiles are represented as Average of 75-100% for Population of the Legal Service Area. Like Deciles, Quartiles are inclusive of the lower bound but not the upper bound.

If you choose a categorical data element, you will see a benchmark for each value in the data set in the Available Benchmarks area of the page. For example if you choose Legal Basis Code in the PLSC data set, you will see nine benchmarks for each of the legal base codes found in the data.

You can select the mathematical method to calculate the benchmark—**average, median, or sum.**

- **Average** – The average method will average all the values for the data element that you select later on for all the libraries included in the benchmark. For example, you choose the state benchmarks of Average for New York, New Jersey, Ohio, and Florida, and in the select Data Elements screen later on, you can select the % of Income from Local Government. The graph will average the % of Income from Local Government for all the libraries in each of the four states.
- **Median** – The median method will find the middle value for the libraries in the benchmark. Medians are helpful because they are not skewed by extreme values in the dataset.
- **Sum** – The sum method will total all the values of the selected data elements for the libraries in the benchmark. In the case of a ratio data element, such as Collection Expenditures per Capita, the sum method will first sum the numerator and the denominator and then divide them to return the result.

Please note that unlike real libraries, which are actually stored in the database, benchmarks are calculated on the fly depending on what you select. It takes more time to look up the appropriate values for the libraries and then perform the benchmark calculation. Consequently, graphs and tables will take much longer to generate when you have included benchmarks, and the more you include, the longer it will take. Average benchmarks provide results faster than Median benchmarks, which are in turn faster than Sum benchmarks.

Once you have clicked **Accept Highlighted Libraries**, follow the [instructions on how to create a graph or table for your data](#).

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