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Information Outlook, March/April 2020

Special Libraries Association

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V 24 | N 02

information outlook

THE MAGAZINE OF THE SPECIAL LIBRARIES ASSOCIATION



THE EVOLUTION
OF RESEARCH

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INFO INSIGHTS

- 1 The Evolution of Research**
STUART HALES

THE EVOLUTION OF RESEARCH

- 2 The Evolution of Social and Behavioral Science Research**
BOB HOWARD

- 3 The Value of Paying Attention**
ANN CULLEN

- 4 Professional Researchers: Embedded, Essential, Iconoclastic**
DAVID GOLAN

- 5 Research Mapping of India through the Lens of Libraries**
PRAVEEN KUMAR JAIN AND
PARVEEN BABBAR

- 6 Staying Ahead of Information Overload**
KAREN RECZEK

- 7 Driving Engagement across the Organization**
MATTHEW DONAHUE

- 8 From Information to Intelligence**
STEPHEN PHILLIPS

- 9 More Calls to 'Add Value'**
SIMON BURTON

- 10 Key Drivers for Researchers of the Future**
ADRIAN MULLIGAN

- 12 Online, but Maybe Not Exportable**
ANNE BARKER

DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

- 13 Thoughts on My Equity Journey (and Steps You Can Take)**
MICHAEL SHOLINBECK

ON LEADERSHIP

- 15 Orientations in Special Libraries**
MELISSA FRASER-ARNOTT

INFO RESEARCH

- 17 Providing Disability Services in the Bodleian Libraries**
MONICA KIRKWOOD

INSIDE INFO

- 20 SLA Joins Calls to Strengthen Copyright and Intellectual Property Laws**
• SLA Urges Employers to Retain Librarians and Information Professionals •
In Memoriam: James King
• SLA Urges Caution on Government Actions during Pandemic

The Evolution of Research

Special librarians have redefined research and, in the process, become more integral to the success of their organizations.

BY STUART HALES

Research /rə serCH/
the systematic investigation into and study of materials and sources in order to establish facts and reach new conclusions

Search /serCH/
to try to find something by looking or otherwise seeking carefully and thoroughly

In the beginning was research, and librarians saw that they were good at it. Trained in research methods such as content analysis and reference interviews, librarians made themselves indispensable to clients who needed information and data for use in business proposals, marketing reports, medical studies, and myriad other projects.

But what library schools giveth, search engines taketh away. With access to computers and the Internet, individuals and organizations could search for information themselves, forcing librarians to find ways to differentiate their services—for example, by emphasizing the value of human interaction and their ability to assist users in finding content tailored to their specific needs. But librarians soon learned what travel agents, insurance salespeople, and many others had learned before

them—that self-service, when made simple and inexpensive, usually is preferable to higher-cost, tailored experiences.

So, why devote an issue of *Information Outlook* to the evolution of research when the story has been told and the outcome is a foregone conclusion? The answer is that, while librarians may have lost the search battle, they have won the research war.

That's the lesson underlying the various perspectives on research contributed by librarians and information providers to this issue. Read them and you'll frequently see words like *collaborative*, *proactive*, *embedded*, and, yes, *technology*. These point to the many ways special librarians and information professionals have redefined their relationship to research and, in the process, become better integrated into (and more integral to) the strategic focus of their organization.

Matt Donahue, market specialist director of knowledge and insight at Dow Jones, sums up this evolution by making five observations about today's librarian researchers:

1. Professional researchers are building stronger relationships with company leaders—for example,

by proactively suggesting research topics that align with organizational strategy.

2. Researchers are using “visual storytelling,” including the use of videos, graphics and other visualization tools, to help bring information to life.
3. There is growing demand to provide training to all employees to ensure research is carried out in the most efficient and accurate manner.
4. Researchers increasingly expect to work alongside client teams and integrate with their ways of working.
5. Researchers are looking to accelerate the use of automation, particularly when it comes to repetitive, cut-and-paste tasks, and to raise awareness of how artificial intelligence and machine learning can enable effective and efficient research.

So, what does the future hold? Consider two scenarios posited by contributors to this issue:

“Whatever happens, ‘business as usual’ will no longer be possible for any of us working in the research ecosystem. We have reached a tipping point: In the decade ahead, new funding models will emerge, new methods of collaboration will develop, and new ways of conceptualizing research and measuring its impact will materialize, driven by advances in technology and the ideas of a new generation.”

Adrian Mulligan, research director for customer insights, Elsevier

“As we look forward to the Fourth Industrial Revolution, we will see the continued proliferation of data and content. The Internet of Things is accelerating the speed at which we all create data. New vendors will strive to mon-

Continued on page 9

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The Evolution of Social and Behavioral Science Research

BY BOB HOWARD

We at SAGE Publishing see research changing in several areas, from why and how it is conducted and then disseminated to how its impact is measured. While SAGE publishes research in journals in many disciplines, our history is in the social and behavioral sciences, and these thoughts reflect this perspective.

Whether research is aimed at broad issues and generalizable theories or at very specific practical outcomes, we see growing interest in its impact beyond academia. For instance, funders are increasing the weight they put on the societal impact of research in deciding on grants, and business and management faculty increasingly consider the social impact of their work.

A robust methodology is critical to conducting good research. We are committed to supporting this through several outlets: undergraduate texts, higher-level books, our free MethodSpace community, the SAGE Research Methods platform (which digitizes access to a variety of publications and allows us to create born-digital resources), and Data Planet, which offers a wide range of data normalized to enable faster analysis.

Historically, SAGE nurtured new research methodologies through our

publishing, such as pioneering publications on mixed methods and evaluation. Today's new methodological challenge is developing the skills, tools, and access needed to engage with very large datasets, whether administrative data or social media data, such as the Facebook data available through Social Science One. For our part, we are responding with products, courses, and whitepapers around big data and computational social science under our SAGE Ocean initiative.

When it comes to disseminating research, there is clearly a global drive to increase open access (OA) publishing. SAGE has liberal policies around authors' ability to distribute their own version of an accepted manuscript. Over the last decade, we've also invested in OA publishing options within traditional journals and through our almost 200 pure OA journals, supported by our recently launched SAGE Open Access Portal. We are negotiating new OA publishing agreements with libraries, such as our recent publishing agreement with UNC-Chapel Hill, which brings funders into the process in a novel way.

But a rapid switch to an exclusively OA world poses risks for social scientists, as they rarely receive the same level of funding as their counterparts in the natural sciences. We've been in

Assessing impact has become increasingly complex, controversial, and contested and is intertwined with broader conversations around academic incentives.

active discussions with multiple funders about not only the impact of publishing mandates, but the importance of social and behavioral science research outcomes. Removing barriers to access must not inadvertently create new barriers to publishing research.

After research is published comes impact measurement. Assessing impact has become increasingly complex, controversial, and contested and is intertwined with broader conversations around academic incentives. How do we move beyond merely counting citations, and why does it matter? To stimulate fresh thinking, last year we published a whitepaper to lay the groundwork for improving impact metrics. To keep the conversation alive, we developed a new impact section of our community site, Social Science Space.

With so much change taking place, we are keen to continue working together with librarians as partners in the scholarly communication process to support the researchers we both serve and help them increase their impact on creating a better world. **SLA**



BOB HOWARD is senior vice president of journals at SAGE Publishing. Contact him at bob.howard@sagepub.com.

The Value of Paying Attention

BY ANN CULLEN, PHD, MLS

There are certainly many changes that have affected the evolution of research since I began my career as an information professional in the 1990s. Below is a brief list:

1990s

- Knowledge management (KM) first introduced
- Information stored on CD-ROMs
- Broader office adoption of e-mail
- The commercial Internet and search engine services like Yahoo! and AltaVista introduced
- Intranets launched

2000s

- By 2005, Google is the dominant search engine
- Move begins to make most resources available online
- Migration of information and services to desktops facilitated by the Web
- Increased demand for librarians as desktop research resource instructors
- Wikis and blogs proliferate

2010 - 2020

- Social networking technology proliferates
- Mobile devices become commonplace
- Resurgence of KM due to availability of social network technology
- Cybersecurity becomes an increasing concern (e.g., rise of 2-factor authentication)
- “Big data” becomes buzzword
- AI (e.g., chatbots and intelligent search)

The topic I would like to highlight for this piece, however, is *focus*. To be an effective researcher, you must develop concentration skills so you can quickly assess an information inquiry and determine the source of the content that will answer the question.

The pervasiveness of social media and the growth of commercially oriented search tools like Google and Alexa have increased the potential for distraction and amplified the likelihood of a biased understanding of the available information. For example, studies confirm that interactions with smartphones can both facilitate as well as inhibit off-screen performance (e.g., Isikman et al. 2016; Sciandra and Inman 2016). In the era of the “attention economy” (Zuboff, 2019), developing focused thinking skills is a capability in high demand.

Consequently, when I am teaching and working with students, I like to encourage them to think about focus and address it in a way that works for them. I urge them to develop the incisive attention skills necessary to support the capacity to effectively think through questions or topics they are investigating. With respect to potential bias that can result by not being an attentive user of social media and search engines, I often reference Eli Pariser’s Ted Talk on the “filter bubble,” which is a useful

reference on this issue ([www.ted.com > talks > eli_pariser_beware_online_filter_bubbles](http://www.ted.com/talks/eli_pariser_beware_online_filter_bubbles)).

As Herbert Simon, a Nobel Prize-winning economist, pointed out, “One of the most fundamental axioms underlying the principle of scarcity of attention is that a human being is a serial information transmitter” (Simon 2002). For information professionals, nurturing and cultivating our analytical skills and ability to focus have always been important, but in today’s cacophonous information world they are more essential than ever. **SLA**

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Professional Researchers: Embedded, Essential, Iconoclastic

BY DAVID GOLAN

Over the years, as our partnerships with our clients have evolved, we have seen many changes in the special library profession and have developed perspectives on what it takes for special librarians and libraries to be sustainable. We characterize the evolution of the research role in special libraries as follows:

- **Where we began:** reactive, transactional, unique
- **Where we stand today:** proactive, relational, embedded
- **Where we are headed:** essential, iconoclastic

The ability to provide library users and clients with excellent training and do-it-yourself tools allows today's special librarians to focus on research, which is no longer a reactive, sometimes transactional function. Evolving technologies have made successful basic research possible through self-service, although librarians play a critical role in delivering and advising on tools and content. As one panelist in Lucidea's 2019 SLA Hot Topics session said of training, "I taught a man to fish, and look—he's fishing!"

With less need to conduct basic information transactions, today's information professionals have the opportunity to undertake proactive, embedded and aligned research projects, increasing the value and sustainability of the function. Working closely with practices and business units, and often providing virtual services (enabled primarily by technology), information professionals shine in research roles by developing important skills. These skills include the following:

- Subject matter expertise (in addition to broad, general knowledge—no pressure!);
- Technological proficiency;
- Business acumen;
- Marketing savvy; and
- Presentation and public speaking capabilities.

We believe that being firmly embedded in organizational business or service lines and/or practice(s) fosters a natural progression toward research librarians being seen as essential to organizational success. Professional researchers already contribute substantially within

the broad categories of evidence-based strategic planning, budgetary control and cost savings, operational effectiveness, customer/client satisfaction, and organizational credibility and thought leadership.

In relation to credibility and thought leadership, researchers are uniquely positioned to provide quality control throughout the information and knowledge life cycle. They provide curated collections of relevant and fact-based content for self-service, evaluate others' research strategies and results, and provide qualified deliverables resulting from their own research. With access to senior leaders—and using request management systems that enable the generation of metrics and business intelligence—research managers can tell their success stories and demonstrate impact and alignment with their organizations' mission and goals.

Lately, we've seen examples of "renegade librarians" (currently in academic settings) redefining libraries' relationships with large publishers and refusing to pay huge sums for bundled content when what's needed is simply one resource, one title, or one article. We think this iconoclastic approach to research resource management will take off within special libraries and will be a game changer, with such a significant impact on the "bottom line" that budgetary resources can be reallocated to additional research staff, evolving technologies such as AI, and professional development. **SLA**

DAVID GOLAN is chief sales officer at Lucidea. Contact him at dgolan@lucidea.com.



Research Mapping of India through the Lens of Libraries

BY PRAVEEN KUMAR JAIN, PHD, AND PARVEEN BABBAR, PHD

Research in India is reaching new heights, with research becoming more diversified and multidisciplinary. Indian institutions are focusing on research collaborations between different countries through engaging visiting faculties and promoting student exchange/travel programs. They are also focusing on grabbing more research-based projects and grants and enhancing their scientific research output. Along with their pursuit of greater research output, Indian institutions are paying attention as well to quality parameters in academics.

Indian libraries are keeping pace by enhancing their research support services to their users. Over the years, research and research support services in India have been changing in similar fashion to the Western world. Conducting research in the past was cumbersome and time-consuming due to manual processes. Users relied on bulky volumes of reference literature and had to type the bibliography and references. It was difficult to find the relevant literature, as one had to turn the pages to reach the required text.

True, researchers were getting more face-to-face interaction with librarians

Libraries in India are now not only enhancing access to open resources but also promoting a culture of making researchers more amenable to publishing in open access journals.

in the past, and the librarians had the privilege of getting personal appreciation for supporting the research. But current-day librarians are conducting orientation/literacy programs to help make users familiar with the library's resources, and librarians with digital collections have made their resources more discoverable, accessible, and analyzable for scholars.

Libraries in India are now not only enhancing access to open resources but also promoting a culture of making researchers more amenable to publishing in open access journals. The librar-

ies are mapping the growth of research by depositing the latest research (in the form of doctoral theses) to the reservoir of Indian research known as Shodhganga, which is a digital repository of Indian theses and dissertations. In earlier times, it was impossible to track research growth, but with Shodhganga, a researcher can analyze trends in research in any subject or discipline with a single click of a button.

Almost all libraries are now involved in maintaining their research publications and data through institutional repositories and subscribing to research platforms like Scopus and Web of Science to analyze the scientific output of their institution. Research support services like reference management tools, plagiarism-checking software, research data management systems, and academic writing tools are the prime focus of Indian libraries at the present time to assist users in producing quality research that equates with world parameters. Thus, the mapping of research in India shows that libraries and librarians are playing a major role in improving and enhancing the quality of research work by linking researchers and developing a culture of ethical research in them. **SLA**



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Staying Ahead of Information Overload

BY KAREN RECZEK, MLS

I have been a practicing information professional since 1987, predominantly in the corporate world. In my current position in the U.S. Government, I do not work in a formal library/information center, but I still provide some research services. I have seen tremendous shifts in research needs over my career, both in the type of research tools being used and in the delivery of the information.

Shift in Research Tools

My initial exposure to research was using printed indexes. This was a tedious process, as you had to search various terms and look them up in indexes year by year.

Soon we had online databases, like Dialog, and full-text sources such as Vu-Text. This was a game changer in terms of researching topics. Not only could you now search multiple years, you could use Boolean operators and focus on specific fields, like subject headings or the title. Full-text searching improved with products like LexisNexis. Then along came the Internet, giving researchers more access to more content than ever before.

What never changed was the process: you must still perform the “reference negotiation” (as we called it when

I went to library school). Your first step is to fully understand the question—what the user needs, such as scope and format. A key to taking this step is knowing how the user plans to use the information. The next step is to design your search strategy. Most of this is informed by your reference negotiation.

The other pieces come from being a trained information professional. What terms would you use? Are there synonyms? Do the terms need to appear as a phrase or near each other? What about scope? Is language important, or range of years? What sources will you use? Is this a cutting-edge topic that would necessitate including conference papers or patents? Journal articles only? Is currency an issue? Or perhaps comprehensiveness? Do you need primary sources of information, such as interviews?

The biggest shift I have observed is trying to stay abreast of available sources (and knowing if you have access to them and whether there is a fee) and learning how to evaluate the authoritativeness of each source. The sheer volume of content available requires information professionals to be much more knowledgeable along these lines as well as know when to use a mix of sources or when once source is enough.

Shift in Deliverables

Since I come from the corporate arena, I haven’t seen as great a shift in deliverables as my peers in the academic sector. To provide added-value services, delivering “the answer” was always preferable to delivering a long list of bibliographic citations. This often meant combing through the citations, identifying the articles that were the best fit, and obtaining the articles—or, to take it a step further, reading the articles and providing a summary of the available literature (beyond the abstract). Sometimes you may be asked to provide a market research report that requires compiling information from different sources and putting it into a summary document and creating some charts or graphs to make the content easier for the user to understand.

Much depends on your setting. When I worked in an R&D library in the pharmaceutical industry, scientists wanted to see the list of articles I had found. They then would select the ones of interest and read them. When I worked in a conformity assessment company, users just wanted the answer: “Tell me what I must do to meet compliance requirements. Don’t give me a bunch of links. Just summarize it for me.”

What Does the Future Hold?

My prediction is this: more content will cause more information overload. The more you can fine-tune your research response to the user’s needs and present it in a digestible form such as a summary report or recommendations, the more likely it will be seen as “decision ready.”

KAREN RECZEK is a social scientist in the Standards Coordination Office at the National Institute of Standards and Technology. She is the 2018 recipient of the John Cotton Dana Award, SLA’s most prestigious honor. She can be reached at karen.reczek@nist.gov.



As an info pro, you bring a unique skill set to your organization. Anyone can search the Web, but you are trained to understand the underlying research question and formulate a good search

strategy, including which sources to use and which not to use. Most importantly, after that work is completed, you are best equipped to summarize the content and make it easily understood by

the user. In today's global, fast-paced business world, these are skills worth learning and honing. **SLA**

Driving Engagement across the Organization

BY MATTHEW DONAHUE

At Dow Jones, we've been working with customers in the professional research space for over 20 years. In fact, we built Factiva to serve this exact use case—helping professional researchers share insights from trusted, high-quality news and information across their organization.

But professional research is being performed by more and more people—in a wide range of roles—as part of their day-to-day work. As a result, the role of the professional researcher is changing, and today it bears a closer resemblance to strategic research or consultancy. It's not only about gathering information; professional researchers are responsible for overseeing tools and sources and for training colleagues to perform research to the highest possible standard.

We've spoken with numerous customers around the world about how they are managing this evolution. Here are some of our key observations:

1. Professional researchers are build-

ing stronger relationships with company leaders—for example, by proactively suggesting research topics that align with organizational strategy.

2. Researchers are using “visual storytelling,” including the use of videos, graphics and other visualization tools, to help bring information to life.
3. There is growing demand to provide training to all employees to ensure research is carried out in the most efficient and accurate manner.
4. Researchers increasingly expect to work alongside client teams and integrate with their ways of working.
5. Researchers are looking to accelerate the use of automation, particularly when it comes to repetitive, cut-and-paste tasks, and to raise awareness of how artificial intelligence and machine learning can enable effective and efficient research.

The role of the professional researcher is changing, and today it bears a closer resemblance to strategic research or consultancy.

We want to support professional researchers as their roles adapt and grow, so we're making various updates to Factiva to help researchers drive engagement across their organization and with senior leaders. Business-grade research is no longer the sole domain of professional researchers; it needs to be easy for everyone to perform and use.

As an industry, we also need to make sure that organizations don't get caught in the trap of relying on business-to-customer research tools that aren't fit for purpose. While free, they often deliver misinformation, inaccurate results and dead ends.

The continued success of Factiva tells us that customers will always be willing to pay for access to trusted, high-quality journalism—sourced responsibly through licensing directly with publishers—even as the world of professional research evolves. **SLA**

MATT DONAHUE is market specialist director of Knowledge & Insight at Dow Jones.



From Information to Intelligence

BY STEPHEN PHILLIPS, BLIB

Business information research has transformed over the 33 years since I entered the workplace. Then, the microfiche reader was almost the only piece of technology in the library, and days were spent maintaining hard-copy collections. “Cut and paste” really meant cutting and pasting the daily press bulletin. Manual systems documented activity: card indices to navigate the collection, the Browne Issue System to track loans, routing lists for journals, and carbon copy forms for requests or purchases.

My early days were an apprenticeship. I spent my time largely developing my knowledge of sources to answer my clients’ requests. The only drawback? An unfortunate intimacy with the inner workings of the photocopier, fixing paper jams and refilling toner.

It is easy to be nostalgic with rose-tinted spectacles. Those were gentler times, but our purpose was clear—to educate and inform our colleagues, enabling them to make good decisions or differentiate themselves from the competition.

Technology was and continues to be the greatest catalyst driving change. Back then, emerging online services were the shape of things to come. Dedicated terminals with acoustic

couplers enabled access to DIALOG, DataStar, and LexisNexis, amongst others. They were powerful (for their time) but expensive, charging by time spent or lines retrieved. Difficult to use with specialized content, they were the preserve of senior staff. Some had primitive e-mail, but it was more efficient to make a call, send a memo or write a letter!

Like every industry, we embraced technology to drive efficacy and efficiency. It democratized information by facilitating access, enabled globalization to leverage economies of scale, reduced reliance on hard-copy resources, and enabled the emergence of a new cohort of information providers.

As we look forward to the Fourth Industrial Revolution (<https://www.weforum.org/focus/fourth-industrial-revolution>), we will see the continued proliferation of data and content. The Internet of Things is accelerating the speed at which we all create data. New vendors will strive to monetize data by creating new platforms and services, shifting their focus from physical to digital assets.

Information-handling skills will become mainstream, with tools and products to leverage this expertise. Content-rich products will proliferate, along with technologies to make their data accessible and free flowing.

Natural language processing will deal with unstructured content. Robotic process automation will streamline repetitive tasks and some bespoke work.

Will we still need traditional research skills? I believe so. Organizations will need operational support for knowledge workers and their technology, but I advocate a return to the fundamentals of information management: “to provide access to information.” Now more than ever, organizations need skills to govern and oversee their systems and to identify, source, ratify and validate veracious sources of information. We understand the subtleties of data collection and curation, the context of data, and its ethical underpinnings. Enabling users to understand and access these products is a critical part of our value proposition (<https://www.cilip.org.uk/page/informationasset>).

The old adage that “knowledge is power” is truer now than it ever was. Our skills, combined with institutional knowledge, enable us to deliver smart solutions. Our purpose remains the same: to educate and inform our colleagues to make good decisions and give our organizations a competitive edge in overcrowded and increasingly challenging markets (<https://intelligence.ft.com/>). **SLA**



STEPHEN PHILLIPS is an information management leader with extensive experience in a variety of functions, including research, information management, and content strategy and acquisition. During his extensive tenure at a global financial services company, he developed his team into the key providers and advisors on information management. He recently established his own venture to offer consultancy and support to a range of clients. Contact him at sjp23480@gmail.com.

More Calls to ‘Add Value’

BY SIMON BURTON

As a specialist recruiter in the business information and knowledge management sector, my firm, CB Resourcing, gets a lot of exposure to client requirements across consulting, pharmaceuticals, law, banking, private equity, and many other industries.

We’ve seen a number of changes over the years, with departments moving toward an increasingly proactive and strategic remit. Increasingly, we also hear the term “adding value” more and more often in the context of research requests. In truth, information professionals have always added value. But what is it that clients are now really asking for when they say they need candidates who can respond to research requests and “add value,” and where can the information professionals’ skills provide a competitive edge?

Show your value as an Information professional. In a COVID-19 world, it’s been brought home to everyone how important information literacy is. Not only fake news, but out-of-date or incomplete information as well, can give a completely inaccurate picture to users who need to make timely decisions based on accurate information. The information professional’s rigor is a

critical protection and competitive edge for their organization.

Demonstrate your curiosity. Information professionals are trained to go beyond the question. Clients ask us all the time for candidates who have a curious mindset, but what does that mean? For example, if you were asked how many industries a megatrend such as driverless cars might affect, non-research professionals may struggle to name three or four. A curious information professional would see hundreds of possibilities for industry disruption, from car parks to insurance.

Show how you’ve embraced technology. Information professionals have acquired a broader range of tools and resources at the same time they’re being asked to do more with smaller teams. Using data visualization and analytics to aid storytelling have become a part of the workload within information teams

in consulting firms and increasingly in other industries. Technologies such as Quid, Tableau, Python and SQL frequently turn up on job specs.

Think about the “why” behind each request. The modern information professional needs to understand and cater to the priorities of both the organization and key stakeholders. Keeping key users updated on industry and client trends by summarizing key points from a wide array of sources is an expectation for the modern information professional. The inherent skills of information professionals are well suited to support this strategic and vital function.

Use information to tell a story. Drawing conclusions and collating insights from disparate sources to support research requests, and putting those insights into a meaningful and digestible context, are essential. **SLA**

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Info Insights

Continued from page 1

etize data by creating new platforms and services, shifting their focus from physical to digital assets. Information-handling skills will become mainstream, with tools and products to leverage this expertise. Content-rich products will proliferate, along with technologies to make their data accessible and free flowing. Natural language processing

will deal with unstructured content. Robotic process automation will streamline repetitive tasks and some bespoke work.”

Stephen Phillips, information management consultant

How will special librarians fare in such environments? The authors of this issue’s perspectives note certain traits—innate curiosity, the ability to focus, a thirst for knowledge, and an instinc-

tive “feel” for finding, curating, and presenting information and data—that have helped special librarians adapt not only to the rise of search engines but to the dissolution of physical libraries and the replacement of “hard” collections with online resources. These traits are sure to be invaluable to special librarians as they navigate the ever-evolving information and research climate of tomorrow. **SLA**

Key Drivers for Researchers of the Future

BY ADRIAN MULLIGAN, MS

We are living in an age of rapid change, with transformative technological advances, political uncertainty, shifting population demographics, funding pressures and global societal challenges. Together, these factors are revolutionizing how research information is conceived, created and communicated.

To help the research community prepare for the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead, Elsevier joined forces with Ipsos MORI on *Research futures: Drivers and scenarios for the next decade*. We surveyed more than 2,000 researchers, talked with experts, and reviewed the published literature to prepare this future-scoping study.

We found 19 key factors driving change around themes such as funding, open science, research workflow and artificial intelligence. Researchers—and their library partners and collaborators—will need to prepare for a future in which—

- The funding mix is changing, with public funders exerting less influence over research priorities;
- Research grants increasingly have

open science conditions attached;

- Researchers are expected to spearhead adoption of open science, but not without experiencing conflicts of interest;
- Metrics will continue to expand, enabled by new technology;
- New technologies transform the research workflow over the coming 10 years;
- Behaviors and skillsets will change as a new generation of researchers arrives on the scene;
- Collaboration will drive research forward; and
- Artificial intelligence and machine learning tools are changing the shape of science.

Whatever happens, “business as usual” will no longer be possible for any of us working in the research ecosystem. We have reached a tipping point: In the decade ahead, new funding models will emerge, new methods of collaboration will develop, and new ways of conceptualizing research and measuring its impact will materialize,

While technology advances have the potential to be disruptive, in general we are likely to see faster, fairer, more open models of research practice and publication. Researchers are likely to benefit from greater career flexibility, better feedback on their emerging ideas, and improved reproducibility.

driven by advances in technology and the ideas of a new generation.

While technology advances have the potential to be disruptive, in general we are likely to see faster, fairer, more open models of research practice and publication. Researchers are likely to benefit from greater career flexibility, better feedback on their emerging ideas, and improved reproducibility.

Finally, we learned that if positive change is to be sustainable, action must take place in unison across all areas examined in the study, from education to research workflow. And wherever there are “virtuous cycles” in which innovations support each other



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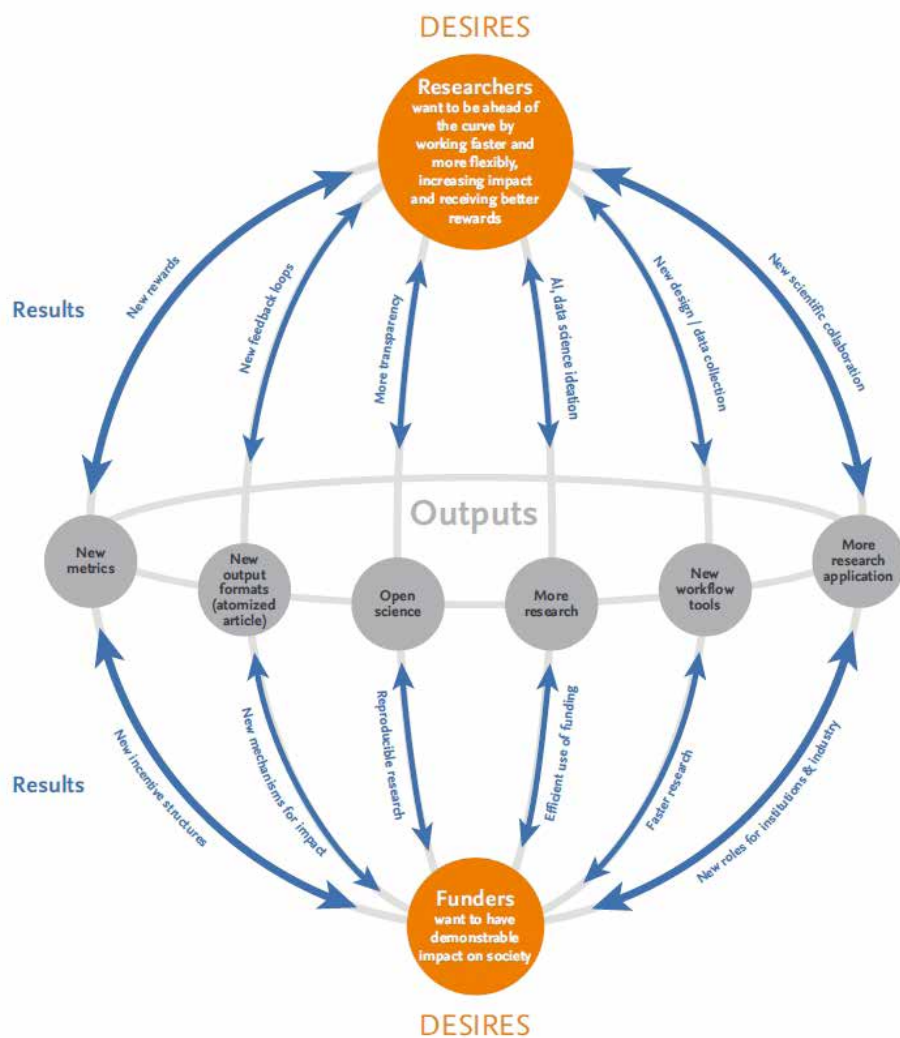
and are mutually beneficial, change will occur rapidly.

From an Elsevier perspective, the study has proved to be a valuable tool in our ongoing mission to improve the information system supporting research—in other words, the many resources that researchers have available to execute and communicate core research tasks. We will continue to partner with researchers, librarians, research institutions and funders to

turn information into actionable knowledge and provide tools that make research more efficient. And crucially, as research becomes more fragmented, we will ensure that trust remains at the system's heart, as it has been for the 140 years of Elsevier's history. **SLA**

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Elsevier has developed a virtuous cycles model to demonstrate how the drivers of change they identified could interact productively, and what their impact might be. Source: *Research futures: Drivers and scenarios for the next decade*.

Online, but Maybe Not Exportable

BY ANNE BARKER, MLIS

Ah, to have reached the point in one's career when one is asked to reflect on significant changes witnessed over the course of said career ...

Having come into the information field well after the point at which it was assumed that "everything is online," the most prevalent changes in my day have had a lot to do with the style in which information is presented. While my bread and butter has always been providing analysis rather than a data dump, visualizations have become a much more frequent request.

In the past, providing a one-page executive summary was the best way to highlight the key points of a work product, but now that can be viewed as boring at best and just another data dump at worst. People want charts, graphs, and other visualizations to give them a quick overview of the findings. When appropriate to the type of research requested, I embed such images into my summaries, which contain fewer words since the image can do much of the talking.

The desire for this type of output reflects a change in expectations of the type and breadth of information that is available. Surprisingly, people might have been slightly incorrect when they said "everything is online" 15 years

ago. What they meant was that books, articles, laws, and other text-based information and resources were online.

The desire for data visualizations reflects the broader availability of data sets. Rather than wanting a researcher to locate, synthesize, analyze, and summarize information from multiple tomes, people are now just as often asking for a numbers game, where the results from any type of search can be sliced and diced at a moment's notice based on a question that pops into the requester's head.

Unfortunately, although much information does exist in data sets, many of our key search resources remain predominantly text-based. Although it takes a bit of extra work to turn text-based results into a parsable data set, it "should not" be an insurmountable hurdle in the world of fielded databases. Some information providers, however, place such an emphasis on the intrinsic value of their (sometimes admittedly) unique collections of information that they erect barriers in the form of export limits—limits affecting both the number of downloadable results and the format. (Such limits, by the way, also affect the ability to perform text mining.)

A database representative to whom I have given an earful about the need for her company to make its data more

Rather than wanting a researcher to locate, synthesize, analyze, and summarize information from multiple tomes, people are now just as often asking for a numbers game, where the results from any type of search can be sliced and diced at a moment's notice based on a question that pops into the requester's head.

exportable for analysis recently sent me a gift: A mug showing an Excel-style visualization platform with the caption, "Lady in the streets, freak in the spreadsheets." She included a note that said, "Gotta' love us some pivot tables!"

I laughed and got the warm fuzzies when I opened the package, but I found myself cursing the product again last week when I needed to pull data to run a specialized analysis and ran into the same barriers. Such vendors need to find their way through this wilderness of their own making and realize that their product only retains and grows its value when it is useful for the type of work that people are currently doing.

Which, in terms of evolution, applies to our profession as a whole. **SLA**

ANNE BARKER is an information specialist in the Legal Department at Genentech, a biotechnology company in the San Francisco Bay region, where she specializes in patent, litigation, and pharmaceutical pipeline research and analysis. Previously she was a librarian and research analyst at an intellectual property-focused law firm. Contact her at annenb@outlook.com.



Thoughts on My Equity Journey (and Steps You Can Take)

True equity starts with identifying the sources and mechanisms of power and listening to and centering the voices of people who are not white, male, abled, Christian, cisgender, and/or straight.

BY MICHAEL SHOLINBECK, MS, MLIS

Note: this column was written before the COVID-19 outbreak. The sentiment and steps to be taken are more important than ever now: who is included in decisions, and who is not, may be more difficult to ascertain without face-to-face contact. It is critical that people be included in the decision-making processes that affect them.

When I began participating in equity and inclusion (E&I) efforts at my workplace, I believed this work was primarily for folks from underrepresented groups; I was just a helper. “Who am I,” I thought, “to be the voice of diversity?”

I still think that centering the voices and leadership of marginalized folks is paramount. When I hear about all-white “diversity panels,” I cringe and think, “I am an ally! I would never claim to speak on behalf of, or to the experiences of, marginalized folks. I would step back.”

Oh, the humility!

But, here I am: I co-convene SLA’s Diversity Inclusion Community Equity Caucus, I have chaired a library diversity committee at my workplace, and I have been involved in equity efforts across campus. Yes, I belong to a

religious minority—and being actively Jewish does infuse me with a keen sense of justice—but I am otherwise a representative of all the groups holding power in this time and place. I am white, male, cisgender, straight, abled, financially secure, neither old nor young. I can pretty much move through the world swimmingly, if I so desire.

But I do not so desire.

At work, I encounter students who are marginally housed, hungry, and regularly face racism and other forms of discrimination. Nevertheless, these students are fired up to change things. Lucy traveled to the U.S.-Mexico border, bringing needed supplies to folks seeking asylum; Ali spends his summers in Syria helping with relief efforts there; Eric is directly engaging the local homeless population to work on housing solutions.

How could I not support these young people? How can I not use my privilege, my “invisible knapsack” (McIntosh 1988), to assist? As a white (male, abled, etc.) person, I should be active in this work. My demographic created and sustained systems of oppression, so we need to remove some of the burdens of

equity work from marginalized folks. We should withdraw and heed the leadership of marginalized folks.

White (male, abled, etc.) people like me must actively work toward dismantling white supremacy, ableism, sexism, and so forth. And we should listen and be humble, too. The “authoritative universal voice”—aka “white male subjectivity masquerading as non-racial, non-gendered objectivity” (Crenshaw 1989)—is not neutral, nor should it be what’s listened to in our equity efforts.

I started on this path at my workplace thanks to Abby, the then-director of diversity at the University of California, Berkeley’s School of Public Health. She contacted me to lead a library workshop for her “Summer Seminar,” a program for incoming students from underrepresented groups. But something more happened—I got to know these students, I heard their stories, and I was welcomed into their spaces. Being so welcomed has sustained me and my desire to do E&I work.

I still have work to do in unlearning biases. Reading has also helped me along the way; I am a librarian, after all! Here is an article I liked: “From Hostile to Inclusive: Strategies for Improving the Racial Climate of Academic Libraries,” by Jaena Alabi (2018).

This article details, in language white people can understand, the experiences of people of color in libraries and other settings. These experiences need to be heard because, as the author states, “... many Whites, including White librarians, are unaware of the racism people of color experience on

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a regular basis.” For example, people of color experience exhaustion and burnout from being ignored or patronized, from facing different standards for advancement, and from being always asked to serve on the diversity committee. So don’t boast that your institution does a good job of recruiting underrepresented folks if most of them leave within a relatively short period of time.

Personal Actions to Consider

What steps can you take? Learn about racism. Many whites think that, because they are not bigots, they do not participate in or benefit from racism. (You could substitute other “isms” here: ableism, sexism, etc.). But in a society (and here I am mostly referring to the United States) literally built on the backs of blacks and other “others,” whites have an undeserved advantage, perpetuated over the decades by exclusionary laws and policies that ensured that wealth was primarily kept in the hands of whites.

Realizing this, whites may wish to become allies, but being an ally only to assuage one’s guilt can lead to seeing oneself as a hero whose role is to “rescue” the oppressed. Better to have a sense of social justice and “work to dismantle the larger system of oppression” (Alabi 2018). Reflect on your motives when you do this work, fellow white people. Don’t be dismissive or defensive if a person of color reports an act of oppression. Listen.

Yes, it makes me groan when I attend a “diversity” event and all the speakers or panelists are white. That said, are white people perhaps more likely to listen to other white people? I don’t love that notion, but I am not naïve. Still, we need to “see the water we swim in” (i.e., see and acknowledge our privilege) before real change can happen. Success does not mean, “Look! There are brown people here!” That’s diversity window dressing. Statements such as “everyone is treated equally here” or “I don’t see race” also reflect the unearned power inherent in a sexist, white supremacist society, because folks of color don’t have the option to

“not see race,” and women don’t have the option to “not see sex.”

Dismantling white supremacy and the meritocracy myth takes real work, both on personal and organizational/institutional levels. It starts with identifying the sources and mechanisms of power—who is making what work or not work here—and using your privilege to listen to and center the voices of folks who are not white/male/abled/Christian/cisgender/straight. Here are some takeaways on a personal level (organizational actions will be addressed in a future column). Please consider them and let me know what you think.

Make space for the voices of those who have not been listened to. Listen, and try to be humble. If the people who speak first and/or most at meetings or events are cis white males, something is wrong. I’m a talker, so it has been hard for me to step back. It’s a work in progress—always.

Learn and read! If your institution or workplace offers them, take workshops on allyship, bystander intervention, and so forth. Follow social justice advocates on social media.

Pledge to not serve on all-male panels If you’re male (see GenderAvenger.com).

Pay attention to how meetings are run and whose ideas are valued. Speak up if you notice particular groups of people getting most of the (positive) attention and/or particular groups being spoken over or dismissed. As an SLA chapter president, I tried to ensure that all voices were heard at meetings and other gatherings, pausing and asking if folks had anything to add.

Vote for people who will diversify any entity in which you participate.

Confront those whose words or actions are inappropriate. This is difficult, but very important. Being an “ally” means acting, especially in uncomfortable situations. I don’t laugh at racist/sexist/etc. jokes. A better response is, “Why did you say that? It isn’t funny.”

You’ll make some mistakes, but you can learn from them. Ask yourself what you could have done to make the situation turn out better. In situations where

there are differing degrees of trust and power, self-reflection is a useful tool.

I have tried in this column to not speak with the “authoritative universal voice,” but instead to reflect on what I have learned over the years. I cannot relinquish my white privilege; in fact, “white privilege” may be a redundant term (Powell 2015) But by making privilege visible, perhaps it can be interrupted.

What are your biggest challenges in being more inclusive? This work is important and, to paraphrase a Talmudic expression, you are not obligated to finish it, but you are obligated to do it. **SLA**

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Orientations in Special Libraries

Orientation sessions are opportunities to start productive relationships with new employees, and special librarians take a variety of approaches to maximizing these opportunities.

BY MELISSA FRASER-ARNOTT, MLIS, PHD

This installment of the “On Leadership” column is from the Marketing Section of SLA’s Leadership and Management Community and focuses on library orientation practices in special libraries. Why would the Marketing Section start with a discussion about orientation sessions? Because the library’s orientation session is the first marketing opportunity available to special libraries when new or potential clients arrive.

Developing a strong orientation session can be the start of a positive and productive relationship with new clients. So, how are special libraries approaching library orientations? While the library literature is full of examples and advice from academic and school libraries, there isn’t much available that focuses on the special library environment.

We decided to help fill this void by surveying special libraries to find out about their library orientation practices. Questions included information about the library’s size and focus as well as their library orientation practices.

The Overall Picture

We heard from 55 special librarians about their library orientation practices. A variety of different types of special libraries were included in the survey,

with many respondents selecting multiple areas of specialization. The most common areas of specialization were science/technology (25 responses), business/competitive intelligence (19 responses), government/public service (16 responses), and law/legal resources (16 responses).

The highlights of the survey responses are as follows:

- Most of the participants in the survey work in small libraries (90.9% have 1-10 employees) serving large client bases (50.9% serve more than 1,000 clients).
- Slightly more than half (53.7%) reported that only one or two employees provide orientation sessions, while one-fourth (24.1%) stated that all library employees are able to offer orientation sessions when needed.
- Roughly 90% reported they are offering library or information center orientations to new clients.
- Almost two-thirds (62.3%) offer orientations whenever new clients arrive in their organization. Participants tend to prefer more frequent orientation and training

offerings (weekly or monthly) over less-frequent schedules (annual or semi-annual).

- Attendance at library orientation sessions results from a variety of motivations: referral by Human Resources Department/required part of orientation (40.4%), referral by supervisor or manager (36.5%), outreach by the library/information center to new clients (53.8%), and new clients seeking out the library/information center independently (44.2%).
- The vast majority (86.2%) of surveyed libraries and information centers offer sessions of one hour or less, with more than half reporting their orientations last 30 minute or less.
- Most sessions are offered face-to-face or synchronously, with only 15.1% of participants reporting that they offer online, self-directed training modules.
- Most participants offer some customization of these sessions (38.5% reported medium levels of customization, usually based on a participant’s work role or team).

Orientation Practices

Several key practices emerged from a review of the responses to the survey. Some of these are highlighted below.

Partnerships. A useful practice among survey participants is to develop an arrangement with the Human Resources Department to receive lists of new employees when they arrive (thereby enabling the library to contact them to participate in orientations) or to be included in the new-employee orientation program.

Technology use. Special libraries are very strategic in their use of technologies to create and deliver training and orientation opportunities for remote

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workers. For example, some used technology to pre-record elements of their training and orientation to save time. Others revised their training approach to ensure that new clients would be able to sit at workstations and actively engage in learning activities during their training sessions.

Orientation timing. Delaying the library orientation is a strategy to ensure that new clients get the most out of the session(s). Several participants reported waiting between two weeks and a month after a new employee starts with the organization to allow the employee to develop a sense of the information needed to fulfill the new work role. Many participants also reported staggering the library orientation process—they initiate contact through an introductory e-mail or preliminary meeting with new library clients, then provide either structured training at later dates or ad hoc sessions based on clients' requests.

Customization based on client segment. Market segmentation was used to design orientation sessions, with many

special libraries creating orientations tailored to clients based on their unit/division or employee type (e.g., sessions designed for interns).

Ongoing outreach. The orientation is one point in an ongoing exchange between special libraries and their clients. Respondents reported promoting their library orientation and training sessions through multiple channels (e.g., “piggybacking” on Human Resources communications, posting promotional materials in public spaces, sending introductory e-mails, etc.). They then followed up with new employees to see if they needed any additional training or support.

Fluid design and delivery. Special librarians' approaches to orientation sessions aren't static. In addition to tailoring their orientations to the information needs of different client groups, participants also reported modifying the orientations based on the latest tools, trends, and developments in libraries, information access, and retrieval.

Mixed delivery tools and techniques. Special libraries employ a wide range of

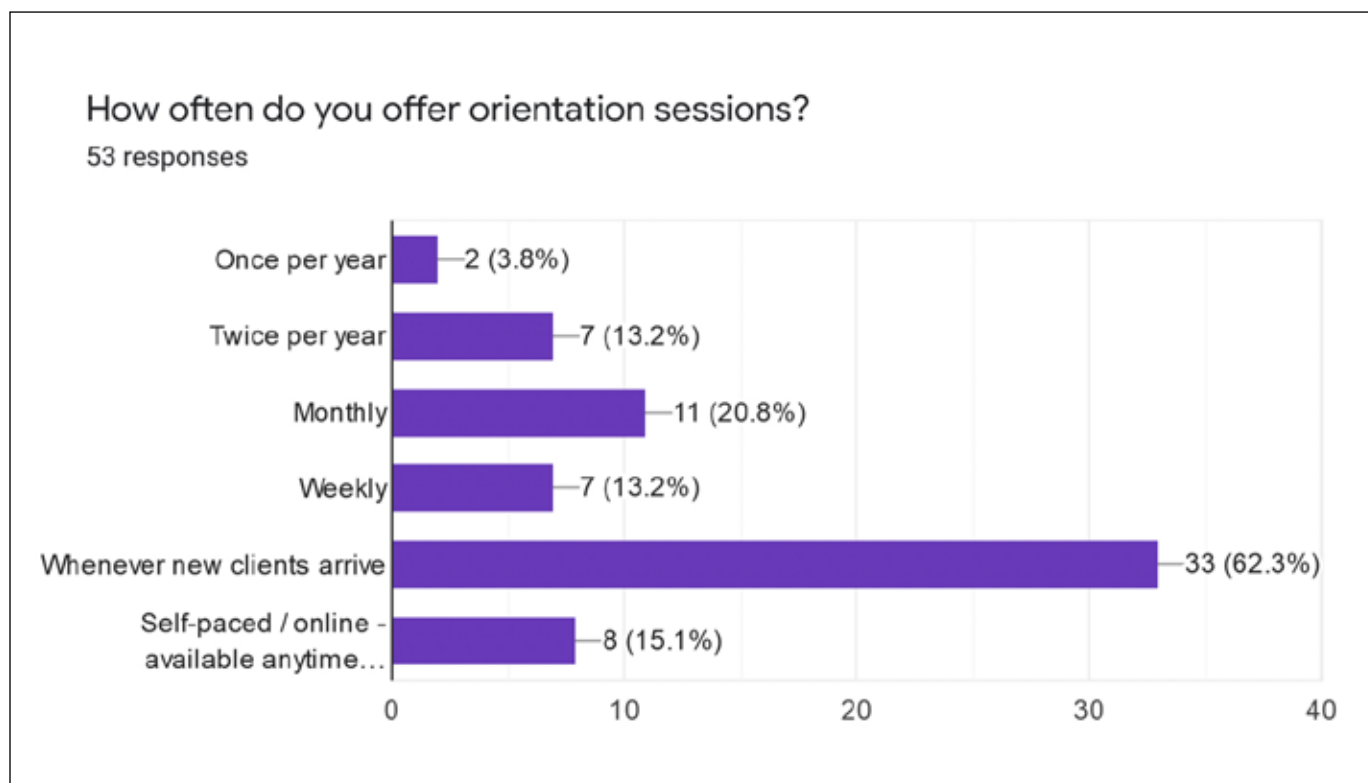
techniques and tools in their orientation programs. The most common among them are live resource demonstrations (72%), physical tours (54%), question-and-answer sessions (54%), and hand-outs/tip sheets (44%).

The goal of a library orientation is to inform clients of the library resources available to them and thereby promote their use. Librarians cannot assume that new employees will be aware of these resources; as one survey respondent stated, “Some percentage of the customers are always astonished at the resources the library presents to them.”

There is at least anecdotal evidence that orientation sessions do achieve their goal. One participant reported that even if only a small portion of new employees participate in the orientation sessions, those that do are likely to become regular library users.

If you are interested in learning more about SLA's Leadership & Management Community, please visit www.connect.sla.org/lmd. **SLA**

Figure 1: Frequency of Orientation Sessions



Providing Disability Services in the Bodleian Libraries

A maternity cover for a colleague allowed Monica Kirkwood to serve as a disability librarian during a year of unprecedented growth in the number of students receiving support.

BY MONICA KIRKWOOD, MLS

For 14 months, from September 2018 through November 2019, I had the opportunity to serve as the disability librarian and manager of the ARACU (Accessible Resources Acquisition and Creation Unit) in the Bodleian Libraries at the University of Oxford. This job post was a maternity cover for a colleague. (The typical time frame for maternity leave is 12 months, but in my case, the mother tacked on 2 additional months that she had accrued during the first 6 months of her leave.)

I presented a poster at the SLA 2019 Annual Conference depicting the responsibilities of both tracks of my position, featuring statistics through mid-year 2019. The left side of the poster details the communication process between the disability librarian (me) and the staff in the university's Disability Advisory Service (DAS). These professionals meet one-on-one with students who are registering as disabled, and these consultations generate a personalized student support plan (SSP) that provides guidance to university groups on recommended support for each student. I was responsible for students who were recommended for "reasonable adjustments" within the libraries.

The most common library reasonable

adjustment for a student is for extended loans in the libraries they are likely to use, based on their course of study. I was responsible for identifying these libraries and inserting extended loan codes into the student records of the online system, Ex Libris Aleph. Other adjustments recommended within the libraries included priority booking of study carrels, a 1:1 induction of the library with the onsite disability liaison librarian, and provision of a support worker/proxy borrower.

(A 1:1 induction is a personal introduction/tour of the library, its policies, and its spaces for the disabled reader. It involves the designated disability liaison librarian, which each library has on staff, and the disabled reader—thus a 1:1 induction.)

These adjustments were communicated by me to each library via the liaison disability librarian. Each of the Bodleian Libraries has such a liaison, as does each college library. (Each student at Oxford is admitted to the university via a college, such as Balliol College or Merton College, and this college becomes the student's "home base" for the duration of the student's studies. Colleges offer accommodations for living, dining, studying, extracurriculars,

and socializing.)

Within the Bodleian and college libraries, efforts have been made over the last few years to provide more visible support and easy access for all library users. These efforts range from providing height-adjustable desks and ergonomic seating to ear plugs and magnifiers. As I finished my post, we were in the process of creating a standardized list of accessible support products that all Bodleian Libraries would make available at each site to ensure consistency of service to users across all locations.

As disability librarian, I led training sessions for library staff to acquaint them with the needs of disabled readers in a library setting and the types of support we could have on hand at our locations to offer on an individual basis, as recommended by the Disability Advisory Service. Additionally, I participated on committees and in groups that discussed and reviewed support for disabled readers throughout the university as a whole.

Year of Unprecedented Growth

The center column of the poster provides definitions and supporting statements from the Disability Advisory Service at the University of Oxford and details the "Common Framework" of support for disabled students and the responsibilities of the libraries in that support effort.

The right side of the poster describes the other side of my job, as manager of the Accessible Resources Acquisition and Creation Unit. In this role, I maintained constant communication with my ARACU administrator, who handled direct communications with the students and their tutors. Tutors maintain the reading lists that each student uses during their term, and input from the tutors is critical to identifying the materials that are the top priority for a student and those that are secondary. Students can select from guided questions for certain topics, and we need their input to provide the accompanying materials for the questions on which they choose to focus.

MONICA KIRKWOOD has nearly 30 years of experience in libraries, 15 as a manager in the higher education sector. Prior to the University of Oxford, she worked in the libraries at Purdue University for 19 years. She has been a member of SLA since 2003 and currently is the webmaster for the Biological & Life Sciences Community.





Monica C Kirkwood
Disability Librarian
University of Oxford
United Kingdom

Special Libraries Association Annual Conference - June 2019

Disability Services in the Bodleian Libraries - my year as Disability Librarian at the University of Oxford

DISABILITY SUPPORT

The Disability Librarian coordinates the support provided to disabled readers across the Bodleian Libraries.

COMMUNICATION AND PROCESS

- Working with the Disability Advisory Service (DAS) & an established network of staff contacts, the Disability Librarian coordinates resources & services to support disabled users across all Bodleian Libraries.
1. Student discusses disability to Disability Advisory Service (DAS)
 2. DAS sends Student Support Plan (SSP) to Disability Librarian
 3. Disability Librarian logs details on spreadsheet and adjusts loan privileges
 4. Disability Librarian emails student details & required support to Disability Liaison Librarians at relevant Bodleian & College Libraries
 5. Disability Librarian emails student with details of library support (DAS Advisor contacts)
 6. Disability Librarian files SSP per record keeping procedures.

REASONABLE ADJUSTMENTS

- Examples of reasonable adjustments are the following:
- Extended Loans
 - Priority Booking of Study Carrels
 - 1:1 induction with Disability Liaison Librarian
 - Provision of a support worker / proxy borrower

EXISTING OFFERINGS

- Book stands and book rests
- Height adjustable desks
- Ergonomics chairs
- Colored overlays and colored paper
- Portable hearing loops
- Portable task lamps

EDUCATION

The Disability Librarian provides training sessions on Disability Confidence. These workshops introduce library staff to the readers that are referred by DAS for reasonable adjustments in the Libraries and discusses how to proactively respond to their needs.

OTHER ROLES

The Disability Librarian serves on several committees in an advisory capacity regarding support for disabled readers related to facilities, equipment, and services throughout the whole of the libraries.

NUMBERS

The number of students assisted by the Disability Librarian:

2019. Of the 4300 students assisted by the Disability Advisory Service, roughly 40% have a Student Support Plan, of which 90% (1,548) have recommendations for reasonable adjustments in the Libraries.
 627 in 2017/18 476 in 2016/17

Who is supported by the Disability Services at the University of Oxford?

- The Equality Act (2010) defines 'disability' as:
- A condition that has lasted or is likely to last for 12 months or more*
 - Has a substantial adverse effect on undertaking day to day activity (including study)

*The DAS is not able to provide support for students with a temporary illness or injury; in such instances the student would need to contact their college/department.

- Long term Mental health condition (e.g Depression, Anxiety, PTSD, Eating Disorders)
- Specific Learning Difficulty (e.g Dyslexia, Dyspraxia or ADHD/ADD)
- Autism Spectrum Conditions
- Sensory impairment (e.g affecting hearing or sight)
- Mobility impairment
- Long term health conditions (including fluctuating/ progressive diagnoses)

The Common Framework for Supporting Disabled Students

Effective from MT14 — The collegiate University will

"seek to demonstrate exemplary inclusive practice in relation to disabled students"

"comply with all applicable legislation and follow the guidance outlined in University policies and relevant external publications, noting the requirement to make reasonable adjustments insofar as they do not compromise the integrity of academic competence standards."

www.admin.ox.ac.uk/ead/evss/disability/commonframework

Common Framework: Libraries

"Libraries play a key role in supporting the learning, teaching and research objectives of the University of Oxford. Access to libraries and collections is essential for all members of the academic community and libraries are committed to providing an excellent library experience for disabled readers."

www1.admin.ox.ac.uk/ead/evss/disability/roles/libraries

ARACU SUPPORT

Accessible Resources Acquisition and Creation Unit

We create alternative formats for disabled students who cannot access printed materials. Our purpose is to ensure that print-disabled students receive their reading materials in their chosen format with the highest possible quality and in a timely manner so that they do not become disadvantaged compared with other students.

THE TEAM

The team is led by a manager, the Disability Librarian. Workflow and communication with students and tutors is handled by the ARACU Administrator. Additional support is provided by two part-time assistants. A team of 7 volunteers assists with scanning.

THE PROCESS

Reading lists are sent to the ARACU Administrator by the tutor. These are transferred into a spreadsheet that tracks term, topic, and year. These lists typically contain up to 40+ titles from books to articles each week of the 9-week term. Our goal is to provide materials 2 weeks ahead of the term in which they are needed.

MATERIALS

- We acquire files in a few different ways:
- received direct from publishers,
 - link students to e-versions of materials via the library online catalog,
 - physically scan materials

PREPARATION

Scanned materials are loaded into Adobe Acrobat DC Pro and either retained as image scans and divided into chapters, matching the table of contents OR converted into screen readable text using OCR (optical character recognition) and saved as a single pdf.

DELIVERY

Students are sent files using Doffle, the University large file exchange service. Students are sent links to online materials from the library catalog via email. Both methods require authentication by secure sign on to access materials.

COPYRIGHT

We are guided by the Copyright Licensing Agency Higher Education Licence and the Copyright & Rights in Performances (Disability) Regulations 2014. Copyright forms are signed at the start of service from ARACU. Students confirm they will use the materials for personal use only.

NUMBERS

The number of students served by ARACU has nearly doubled since Michaelmas Term 2018, from 17 to 31. The number of requests processed increased to 5,458 in 2017/18 from 2,207 in 2016/17. In 2017/18, ARACU staff and volunteers scanned 100,700 pages from over 480 books!

Our ARACU goal was to provide these materials two weeks ahead, so materials for week 3 were sent to each student during the first week of the term, week 5 materials were sent during the third week of the term, and so on. Many students who relied on our services needed to spend significant time with the materials—for example, if they used a screen reader to learn the content as compared to visually reading the content. Providing the materials ahead of time helped ensure these students were not disadvantaged relative to their peers studying the same courses.

The process, materials, preparation, and delivery steps described in the poster cannot adequately describe the magnitude of effort that was necessary to meet the team goals and support the needs of the students we served. When I began my role, we served 18 students, which was considered “at capacity” for the team. By the time I completed my post, we were serving 44 students. It

was definitely a year of unprecedented growth in ARACU, and the demands were felt there and throughout the Disability Advisory Service.

These increased needs required that I shift the majority of my focus to the ARACU side of my post and use a triage method to manage the disability librarian tasks. I consulted regularly with my supervisor as we navigated these increased demands and identified efficiencies to streamline our operations. Replacing one of our flatbed scanners with a new overhead scanner improved our processing speed while reducing wear and tear on materials and staff. Adding processing software to multiple machines, as opposed to a single computer, improved our content and delivery capabilities.

When one of our two part-time staff departed in May 2019, I was able to lobby the upper administration to transition the post to a full-time assistant position. As I was leaving, we were

completing our first month of training and integration with our new hire.

Final numbers recorded at the end of my 14-month post reflected a year of unexpected and significant growth and demand. I handled more than 1,500 referrals as the disability librarian; as stated earlier, the ARACU was serving 44 students as of mid-November 2019.

The ARACU team is composed of the full-time administrator, a full-time assistant, a part-time assistant, and seven volunteers. The incredible level of support we maintained to our users would not have been possible without my phenomenal ARACU team and their confidence in our group’s capabilities and willingness to follow my lead. I am privileged to have worked as the disability librarian and manager of the ARACU for the University of Oxford and to have participated in such worthy efforts on behalf of the disabled students we served. **SLA**

- Overspending on data?
- Duplicating user access across departments?
- At risk of violating publisher terms?
- Acquiring and renewing at a higher cost than you should?
- Spending too much time managing the process?



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SLA Joins Calls to Strengthen Copyright and Intellectual Property Laws

On the occasion of World Intellectual Property Day, SLA joined calls for global action on copyright and intellectual property laws to allow libraries to provide and protect access to research and cultural resources in the face of challenges such as the COVID-19 virus pandemic and climate change.

In an April 26 news release, SLA announced that it had signed on to two letters to the World Intellectual Property Organization (which organizes World Intellectual Property Day) urging WIPO to take the lead in facilitating the copyright and IP changes. The letters state, in part, the following:

Climate change. *[T]here is growing awareness of the impact of climate change on cultural heritage. This can happen gradually, through changes in temperature that accelerate the degradation of materials or leave institutions and sites underwater. It can also happen suddenly, thanks to an increased chance of fires or extreme weather events.*

Clearly not all irreversible losses can be prevented, but a lot can be done by investing in preservation capacity and comprehensive plans for managing and responding to risks. Alongside training, equipment and buildings, at the heart of these efforts is preservation copying. This is essential to ensure that works survive into the future, even if the original physical support is lost, using tools such as digitisation.

Currently, copyright laws are not up to the task. In 51 countries around the world, there are no basic preservation exceptions, meaning that any relevant copying is effectively illegal unless a heritage institution gains (and potentially pays for) authorisation. Furthermore, while 136 countries do have preservation exceptions, 73 limit preservation copying in ways that effectively prevent digitisation.

As their contribution to addressing climate change, copyright decision-makers can make a difference by taking action internationally to facilitate preservation. It is only at the global level that we can realise the potential of digitisation in safeguarding our heritage.

COVID-19 virus. *The COVID-19 pandemic has shone a bright light on how important intellectual property limitations and exceptions can be to development and human flourishing. Researchers discovered the spread of the virus through a text and data mining project analysing copyrighted news articles, enabled by Canada's flexible fair dealing right for research purposes. The earliest potential treatments have been developed through existing medicines, enabled by experimental use exceptions to patent rights.*

Now, schools, universities, libraries, archives, museums and research institutes across the world, forced to close their buildings, are transferring materials online and providing remote access, but only where copyright laws permit. However, these and other critical activities to overcome the crisis are not being performed everywhere—including where subscriptions have been paid in advance—because they are not lawful everywhere.

We have seen helpful steps from a number of countries, and from some right holders themselves, to facilitate access to academic articles and other works, educational and cultural materials, research data, chemical libraries, and needed medicines and medical devices that are subject to intellectual property rights. These steps are to be lauded. But much more is needed. And WIPO can help lead the way.

The climate change letter and the COVID-19 letter were both sent to WIPO by the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA), of which SLA is a longtime member.

SLA Urges Employers to Retain Librarians and Information Professionals

With the spreading COVID-19 virus prompting government officials around the world to close non-essential businesses and organizations and calling on their citizens to shelter in place and practice social distancing, SLA urged employers to consider the importance of accessing and sharing information and data when making decisions about furloughs and layoffs.

In a news release issued on March 26, SLA acknowledged that the dangers posed by the virus outweigh the benefits of operating public-facing libraries and information organizations and expressed support for decisions to close such facilities until public health and medical experts determine that it is safe to reopen them. The release also called on government, business, and academic leaders to take a “long view” on the COVID-19 pandemic and retain and compensate staff who manage the information resources that power their organizations, even if business operations must be suspended temporarily.

“Cutting library and information professionals during economic downturns has proven to have negative consequences and is increasingly shortsighted in a global marketplace that is becoming more interconnected with each passing day,” says Tara Murray, SLA 2020 President. “SLA is doing its part to support library and information professionals during the COVID-19 pandemic by providing educational resources and tools that facilitate networking and information sharing. SLA calls on all employers to support librarians and information professionals by recognizing their value, retaining them as employees and including them in post-pandemic plans.”

In Memoriam: James King

Richard James King, a leader in SLA at both the association and community levels and a frequent speaker and presenter at SLA Annual Conferences and other industry meetings, died March 30.



James joined SLA in 2003 and quickly became active in several communities, including the Washington, D.C. Chapter, the Maryland Chapter, the Military Libraries Division, the Information Technology Division, the Government Information Division, and the Information Futurists Caucus. He served as president of the Washington, D.C. Chapter in 2010 and convener of the Information Futurists Caucus from 2007-2010, and was serving as chair of both the IT Division and the SLA Technology Advisory Council at his death.

At the association level, James served on the SLA Board of Directors as chapter cabinet chair from 2014-2016, as chair of the SLA Nominating Committee in 2012, and on advisory councils for two annual conferences (Seattle in 2008 and Philadelphia in 2011). He was named a Fellow of the Special Libraries Association at the 2011 Annual Conference and received a presidential citation from 2018 SLA President Roberto Sarmiento.

James began his library career at the Naval Research Laboratory (NRL) in Washington, D.C., where he worked as senior LAN administrator, IT administrator, and specialist in library information technology before serving as the chief librarian and the digital innovations librarian. At the National Institutes of Health (NIH) in Bethesda, Maryland, where he served as the NIH Library's branch chief and information architect, James spent his career blending his IT background with librarianship to enhance and optimize library services. His responsibilities included oversight of the library's substantial collection, the library's customized web development service, and the library's assessment and reporting initiatives.

In addition to his duties at NRL and NIH, James volunteered his time and expertise to further the interests of the government library community. He served as chair of the Consortium of Naval Libraries and the National Research Library Alliance and also chaired the Libraries and Emerging Technologies Working Group of the Federal Library and Information Center Committee. In 2014, James was honored as Federal Librarian of the Year by the Federal Library and Information Network (FEDLINK).

James was acutely interested in the intersection of technology and information and was honored in 2006 with SLA's LexisNexis Innovations in Technology Award. He gave generously of his time to help SLA staff and members address technology challenges, and he spoke at SLA conferences and meetings on topics such as digital asset management and using data. He also took an active interest in advancing the careers of new and younger librarians and served on the Advisory Board of Catholic University's Department of Library and Information Science, from which he earned his library degree in 2002.

SLA Urges Caution on Government Actions during Pandemic

SLA has joined with more than 130 library, information, and civic organizations and advocacy groups in signing an open letter calling on government bodies to consider deferring action on important decisions during the COVID-19 pandemic.

"Government bodies should not opportunistically take advantage of the public's inability to attend large gatherings to make critical decisions affecting the public's interest if those decisions can reasonably be postponed," the letter states. "Just as citizens are being asked to defer nonessential travel and errands, so should government agencies defer noncritical policy-making decisions until full and meaningful public involvement can be guaranteed. Where postponement is not realistic, every available measure should be taken to (1) notify the public of meetings of government bodies and how to participate in those meetings remotely, (2) use widely available technologies to maximize real-time public engagement, and (3) preserve a viewable record of proceedings that is promptly made accessible online."

In a news release, SLA noted that it recognizes that government leaders have critical roles to play during public health crises, and it is appropriate for them to ask or even require the public to refrain from meeting in groups during the current pandemic. Librarians have critical roles to play as well, and one of them is to heighten efforts to ensure the public has access not only to information but also to opportunities to influence governments and other organizations that make decisions affecting the public welfare.

"We encourage SLA members to make their voices heard to ensure such opportunities are not restricted during the COVID-19 pandemic," the release states. **SLA**