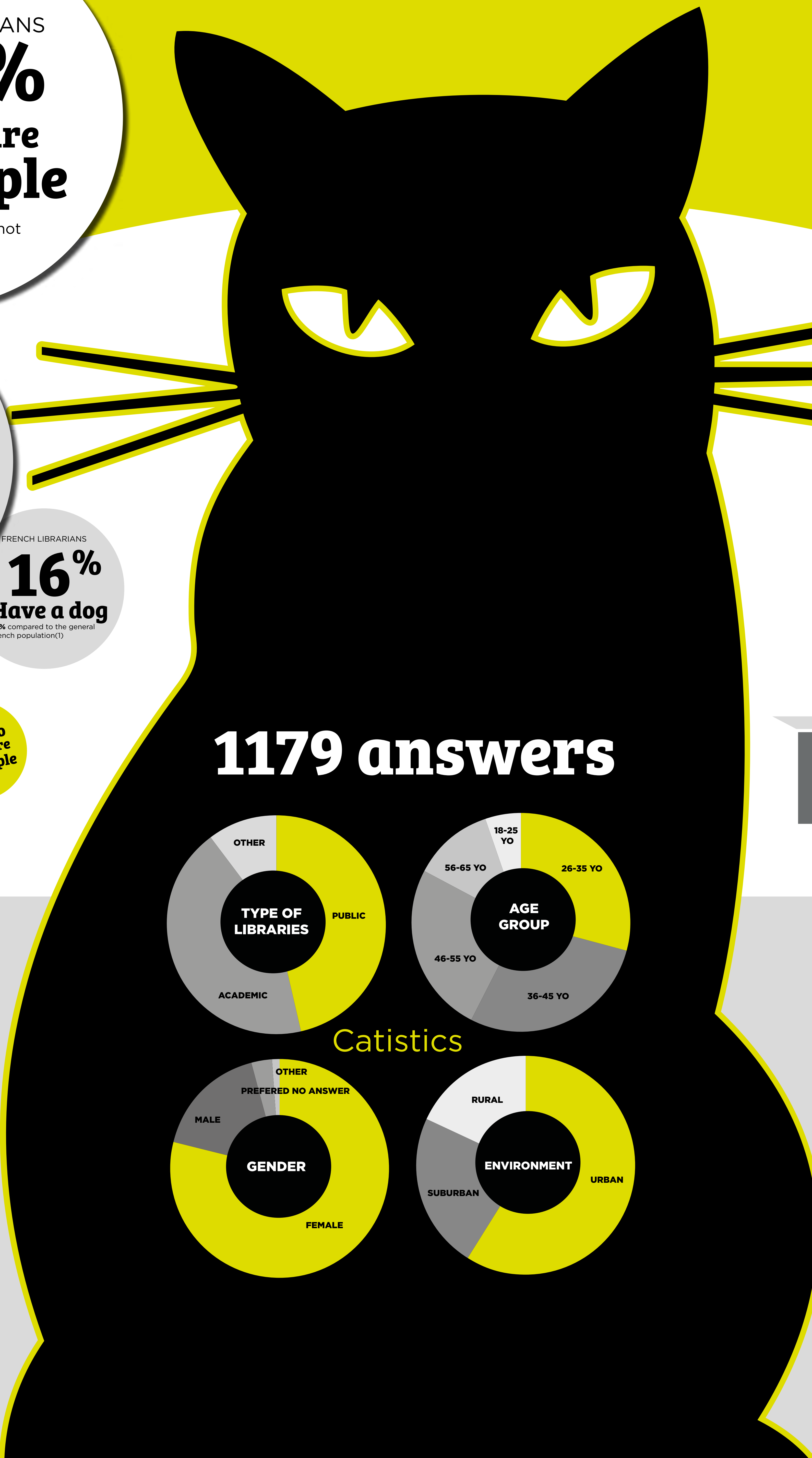


'Dogs come after being called out, cats take the message and call you back later.'  
Anonymous Librarian, Aix-en-Provence, France

# Are Librarians Cat People?

#WLIC2022  
#LibCat

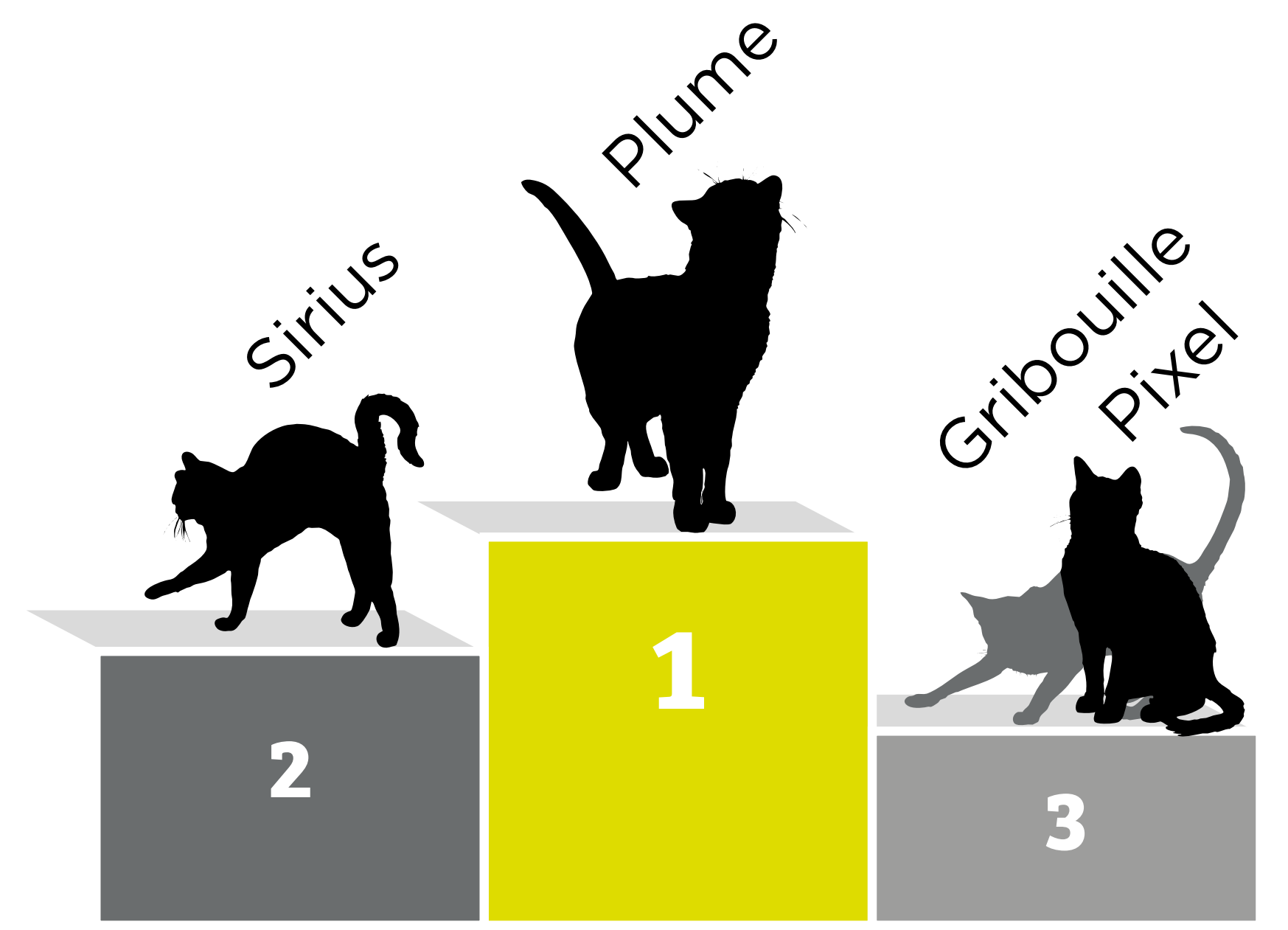


FRENCH LIBRARIANS  
**71%** are cat people  
whether exclusively or not

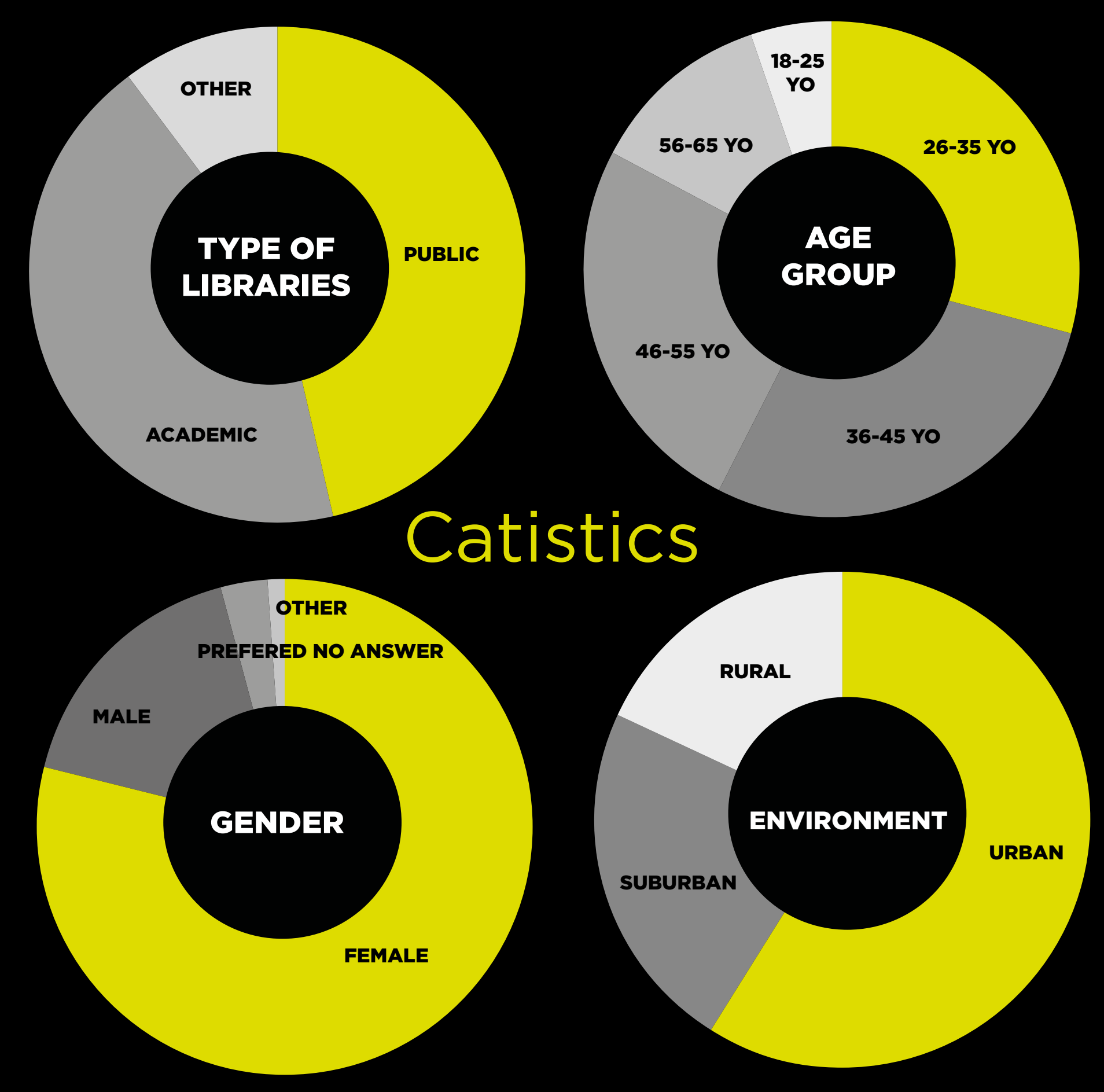
FRENCH LIBRARIANS  
**53%** Have a cat  
33% compared to the general French population(1)

FRENCH LIBRARIANS  
**16%** Have a dog  
25% compared to the general French population(1)

FRENCH LIBRARIANS  
**79%** are Women  
73% are Cat People  
56% have a Cat



1179 answers



## Statistics

**How to Engage Librarians In Your Research**  
What we learned from this survey: you want your survey to go viral even though it deals with sustainable development or cataloging standards? **Just ask people about their pets!**

**Librarians Are Fussy**  
Librarians love cleanliness so much that they prefer cats to dogs 'because dogs drool' and 'their bad smells are an issue for mutual love.'

**Librarians Are Superheroes**  
Among all the reasons to decide to adopt a cat, 11% declared the purpose was to rescue a cat from a shelter or **they just couldn't say 'no'** when a cat came to them. 42% of librarians adopted their cats in shelters or found them on the street.  
*'I wanted a dog. My partner wanted a cat. We adopted a cat.'*

**Librarians Are Lazy**  
10% decided to go for a cat because they are autonomous, independent and self-sufficient. 4% 'hired' a cat to do their rodent work.

**Cat Wealth Distribution**  
4% of librarians own 13% of the represented cats (meaning 25 librarians own alone 125 cats).

**Librarians Can't Fight Fate**  
In 55% of cases, French librarians had cats before they started working in libraries... It's only a short step from there to saying that they are predestined for the job!

**Librarians Lack The Right Words**  
The top three reasons are: special interest/love for cats (22%), having companionship (14%), out of habit (13%). But mostly, librarians couldn't always explain why they like cats, often it's just 'the way it is'...

**QUESTION**  
From the Library of Alexandria, to contemporary libraries that offer sessions of purring therapy, cats inhabit libraries. That is why from time immemorial librarians have been associated with cats. Who has never been confronted with the cliché of the librarian—hair in a bun, glasses and cardigans but most importantly cats? We have chosen to question the stereotype of the cat librarian, among the French population. In France, to what extent do librarians represent a larger than average proportion of cat people?

**METHOD**  
To collect the data, we conducted and shared a survey on social networks, via professional mailing lists and among our institutions. The survey was open between May, 2nd and June, 9th 2022 and we gathered 1179 answers. The study doesn't aim to be complete representation and surely contains some biases, as we could only reach people linked to these networks and as we assume that most people answered because of a prime interest in animals (therefore excluding non-lovers of animals). Also, we apologise, we still don't know if cats like to live with other animals (turtles, dogs, snakes, horses, rabbits, etc.).

**WHAT YOU THOUGHT WE ARE DOING**  
• Having fun with research  
• Evaluating a possible introduction of pets in our libraries since librarians are so chatty, they don't mind talking to their pets, that's why they would like to continue this conversation at work  
• Inviting you to continue to spread the survey in your country's library community  
• Wondering how many people had a picture of their cat as their desktop wallpaper

**WHAT WE WERE REALLY DOING**  
• Questioning stereotypes  
• Looking for 'guide' cats in libraries  
• Questioning library work/career options in relation to clichés  
• Asking ourselves about the psychological and sociological reasons for the over-representation of librarians as cat people

**NEXT STEPS**  
Spreading this survey was an opportunity to collect data about librarians and cats to start engaging a deeper study on the weight of stereotypes in our own representation of this occupation. More than 300 respondents agreed to be interviewed in the coming steps. If YOU want to spread the survey among librarians in your country, in order to compare our results, please ask us for the survey. See you next year, for the continuation of our work!

What impact do clichés have on those wanting to enter the library field?  
Is there a connexion between this female-dominated profession and being a cat person?  
Will it ever be possible to find a 'guide-cat'?