

# NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

The New York Public Library is embracing its role in not only providing access to information and technology, but also in actively supporting reading, creativity, and learning—reaching more people, in more ways. It seeks to become a catalyst for creativity and a connector of people and ideas, both on-site and online.

At a time of great transition, with a new Chief Library Officer and Chief Operating Officer, the NYPL functioned like a new organization, using a major capital project as a chance to reinvent itself. brightspot worked with NYPL to embrace change and plan for its future spaces and services across three different locations in midtown Manhattan through a process that engaged staff, users, and Board members. The 750,000 usable square feet of space across three locations included collections space, dining, retail, reading rooms, program and event spaces, staff spaces, and gallery/exhibition spaces.

In 2014, we worked with the Library (in collaboration with Gensler) to develop alternative strategies for its midtown locations instead of the consolidation plan they had been pursuing with Foster + Partners for the prior decade. Once NYPL had selected an alternative strategy, brightspot then led the development of a detailed design brief for the renovation of the Stephen A. Schwarzman Building on Bryant Park and the Mid-Manhattan Library on Fifth Avenue.

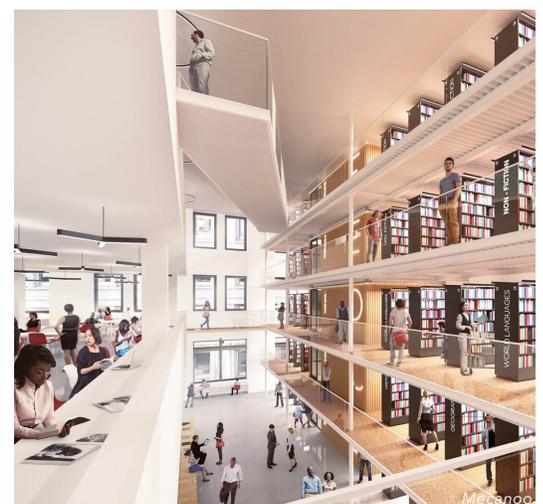
The space programming process was both evidence-based—drawing on information from public surveys and peer benchmarking—and engaging—drawing on input from NYPL staff, external expert advisory panels, and public town hall meetings. It began with master plan level scenarios to look at different degrees of transformation and different program options for balancing user, staff, and collections spaces. We then developed a detailed room-by-room program for both buildings that was vetted for cost, phasing, and operational considerations, such as our analysis of the flow of materials in, out, between, and through the facilities. In developing the program, we incorporated findings from our user experience and service strategy work so that visitor and staff flow, service points, and staffing projections informed future space needs. Finally, we worked with the Library to onboard their selected architects, Mecanoo, by facilitating workshops to orient them to the design brief and program.



**TOWN HALL DISCUSSION**



**EXPERIENCE MAPPING WORKSHOP**



**MID-MANHATTAN LIBRARY RENDERING**