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Beyond the Academy: Connecting Research and Policy

Angela Hackstadt

University at Albany, State University of New York, ahackstadt@albany.edu

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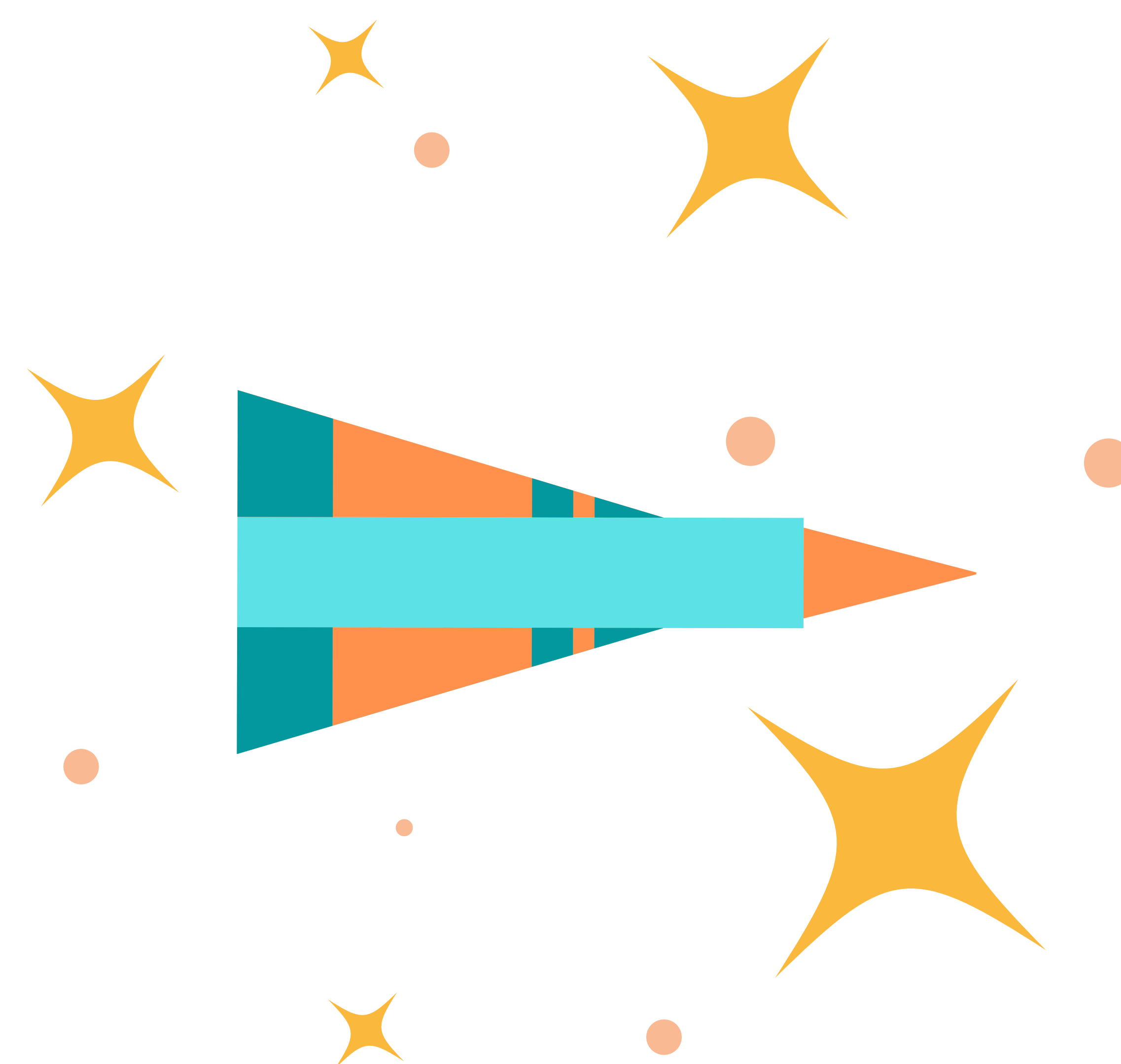


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New York State government officials and Capital Region nonprofits were surveyed in the spring of 2022 to learn more about how they find and select information sources for their work.



The survey results presented here show that policy work and advocacy relies more on grey literature and other non-academic sources than on peer reviewed scholarship.

the most important sources

- News reports, news articles, media releases
- Web pages or websites
- Government information
- Policies, procedures, standards, or regulations

the most important search tools

- Web search engine
- News (print, broadcast, online)
- Government agency/dept. websites
- Nonprofit or NGO websites
- Other publications

circumstances that affect the search

- Urgent or high priority projects
- Multiple projects at once
- No subscription database access
- Time constraints (other duties)
- Limited subscription database access
- Time constraints (deadlines)

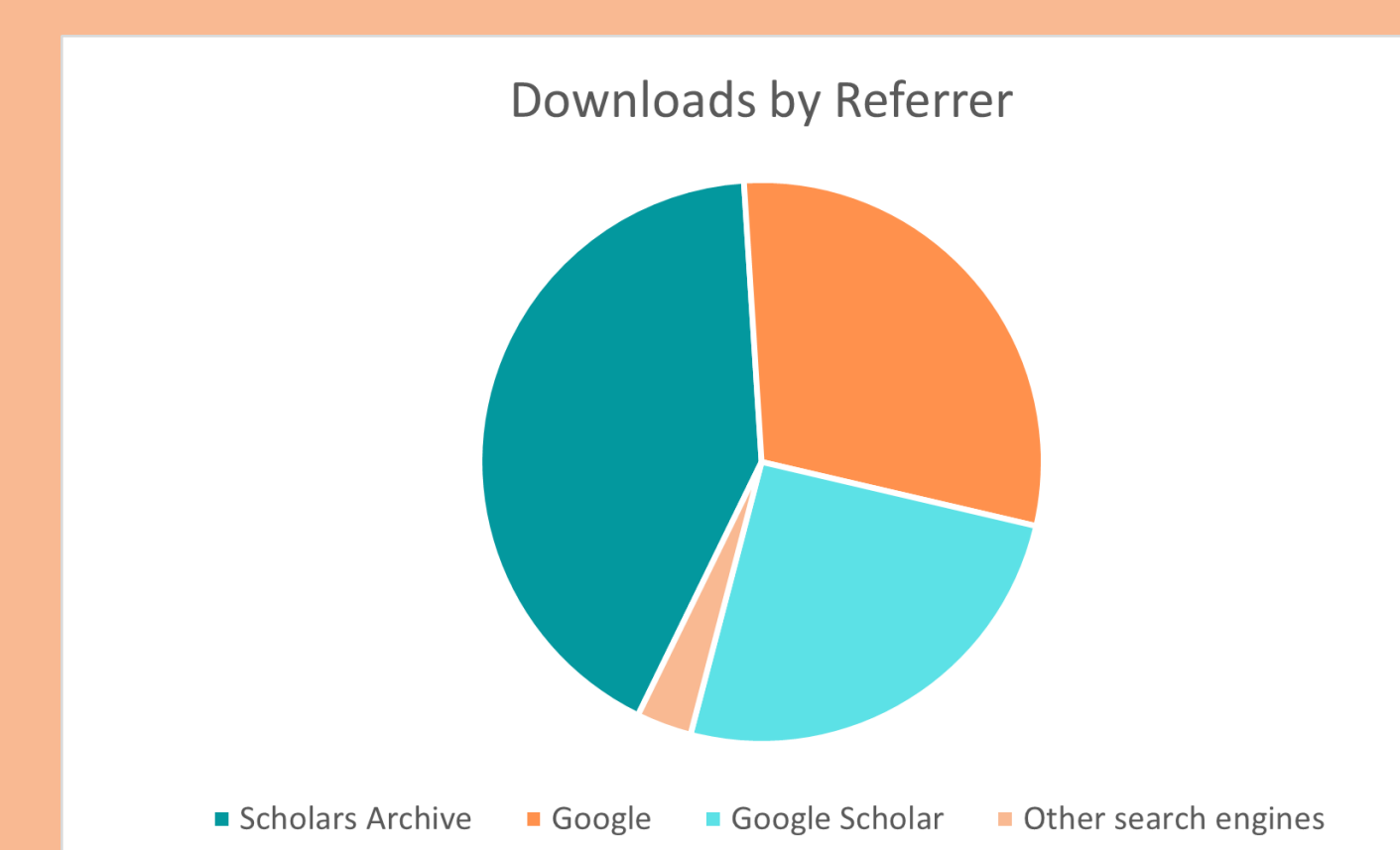
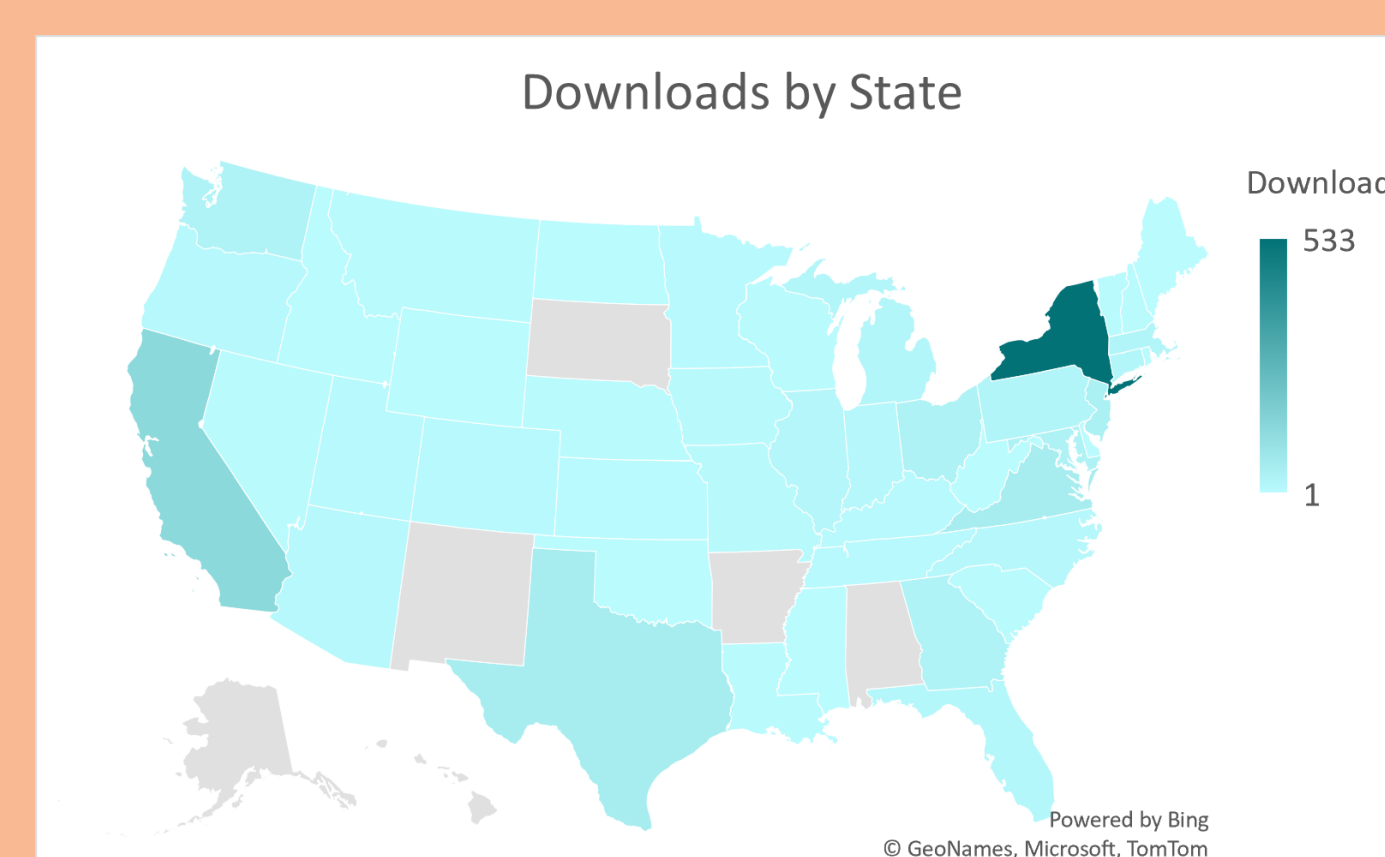
when users encounter a paywall

- Rarely or Never pay for access
- Always or Frequently seek alternative access
- Frequently or Sometimes give up

Limitations: Geographically limited to New York State, very low response rate

In April 2021, members of the NYS Covid-19 and Minority Health Disparities Engaged Researchers Working Group began contributing a series of white papers to a collection in Scholars Archive, University at Albany's institutional repository. The group's purpose was to provide an evidence base for policy to address the differential impact of Covid-19 on Black and Latinx New Yorkers.

The White Paper Collection's reach has expanded beyond New York, with over 1,700 downloads as of May 2022.



Most readers find these white papers by searching the Web.

Academics tend to focus their efforts toward peer reviewed scholarship but for those who want to influence policy, other formats or publication venues are worth exploring.

Government, policy, and nonprofit workers value academic scholarship but tend to use more grey literature and other non-academic sources.

We can leverage scholarly communications and other library services to connect scholars with information users beyond the academy.