



OVERDUE | ADAPTATION

Originally published on July 7, 2026

People often ask whether libraries are still relevant, but that's the wrong question. The better question is, "How have libraries stayed relevant?" The answer lies in a pattern that has emerged throughout OVERDUE.

Libraries connect people with information, ideas, and one another.

Their mission never changed.

ACCESS: Removing barriers to information.

TRUST: Adapting services to community needs.

INTELLECTUAL FREEDOM: Protecting the freedom to explore ideas.

COLLECTIONS: Continually evolving to reflect community needs.

EXPERTISE: Connecting people with the information they need.

Across all five pieces, one idea emerges: libraries preserve their value not by resisting change, but by adapting their methods while remaining faithful to their mission.

Libraries have adapted to the world around them. As technology evolved, they embraced digital collections, streaming media, and online databases. As communities changed, they expanded multilingual services and workforce programs. Librarians expanded their expertise by teaching digital skills, assisting with government services, and helping job seekers.

The greatest strength of libraries isn't that they've resisted change.

It's that they've embraced change without abandoning the principles that made them valuable in the first place.

Their tools, collections, services, and even the role of the librarian have evolved.

Their mission has not.

For centuries, libraries have adapted to meet changing community needs without abandoning their mission to connect people with information, ideas, and one another.

That is why libraries are not relics of the past, but essential institutions for the future.

Next week, we'll conclude this series by bringing everything we've learned together.

This has been OVERDUE. Come back next week to keep your account in good standing.

#Libraries #Librarians #Librarianship #InformationScience #LifelongLearning