

VALUE OF A REN

# Libraries



With the power of Research and Education Networks (RENs) behind them, our nation's libraries are a staple institution and vital information resource hub in communities everywhere now more than ever.

Gone are the days of libraries just stocking books and periodicals. Libraries have adapted to address the digital needs of the communities they serve. Libraries are the information hub of the future. Everyday and across the country, libraries collaborate with local, state, and national partners to offer a rich set of programming, events, and resources to serve their communities with a focus often on the most vulnerable.

Libraries have always been and continue to be all about citizen access. According to the FCC's most recent broadband progress report, nearly 19 million Americans still lack access to fixed broadband service at threshold speeds with statistics worse in more rural areas. Even among those who have broadband available to them, approximately 100 million Americans do not subscribe mainly for cost reasons. In the absence of home internet access, libraries are called upon to bridge this gap as a leader in community broadband connectivity. In the face of the pandemic, libraries stepped up to the challenge and accelerated the monumental task of closing this broadband gap with a mission to keep citizens engaged and connected to school, work, and life opportunities.

## The Nation's RENs provide Libraries with:

### Advanced Network Services and Applications

- Provide unrivaled network performance for speed, latency, reliability, and security
- Empower librarians to understand their network inside and out through the REN created Gigabit Library Toolkit
- Access to 24/7/365 technical support by local senior technical staff
- Provide indoor/outdoor community managed wireless service including wireless assessments
- Offer seamless and cost-effective access to desktop virtualization services and cloud providers
- Deliver powerful synchronous bandwidth for upload and download critical for real-time, interactive applications
- Host network backup and network storage service for business continuity

### Powerful Community and Collaboration

- Offer e-rate program expertise, consulting, and consortia filing
- Host community training and comprehensive library programming events
- Facilitate the sharing of internet access best practices across the library community
- Empower libraries to capture state and federal broadband infrastructure and adoption program funds
- Ensure library representation in REN governance to help set network and service priorities
- Foster a vibrant community of community anchor practitioners for a variety of perspectives, advice, resources and training
- Access to cost-effective REN consortia purchasing agreements for electronic periodicals and research resources.

### Network Security

- Strengthen cybersecurity operational protections and staff expertise through REN Security Communities of Practice.
- Offer Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA) compliant web filtering services
- Provide cybersecurity services including monitoring and mitigation of DDoS attacks at no additional cost to libraries
- Reduce library staff workloads through enhanced security protection and managed firewall services
- Supply security audits and remote vulnerability assessments

## When Libraries and RENs work together, everyone wins

Visit [www.thequilt.net/value-research-education-network/](http://www.thequilt.net/value-research-education-network/) to explore examples below of success achieved from collaboration between RENs and libraries near and far. Visit our [Member Page](#) to engage with your regional Research and Education Network today. You can find the REN in your state at [www.thequilt.net/about-us/the-quilt-participants/](http://www.thequilt.net/about-us/the-quilt-participants/).