

OLA Library and Information Sector Employment Survey – 2019

Executive Summary

The library and information sector is changing rapidly, and library and information professionals are increasingly putting their skills to work in non-traditional library roles. Library and information professionals are finding work in special libraries, government, hospitals, non-profits and businesses. As the career prospects of new graduates shift, universities and colleges are introducing new and innovative streams for their students. One such example is the UXD: User Experience Design stream at the University of Toronto Master of Information Program.

This sector employment survey was initiated to help OLA better track employment trends for new graduates in the library and information sectors. This initial survey report provides a snapshot of employment trends in late 2019. By repeating this survey periodically, OLA will be able to track changes over time.

The survey targets recent graduates of Ontario library technician programs or Masters of Library and Information Science/Studies or Masters of Information (MLIS/MI) programs in Ontario. Here, recent graduates were defined as any person having completed their program in the past two years. This first iteration of the survey welcomed response from current students, however, those responses have been omitted from this final report.

Key Findings

Current employment of recent graduates

- 57% of respondents were employed full-time at one job (64% of MLIS/MI graduates and 43% of library technician graduates)
- 17% of respondents were not employed at the time that the survey was administered (21% of MLIS/MI graduates and 11% of library technician graduates)

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- Graduates from the library technician programs were more likely to be employed part-time (36% at one job, 7% at multiple jobs) compared with MLIS/MI graduates (9% at one job, 4% at multiple jobs)
- Employment rates increased over time: 70% of respondents who had graduate 1-2 years ago were employed full time at one job, compared with 48% of those who had graduated within the last 6 months

Contract / permanent position

- 71% of library technician graduates and 64% of MLIS/MI graduates were employed in permanent positions
- The remainder were employed in contract positions, with 13% of library technician graduates and 29% of MLIS/MI graduates employed in contract positions longer than 6 months, and 17% of library technician graduates and 7% of MLIS/MI graduates employed in contract positions less than 6 months

Employment Sector

- Respondents were employed across diverse sectors, with the most common being
 - Academic Libraries (24%)
 - Public Libraries (22%)
 - Government (12%)
 - Special Libraries (10%)
- Among MLIS/MI graduates, the most common sectors were:
 - Academic Libraries (31%)
 - Public Libraries (21%)
 - Special Libraries (13%)
 - Government (8%)
- Among library technician graduates, the most common sectors were:
 - Public Libraries (23%)
 - Government (17%)
 - Academic Libraries (13%)
 - School Libraries (13%)

Relevance

- Across sectors of employment and employment type, respondents rated their programs to be highly relevant to their current jobs
- The median score was slightly higher among MLIS/MI graduates (99.5/100) compared with library technician graduates (95/100)

Annual Salary

- 54% of recent library technician graduates reported an annual salary range of under \$30,000. This includes both full- and part-time employed recent graduates
- 43% of recent MLIS/MI graduates reported an annual salary range between \$50,000 and \$69,000. This includes both full- and part-time employed recent graduates

Seeking Alternative Employment

- 41% of employed respondents indicated that they were seeking alternative employment, with 46% of library technician graduates and 38% of MLIS/MI graduates reporting that they were looking for alternate employment
- The most frequently cited reasons were seeking a more permanent opportunity (63%), career advancement (56%) and seeking a more competitive salary (52%)

Methodology

A survey was administered via Survey Monkey, with responses accepted from December 2, 2019 to January 4, 2020. Responses from both recent graduates of masters of library science and information technician programs in Ontario and current students were accepted.

The survey was promoted by OLA via the following communications channels:

- OLA newsletters
- OLA social media
- Direct email to volunteers at the OLA Super Conference and Forest of Reading® Festival from 2018 and 2019

The survey was also sent to the administrators of all Ontario masters of library science and library technician programs in Ontario who distributed to students and recent graduates in their networks.

The purpose of this survey was to better understand the employment trends of recent graduates in the library and information studies field. Recent graduates were defined as any person having completed a library technician program or MLIS/MI program in the past two years.

This survey also accepted responses from current students, to learn more about the employment of library and information students during their study. However, as only 25 current students responding, these responses were not included in this report.

Respondents

A total of 194 responses were received, 77 recent graduates and 25 current students. 85 responses indicated that they were neither current students nor recent graduates, and were excluded as ineligible. Recent Graduates from all Library Technician and MLIS/MI programs in Ontario responded. The 25 responses from current students are not included in this report.

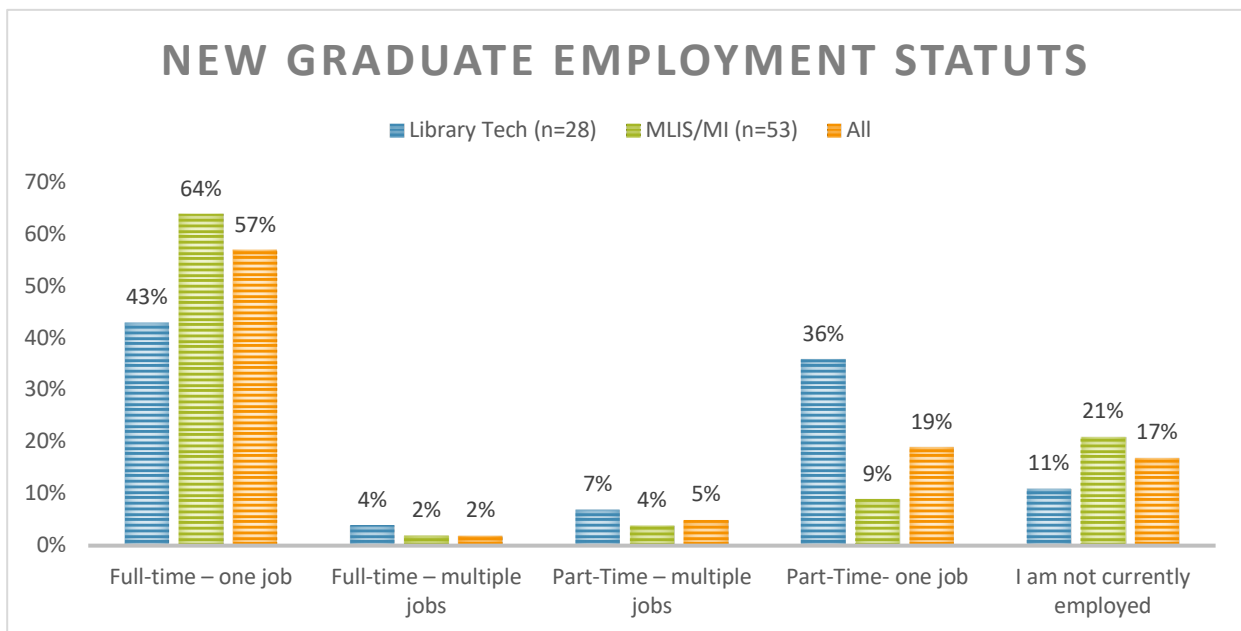
	Library Technician program	MLIS/MI or equivalent	All
1 – 2 years ago	12	18	30
6 months to 1 year ago	9	11	20
less than 6 months ago	4	23	27
All	25	52	77

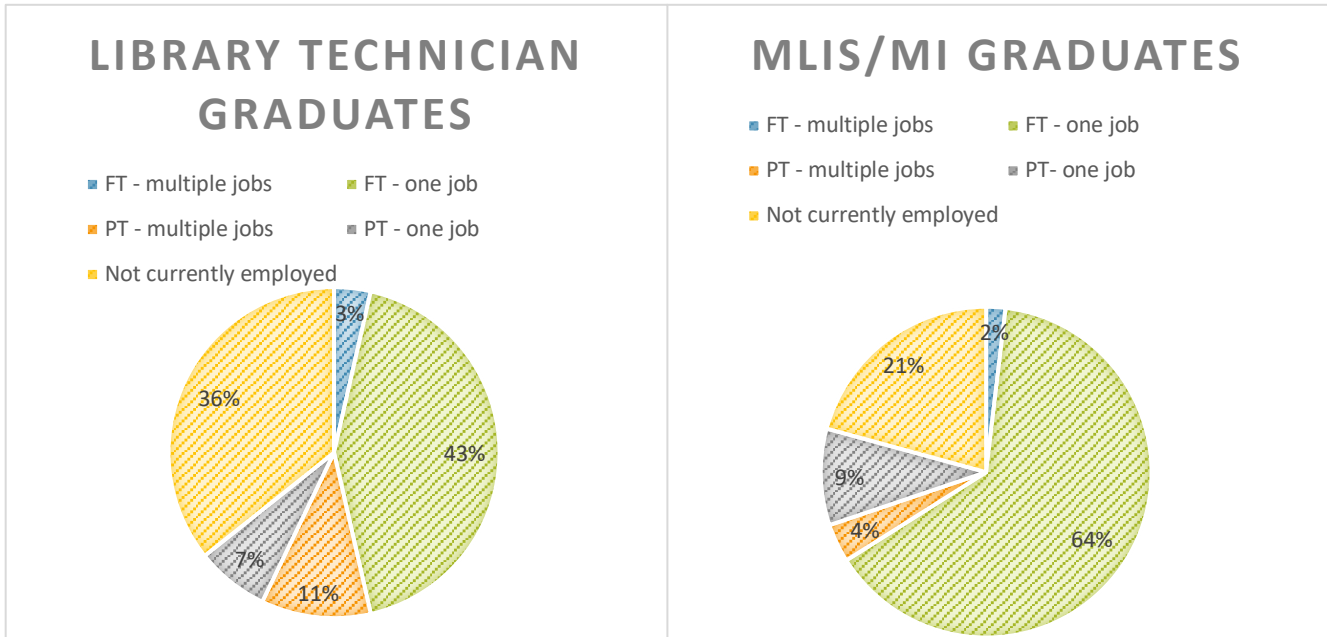
Survey Results

Current Employment of Recent Graduates

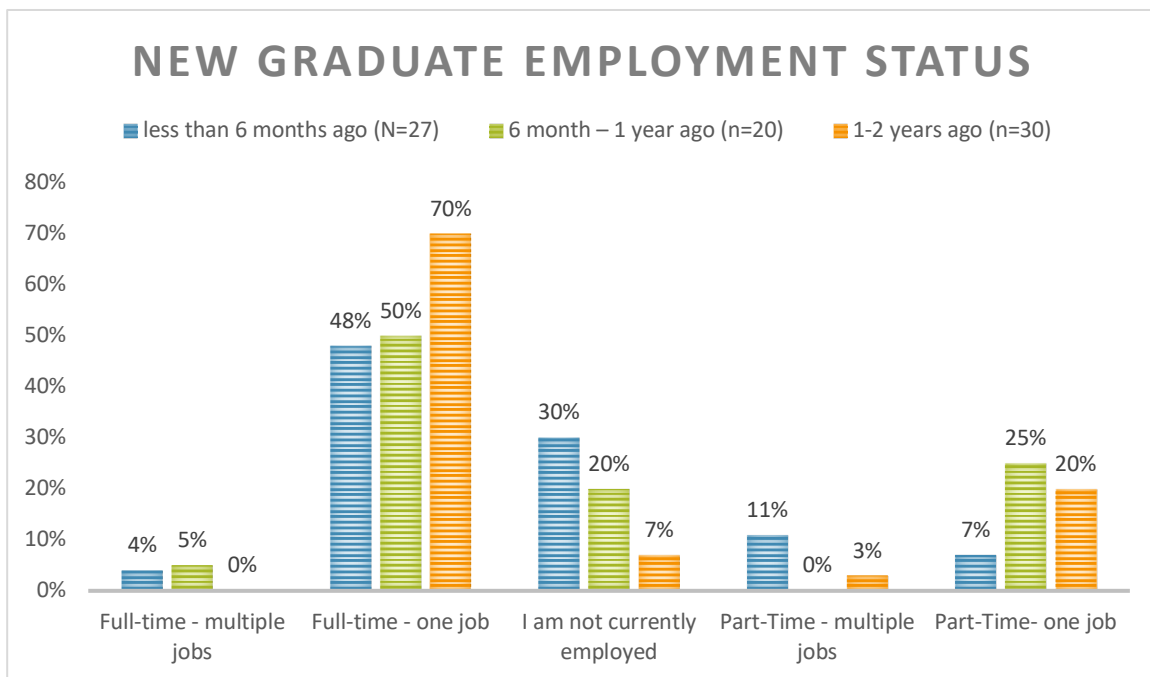
Overall, 57% of respondents were employed full-time at a single job, with a slightly higher employment rate reported among MLIS/MI graduates (64%) compared with library technician graduates (43%). Graduates from the library technician programs were more likely to be employed part-time (36% at one job, 7% at multiple jobs) compared with MLIS/MI graduates (9% at one job, 4% at multiple jobs)

17% of respondents were not employed at the time that the survey was administered. MLIS/MI graduates were more likely to be unemployed (21%) compared with library technician graduates (11%).





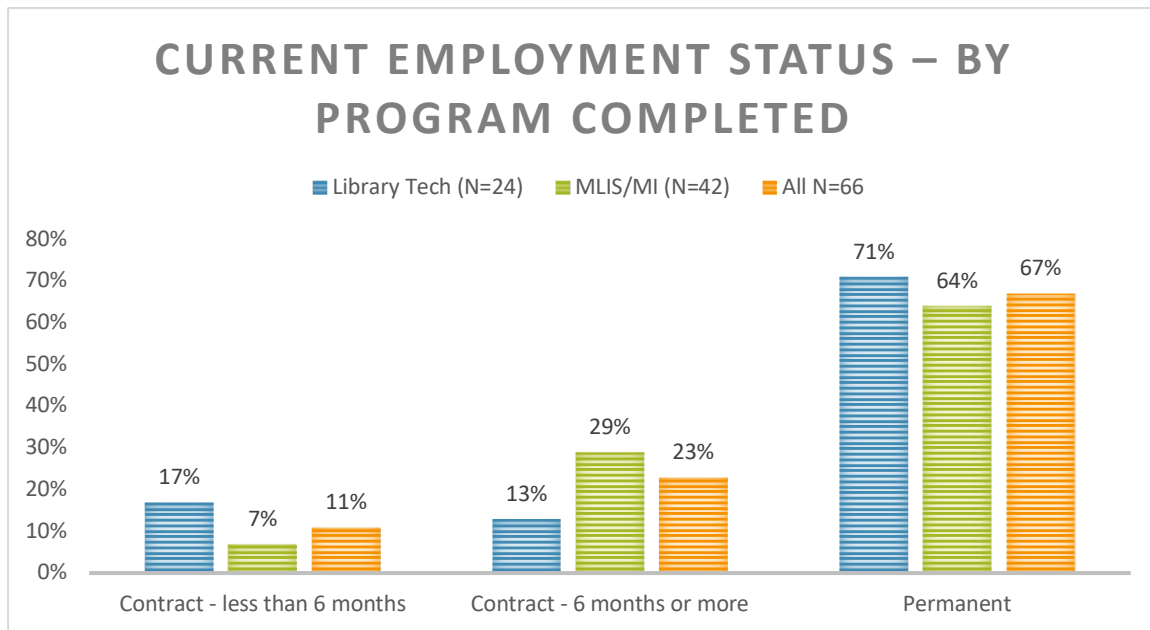
Nearly half of respondents who had graduated within 6 months were employed full-time. 70% of respondents who had graduate 1-2 years ago were employed full-time.



Employment Type Contract or Permanent

71% of library technician graduates and 64% of MLIS/MI graduates were employed in permanent positions.

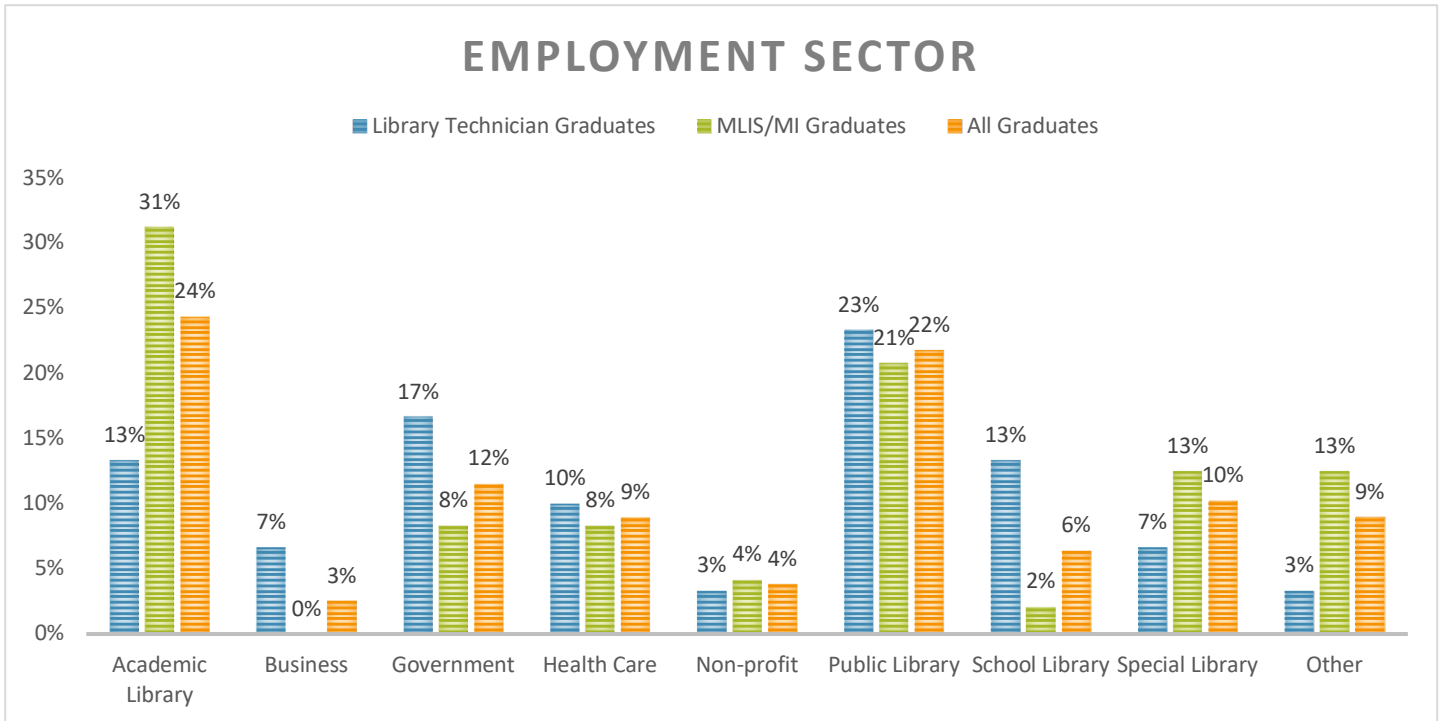
The remainder were employed in contract positions, with 13% of library technician graduates and 29% of MLIS/MI graduates employed in contract positions longer than 6 months, and 17% of library technician graduates and 7% of MLIS/MI graduates employed in contract positions less than 6 months.



Employment sector

Respondents were employed across diverse sectors, with the most common being:

- Academic Libraries (24%)
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Among MLIS/MI graduates, the most common sectors were:

- Academic Libraries (31%)
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Among library technician graduates, the most common sectors were:

- Public Libraries (23%)
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Relevance of Job to Program

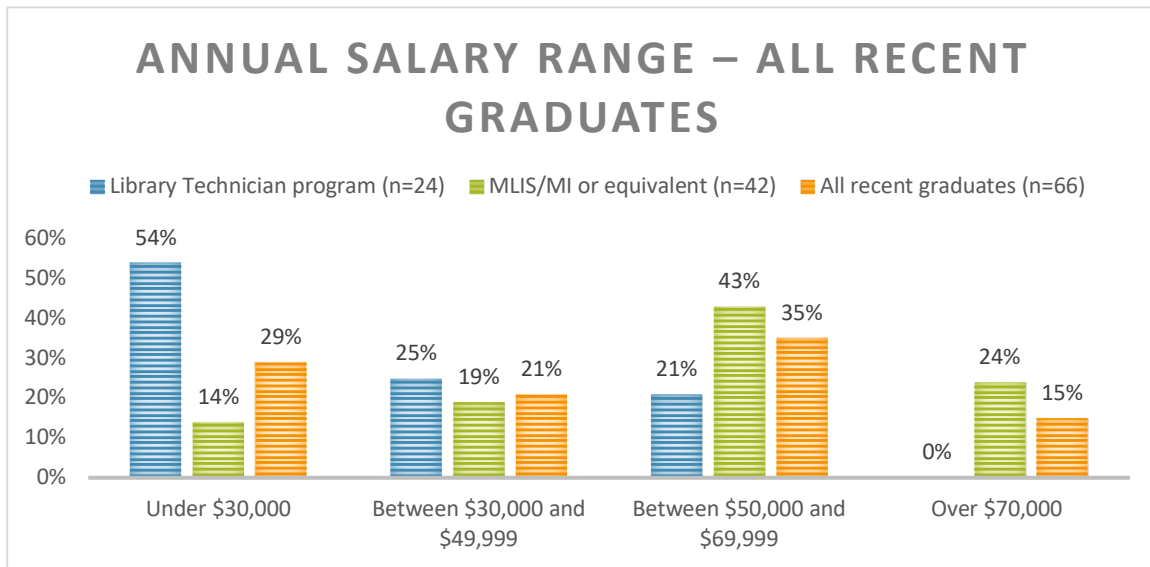
Respondents were asked to rank on a scale of 0-100 how relevant their current job was to their library and information degree. Respondents generally indicated a high degree of relevancy, with the median response being 95 for library technician graduates and 99.5 for MLIS/MI graduates.

	Median Score	Lowest Score	Highest Score
Library Technician Graduate (n=24)	95	3	100
MLIS/MI Graduate (n=42)	99.5	20	100

Annual Salary Range

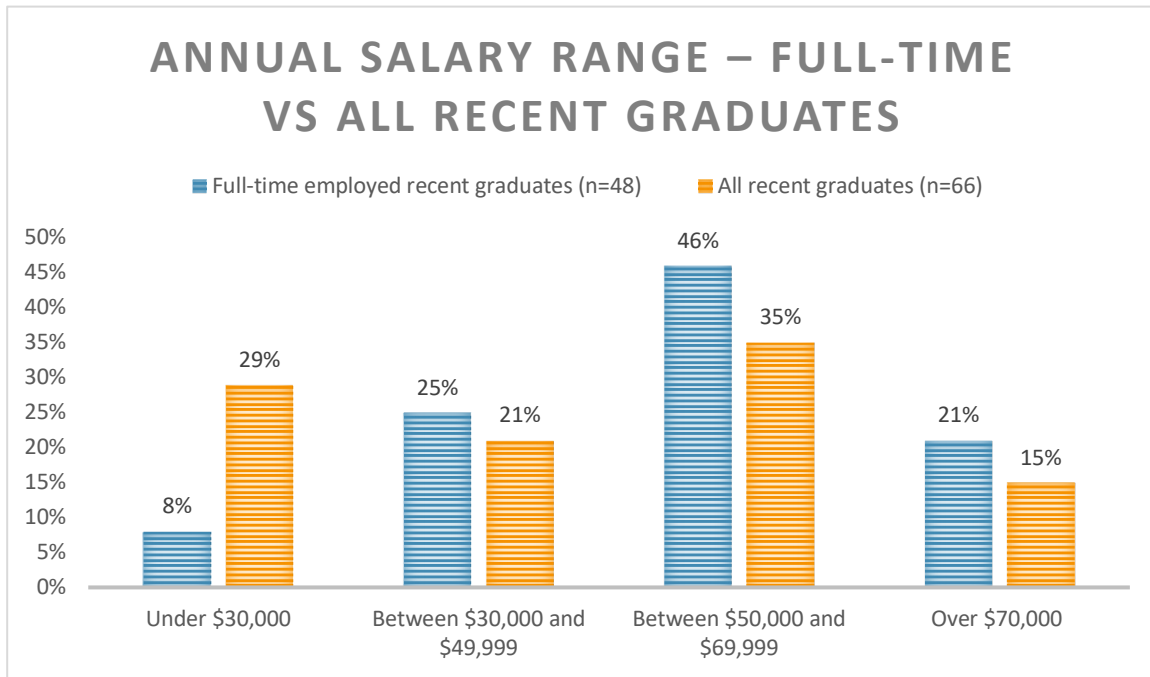
Annual Salary Range – All recent graduates

- 54% of recent library technician graduates reported an annual salary range of under \$30,000. This includes both full- and part-time employed recent graduates.
- 43% of recent MLIS/MI graduates reported an annual salary range between \$50,000 and \$69,000. This includes both full- and part-time employed recent graduates.



Annual Salary Range of Full-time Grads

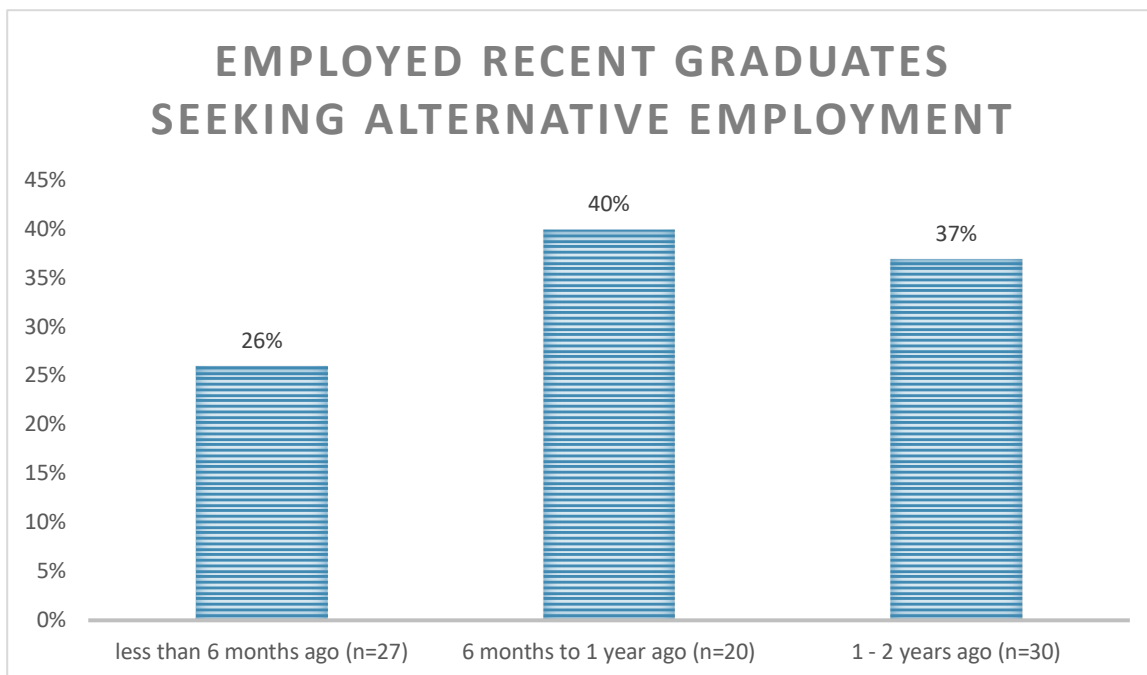
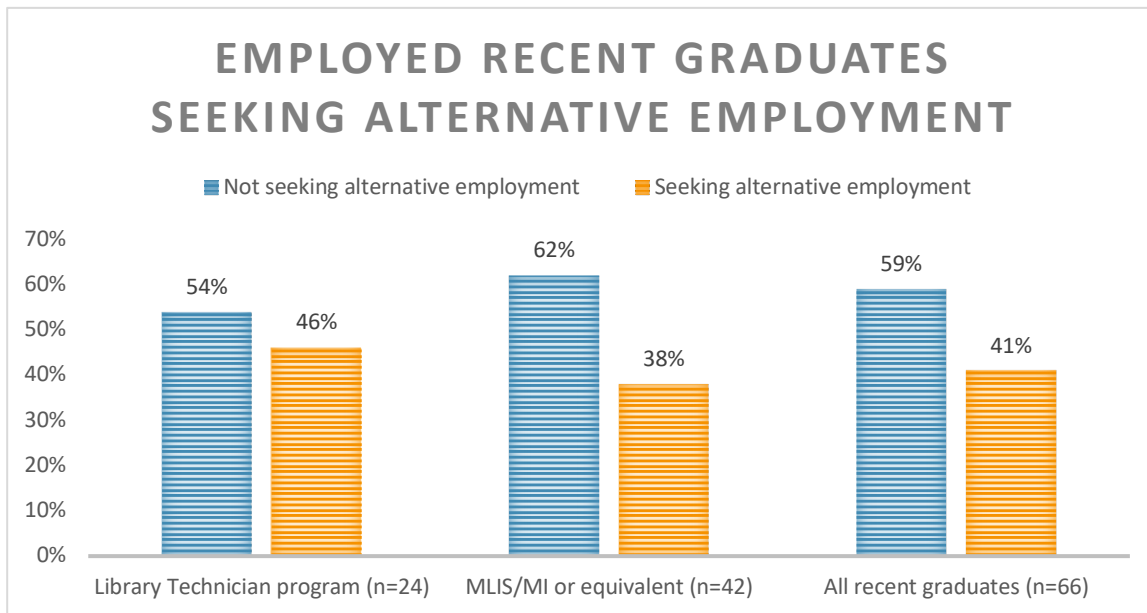
Insufficient responses were collected to provide a comparison of salary ranges of full-time graduates in each of the programs individually. However, as a whole, respondents who were employed full-time noted higher salary ranges.



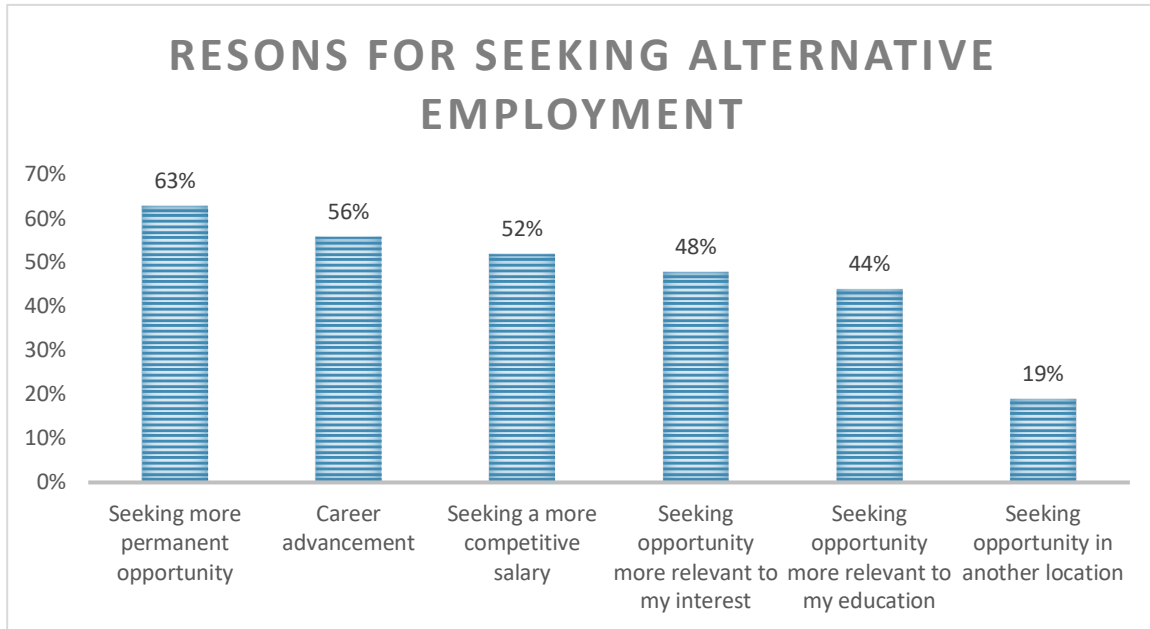
Seeking Alternative Employment

Of those who were employed, 41% indicated that they were seeking an alternative job.

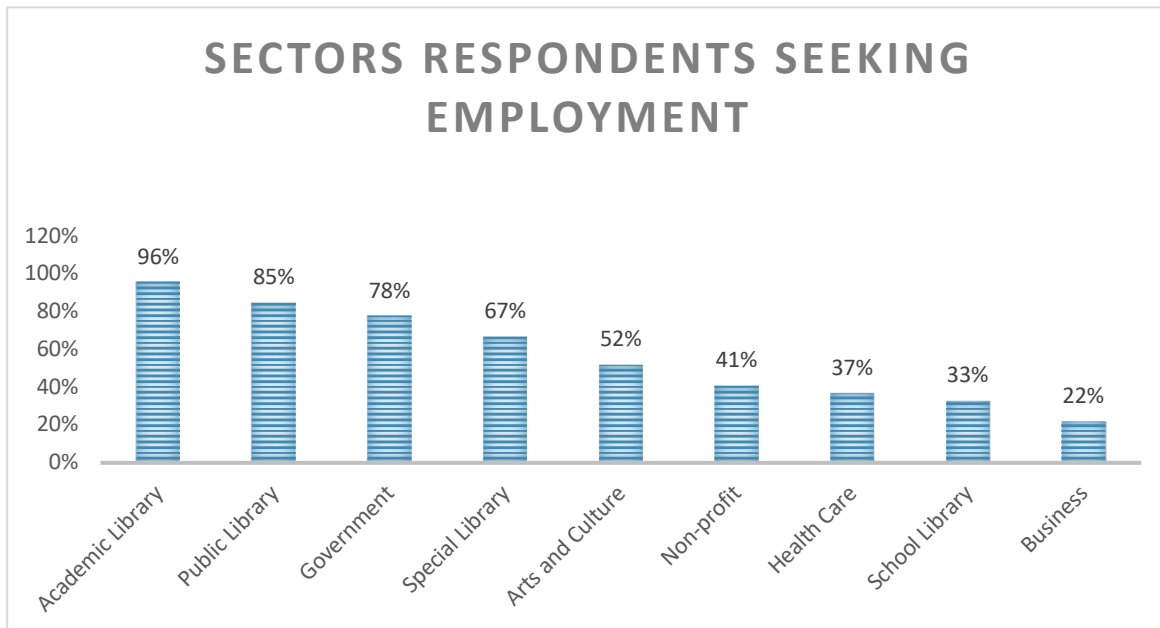
Library technician graduates were slightly more likely to be seeking alternative employment opportunities (46%), compared with 38% of MLIS/MI graduates.



The most frequently cited reasons were seeking a more permanent opportunity (63%), career advancement (56%) and seeking a more competitive salary (52%).



Similarly, when asked in which sectors they were seeking employment, this too varied, with the academic and public libraries sectors being most common, followed by government, and special libraries.





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Acknowledgements

We would like to thank all of the respondents of the survey, as well as OLA's partners at Ontario colleges and universities for their help in sharing the survey and encouraging their students and graduates to participate, providing valuable data for this initiative.



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Appendix A: About the Ontario Library Association

Founded in 1900, the Ontario Library Association (OLA) is the oldest continually operating non-profit library association in Canada. With more than 5,000 members, the OLA is the largest library association in the country. We provide the chance for library staff and supporters to share experience and expertise while creating innovative solutions in a constant changing environment. We offer opportunities for learning, networking, recognizing, influencing and celebrating within the library world.

Our Mission

We empower our members in the library and information services to build informed, participatory, and inclusive communities through:

- Research
- Education
- Advocacy
- Partnerships

Our Vision and Values

OLA is leading and inspiring the growth and innovation of the library and information services sector. Our set of guiding values has stood the test of time and continue to guide us in our work.

Appendix B: Tables

Employment Status

Graduates in the past 2 years by program completed			
	Library Tech (n=28)	MLIS/MI (n=53)	All (n=81)
Full-time – one job	43%	64%	57%
Full-time – multiple jobs	4%	2%	2%
Part-Time – multiple jobs	7%	4%	5%
Part-Time- one job	36%	9%	19%
I am not currently employed	11%	21%	17%

Graduates in the past 2 years by graduation date			
	less than 6 months ago (n=27)	6 month – 1 year ago (n=20)	1-2 years ago (n=30)
Full-time - multiple jobs	4%	5%	0%
Full-time - one job	48%	50%	70%
I am not currently employed	30%	20%	7%
Part-Time - multiple jobs	11%	0%	3%
Part-Time- one job	7%	25%	20%

Current employment status – Graduates in the past 2 years by program completed			
	Library Tech (N=24)	MLIS/MI (N=42)	All N=66
Contract - 6 months or more	13%	29%	23%
Contract - less than 6 months	17%	7%	11%
Permanent	71%	64%	67%

Position type

Current employment status – MLIS/MI and Library Technician by graduation date			
	Graduated 1-2 years ago (N=27)	Graduates 6 month – 1 year ago (N=16)	Graduated less than 6 months ago (N=19)
Contract - 6 months or more	19%	19%	37%
Contract - less than 6 months	7%	13%	16%
Permanent	74%	69%	47%

Sector of employment

	Library Technician program	MLIS/MI or equivalent	All
Academic Library	4	15	19
Arts and Culture	0	0	0
Business	2	0	2
Government	5	4	9
Health Care	3	4	7
Non-profit	1	2	3
Public Library	7	10	17
School Library	4	1	5
Special Library	2	6	8
Don't know	1	0	1
Other (please specify)	1	6	7
Total	30	48	78

Sector of employment			
	Library Technician program	MLIS/MI or equivalent	All

Academic Library	13%	31%	24%
Arts and Culture	0%	0%	0%
Business	7%	0%	3%
Government	17%	8%	12%
Health Care	10%	8%	9%
Non-profit	3%	4%	4%
Public Library	23%	21%	22%
School Library	13%	2%	6%
Special Library	7%	13%	10%
Don't know	3%	0%	0%
Other (please specify)	3%	13%	0%

Annual Salary Range

	Library Technician program	MLIS/MI or equivalent	All
Under \$30,000	13	6	19
Between \$30,000 and \$39,999	<5	<5	<5
Between \$40,000 and \$49,999	<5	7	10

Between \$50,000 and \$59,999	<5	5	8
Between \$60,000 and \$69,999	<5	13	15
Between \$70,000 and \$79,999	0	<5	<5
Between \$80,000 and \$89,999	0	5	5
Over \$100,000	0	<5	<5

Seeking Alternative Employment

Career advancement	56%
Seeking opportunity more relevant to my education	44%
Seeking opportunity more relevant to my interest	48%
Seeking more permanent opportunity	63%
Seeking opportunity in another location	19%
Seeking a more competitive salary	52%
Other (please specify)	11%

Academic Library	96%
Arts and Culture	52%
Business	22%



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Government	78%
Health Care	37%
Non-profit	41%
Public Library	85%
School Library	33%
Special Library	67%
Don't know	4%

Appendix C: Full Survey Questions

* I am

- Currently enrolled in an information / library studies program
- A recent graduate of an information / library studies program (in the past 2 years) Other

* From what program did you graduate?

- MLIS/MI or equivalent
- Library Technician program
- Other (please specify)

When did you graduate?

- less than 6 months ago
- 6 months to 1 year ago
- 1 - 2 years ago
- more than 2 years ago

What school did you attend?

- University of Toronto
- University of Western Ontario
- University of Ottawa
- Other (please specify)

What school did you attend?

- Algonquin College of Applied Arts and Technology (Ottawa)
- Conestoga College of Applied Arts & Technology (Kitchener)
- Confederation College (Thunder Bay)
- Durham College of Applied Arts and Technology (Oshawa)
- Mohawk College of Applied Arts & Technology (Hamilton)
- Seneca College of Applied Arts & Technology (Toronto)
- Other (please specify)

I am currently employed:

- Full-time - one job
- Part-Time- one job
- Full-time - multiple jobs
- Part-Time - multiple jobs
- Self-Employed
- I am not currently employed

Is your job permanent or contract? If you have multiple jobs, please provide information for what you would consider your primary employment.

- Permanent
- Contract - less than 6 months
- Contract - 6 months or more

In what sector are you employed? If you have multiple jobs, please provide information for what you would consider your primary employment.

- Academic Library
- Arts and Culture
- Business
- Government
- Health Care
- Non-profit
- Public Library
- School Library Special Library
- Don't know
- Other (please specify)

What is your annual salary?

- Under \$30,000
- Between \$30,000 and \$39,999
- Between \$40,000 and \$49,999

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- Between \$50,000 and \$59,999
- Between \$60,000 and \$69,999
- Between \$70,000 and \$79,999
- Between \$80,000 and \$89,999
- Between \$90,000 and \$99,999
- Over \$100,000

How relevant is your job to your library and information degree? If you have multiple jobs, please provide information for what you would consider your primary employment.

When did you start this job? If you have multiple jobs, please provide information for what you would consider your primary employment.

- Less than 3 months ago
- 3 - 6 months ago
- 7 -12 months ago
- Over 1 year ago

Are you looking for alternative employment?

- Yes
- No

Why are you seeking alternative employment? Please select all that apply.

- Career advancement
- Seeking opportunity more relevant to my education
- Seeking opportunity more relevant to my interest
- Seeking more permanent opportunity
- Seeking opportunity in another location
- Seeking a more competitive salary
- Other (please specify)

Where do you hope to find employment? Please select all that apply.

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- Academic Library
- Arts and Culture
- Business
- Government
- Health Care
- Non-profit
- Public Library
- School Library
- Special Library
- Don't know
- N/A - I am not currently seeking employment
- Other (please specify)

How are you finding employment opportunities. Please select all that apply.

- Partnership Job Board
- My school's Job Board
- Other Job Board
- Job postings on institutional websites
- My existing social network
- Attending conferences
- Attending networking events
- N/A - I am not currently seeking employment
- Other (please specify)

How long have you been searching for employment?

- < 3 months
- 3 - 6 months
- 7 - 12 months
- 1 year or more
- N/A - I am not currently seeking employment
- Other (please specify)

Are you considering further study?

- Yes
- No

If yes, what program are you considering?

Do you feel your school has adequately prepared you to enter the job market?

Please share any further comments regarding your job search experience.

What is your age?

- 18 to 24
- 25 to 34
- 35 to 44
- 45 to 54
- 55 to 64
- 65 to 74
- 75 or older

What is your gender identity?

- Woman
- Man
- Genderqueer or non-binary
- Decline to Answer
- Not specified above (please specify)

Do you identify as Indigenous?

- No, I identify as Non-Indigenous
- Yes, I identify as Métis
- Yes, I identify as First Nations
- Not specified above (please specify)
- Yes, I identify as Inuit
- Decline to answer



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Which of the following best describes your racial or ethnic background?

- Arab
- Black
- Chinese
- Filipino
- Japanese White
- Latin American
- South Asian
- Southeast Asian
- West Asian (e.g. Iranian, Afghan, etc.)
- Korean
- Not specified above (please specify)
- Decline to Answer

What is the first digit of your postal code?

- K
- N
- L
- P
- M
- Other (please specify)