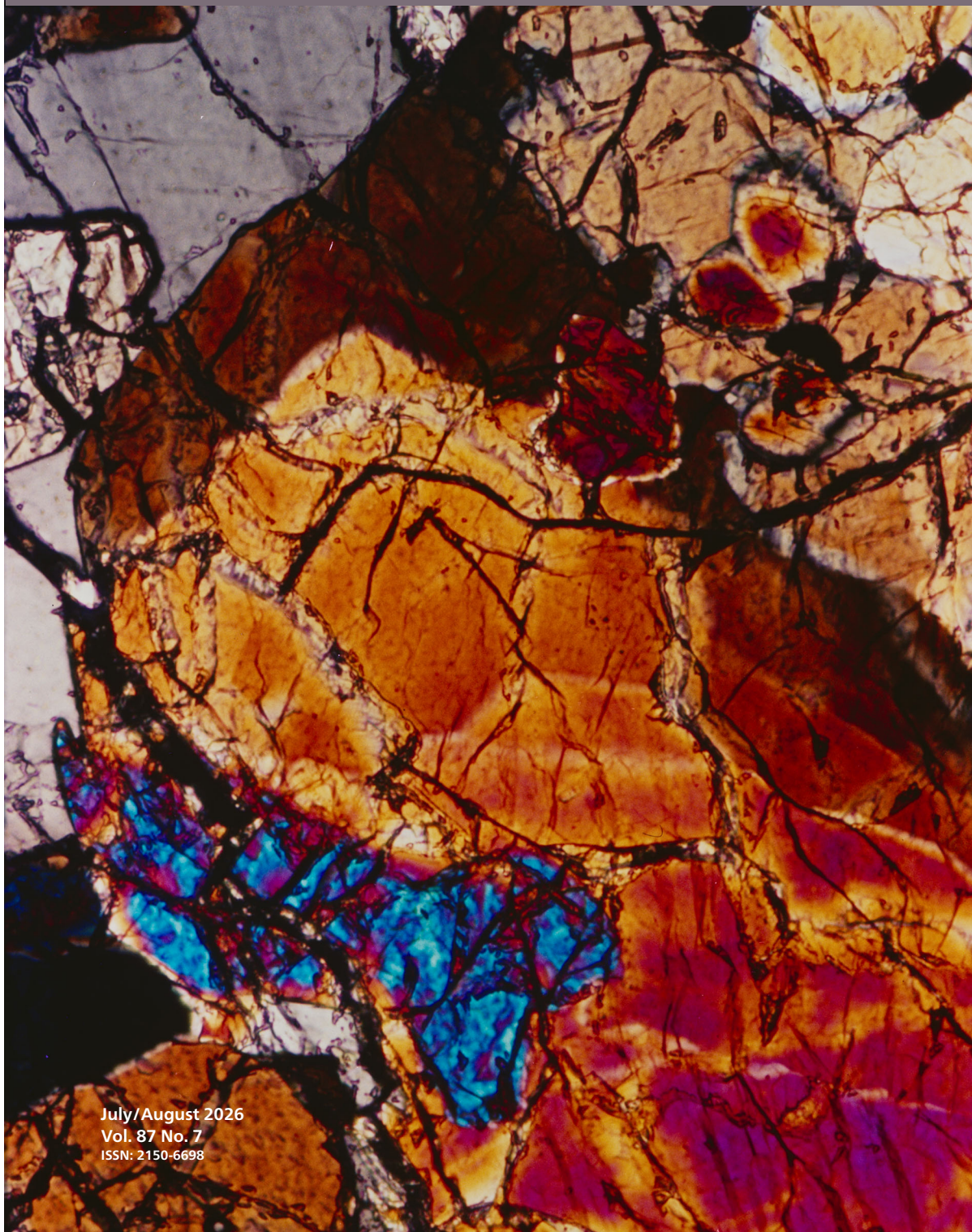


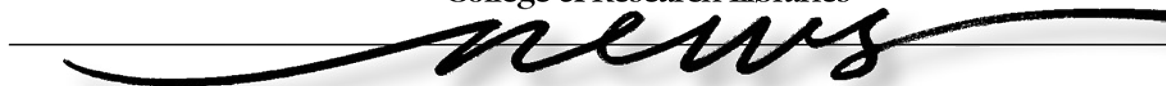
College & Research Libraries

news

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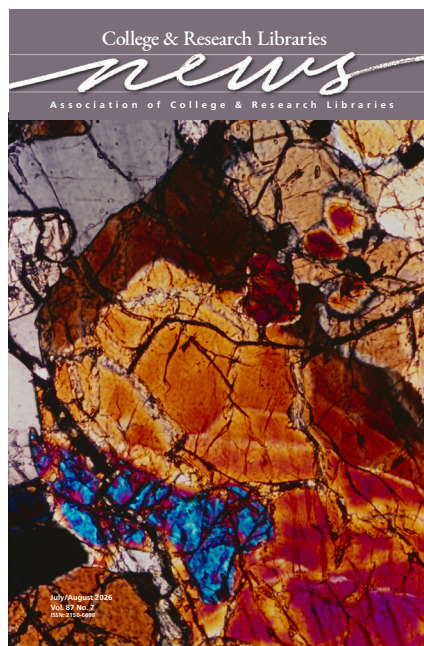
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This month's cover features an image of a thin section of lunar sample 15384 collected during the Apollo 15 Moon mission in the summer of 1971. Thin sections are slices of Moon rock that allow microscopic examination and enable detailed scientific study. Thin section images of Apollo lunar samples can be found online in the Apollo Thin Sections catalog (https://www.lpi.usra.edu/lunar/samples/atlas/thin_sections/), a subset of the Lunar and Planetary Institute's (LPI's) Lunar Sample Atlas.

The library at the LPI, located in Houston, Texas, provides valuable physical and online resources and reference services to planetary scientists, researchers, educators, and students. The library has a unique collection of books, journals, documents, maps, globes, models, videos, images, and educational resources with a focus on space science, astronomy, geology, and related fields. Learn more about the LPI Library at <https://www.lpi.usra.edu/library/>. *Credit: NASA/LPI.*

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Revised Standards for Libraries in Higher Education

The ACRL Board of Directors has approved a revision of the association's Standards for Libraries in Higher Education (SLHE). SLHE, adopted in 2004 and previously revised in 2011 and 2018, is designed to guide academic libraries in advancing and sustaining their role as partners in educating students, achieving their institutions' missions, and positioning libraries as leaders in assessment and continuous improvement on their campuses. The standards are a framework for library planning and assessment, particularly in regard to providing guiding principles, performance indicators, outcomes, and metrics for libraries to use in a variety of circumstances as they work with faculty and students in the higher education setting, achieving and measuring institutional learning outcomes.

A task force composed of members of the ACRL Value of Academic Libraries Committee reviewed SLHE as part of the usual five-year review process. The resulting revision of SLHE builds upon the foundation of the 2018 document with an added and intentional focus on the role of academic library personnel. The task force used the term *library personnel* instead of *academic librarian* or *librarian* to encompass the full range of staff who contribute to the academic library mission. Recognizing that library expertise is central to advancing teaching, research, and institutional effectiveness, the revised SLHE explicitly emphasizes expectations in core areas such as information literacy, scholarly communication, collection development, and discovery.

This emphasis affirms library personnel not just as support personnel but also as educators, collaborators, and strategic partners whose contributions are integral to the academic mission. By embedding library personnel expertise into SLHE, the task force aimed to ensure that this professional knowledge is both recognized by university leadership and valued by accreditation teams as a critical dimension of institutional quality. The board approved the revised SLHE at its April 30, 2026, virtual meeting. The revised standards are freely available on the ACRL website at <http://www.ala.org/acrl/standards/standardslibraries>.

UNC Charlotte Names 2026 Atkins Fellows

The University of North Carolina at Charlotte J. Murrey Atkins Library has named two fellows in the tenth year of the Atkins Fellows summer program. This program offers paid, full-time work experience for MLIS students at the midpoint in their library, archives, or information science degree programs, and graduates who completed their programs in the last year. Participation in the program includes an additional stipend to help fellows with housing and transportation costs. Each Atkins Fellow works on a project throughout the summer, participates in workshops, tours and panel discussions, and engages in department and library committee meetings. The purpose of the program is to prepare MLIS students and recent graduates to work in academic libraries, archives, and other institutions, while supporting the mission, goals and initiatives of Atkins Library. The 2026 Atkins Fellows are Bashi Hariharan Yasodha of the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign and Meredith Zeller of the University of North Carolina at Greensboro. Projects include work with open access and streaming video engagement. To learn more about the current fellows, alumni, and the program and projects, please visit library.charlotte.edu/atkinsfellows/.

JSTOR Transitions Path to Open Pilot to Ongoing Program

JSTOR has announced that Path to Open, a community-supported open access monograph program, will continue as an ongoing program following its three-year pilot phase. Launched in October 2023 to test whether a collaborative model could sustainably scale open access for humanities and social sciences monographs, Path to Open includes nearly 300 participating libraries, more than 50 university presses and scholarly publishers, and a corpus of titles that will reach 1,000 works by the end of 2026. The core design of Path to Open includes 300 new titles selected for inclusion in the program each year; library support through annual licensing payments to access titles for up to three years before they become openly available; and per-title payments to presses to help sustain monograph publishing without requiring authors or institutions to pay processing charges.

Early results from the first one hundred Path to Open titles, published in 2023 and openly available since January 2026, illustrate what this model can enable. Usage among participating libraries was strong during the licensed period and grew significantly once titles became openly available. In the first three months after opening, item requests increased by more than 440% compared to the full year of 2025, when the titles were available only through participating libraries. Over the same period, access expanded to more than 2,000 institutions from 228 and to nearly 160 countries from 12—highlighting the global demand for high-quality, peer-reviewed titles. Learn more about Path to Open at <https://about.jstor.org/products/books/path-to-open/>.

Johns Hopkins University Press, BioOne Announce Integration

Johns Hopkins University Press (Hopkins Press) and BioOne today announced their merger in a bold move designed to enhance community impact, expand future opportunities, and transform how they engage with researchers. BioOne's flagship aggregation of bioscience research journals, BioOne Complete, as well as their eBook collections, will continue as discrete and independent products within Hopkins Press. The union promises significant operating efficiencies and combined scale with Hopkins Press's Project MUSE, the widely used collection of journals and books in the humanities and social sciences. Both organizations were early adopters of the equitable open access model *Subscribe to Open*. Hopkins Press and BioOne are committed to a smooth and transparent transition for all stakeholders with minimal disruption of day-to-day operations. The deal is expected to close on August 31, 2026, subject to final governance and legal approvals.

The State of U.S. Academic Libraries: Findings from the ACRL 2024 Annual Survey

ACRL recently released the report "The State of U.S. Academic Libraries: Findings from the ACRL 2024 Annual Survey." The 2024 Academic Library Trends and Statistics Survey results show academic libraries adapting to a rapidly shifting information landscape and expanding access for users. While disparities in staffing and funding persist across institution types, libraries continue to play a vital role in supporting research, instruction, and student success. ACRL is committed to advancing, and advocating for, academic libraries and library workers in that role. Continued participation in the survey is essential to ensure libraries remain visible, valued, and equipped to meet the evolving needs of higher education. This report focuses on US academic libraries in fiscal year 2024 (the 2023–24

academic year). For the first time this year, the results are weighted to be representative of all US academic libraries, unless otherwise noted. Survey data from 1998–2024 is available for subscribers in Benchmark: Library Metrics and Trends. Benchmark makes data-driven planning and advocacy easy for academic libraries by providing libraries with data visualizations that allow them to compare their inputs and outputs to peer and nationwide data. Learn more at <https://www.ala.org/acrl/benchmark-library-metrics-and-trends>.

KSU Launches Open Publishing Exchange

Kansas State University (KSU) Libraries has renamed its Center for Scholarly Publishing to the Open Publishing Exchange (OPE), reflecting an expanded mission to support open, affordable, and sustainable ways for researchers to share their work. The new name reflects how the department's role has grown in response to changes in research funding, publishing costs, and federal public-access requirements. OPE supports the publication of journal articles, research data, and other scholarly outputs, recognizing them as connected parts of the research process rather than separate activities. The department works with faculty early in the research and grant-planning process to address data management, publishing options, and public-access requirements from the start. This early support can strengthen grant proposals, reduce costs and compliance challenges, and ensure research output can be shared openly and affordably once projects are complete. OPE also helps the university meet federal public-access requirements, including those outlined in the 2022 Office of Science and Technology Policy Public Access Memo, also known as the Nelson Memo.

ACRL Sets 2026–27 Legislative Agenda

Each year, the ACRL Government Relations Committee, in consultation with the ACRL Board of Directors and staff, formulates an ACRL Legislative Agenda. Drafted with input from key ACRL committees, ACRL leaders, and the ALA Public Policy and Advocacy Office, the ACRL Legislative Agenda is prioritized and focuses on issues at the national level affecting the welfare of academic and research libraries. The 2026–27 ACRL Legislative Agenda focuses on four issues that will be the focus of ACRL's advocacy efforts, listed in priority order: Impacts to Higher

Tech Bits . . .

Brought to you by the ACRL ULS Technology in University Libraries Committee

Although generative AI tools often focus on conversation, Perplexity AI functions as a “discovery engine” that bridges the gap between traditional search and AI. It answers queries by scanning the live web and providing a synthesized response accompanied by immediate, numbered citations. Perplexity addresses the AI “black box” by linking every claim to a source, making it a powerful tool for fact checking and source verification. It is highly effective at the reference desk for providing quick topic overviews with a clear trail for deeper research. Additionally, its “Pro Search” mode mimics the reference interview by asking clarifying questions, making it an excellent instructional tool for teaching students how to evaluate AI-generated content against original sources. There are both free and paid versions available.

Roger Zender, Case Western Reserve University

Perplexity AI
<https://perplexity.ai>

Education; Public Access to Reliable Governmental Data; Elimination and Reorganization of Federal Agencies and Departments; and Safety, Security, and Ethical Concerns of Artificial Intelligence (AI). The agenda also includes a watch list of policy issues of great concern to academic librarians. Issues on the watch list are: Deferred Action for Childhood Arrival (DACA), Consumer Data Privacy, Affordable College Textbook Act, Accessible Instructional Materials, and Net Neutrality. The full 2026–27 Legislative Agenda is available on the ACRL website at <https://www.ala.org/acrl/issues/washingtonwatch#agenda>.

ARL, CNI Release Report on Strategic Implications of AI Futures for Research Libraries

Artificial intelligence (AI) is reshaping the research and information environment in consequential ways. To help research library leaders think strategically about those changes, the Association of Research Libraries (ARL) and the Coalition for Networked Information (CNI) have released the report from their Strategic Implications Workshop “Futurescape Libraries: Mapping Possibilities for Tomorrow’s Information Hubs.” The report is designed to support leaders as they consider how advances in AI may affect the roles, responsibilities, and future direction of research libraries. Four near-term priorities emerged from the workshop with particular urgency for library leaders, including invest in workforce now, leverage unique collections, lead on governance and ethics, and build and deepen partnerships. Since the workshop convened in December 2024, the most consequential shift has been the move from AI as a tool researchers use to AI as an agent that acts on their behalf. That shift makes governance, authorization, and quality control operational requirements, not future considerations. *Strategic Implications of AI Futures for Research Libraries: Workshop Report* by Karen Estlund and Cynthia Hudson Vitale is available at <https://doi.org/10.29242/report.futurescape2026>.

Inclusive Reference

Creating Guiding Principles and Best Practices That Inform Our Everyday Practice as Reference Librarians

In 2021, the Research Services Team at the Gutman Library at the Harvard Graduate School of Education (HGSE) was preparing to onboard two new colleagues. As we developed checklists and other orientation documentation to help our new librarians acclimate to their roles, we talked at length about our research consultation practice. One-on-one research appointments are heavily used at HGSE, and the Research Services Team grappled both with how to codify what we were already doing and how to continue refining our practice to ensure every user feels welcomed and supported. We conducted preliminary research to see what others in the field had written about conducting inclusive research appointments and came up short. Although there is extensive literature on inclusive teaching in librarianship, there currently exists very little research on developing a set of best practices for inclusive research consultations.

Fortunately for us, one of our incoming colleagues was Jamillah Gabriel, who was hired for the role of critical pedagogy research librarian. The Research Services Team invited Gabriel to design and lead a professional development series specifically for Gutman Library staff focused on the practice of inclusive reference, leveraging her existing expertise in this work and the team's eagerness to deepen our practice around inclusivity. This led to a multisemester process of deep learning in inclusive pedagogy and other closely related topics as further discussed below, resulting in an instructive document of guiding principles and best practices for inclusive reference.

Developing Inclusive Reference

In preparation for initial discussions on inclusive reference, the team first embarked upon a comprehensive and intensive schedule of readings encompassing various topics such as inclusive pedagogy, Black feminist thought, cultural humility, trauma-informed pedagogy, culturally sustaining pedagogy, and Universal Design for Learning. The overarching goal was to develop a body of knowledge on topics that would be directly applied to the development and understanding of what inclusive reference could and should be. This meant acquiring a critical perspective that would take into account multiple ways of knowing and thinking and allow adequate time for thorough reading and reflection, thereby practicing inclusivity even in the knowledge-gathering process leading up to our discussions.

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We committed to meeting monthly to discuss the readings as a team with the aim of identifying key components of these various theories and pedagogies that would serve as the foundation of our work. We determined that the work would culminate in an inclusive reference document that would both provide guiding principles and frame a set of best practices for information workers wanting to incorporate inclusivity in mindset and in practice. After completing the readings, our group discussions shifted into brainstorming sessions where we identified key components of those readings that we felt embodied the application of inclusivity to reference and research, and we began to develop the guiding principles that would provide the rationale for why such a practice was necessary in one-on-one consultations and interactions. We modeled our process on the Robert Perret article¹ similarly discussing the implementation of virtual reference, which prompted us to ask the following questions of ourselves:

- What is inclusive reference?
- Why are we doing inclusive reference?
- Who are we serving?
- How are we creating an inclusive practice?
- Where is inclusive reference taking place?
- How do we conduct inclusive reference?

We then began to think through the kinds of practices that would characterize inclusive reference, which meant considering things such as inclusivity training, accountability measures for our reference interactions, challenges in practicing inclusive reference, core reference skills that we should all possess, and chat techniques to employ toward creating an inclusive environment for all involved. The ideas emerging from these discussions ultimately led to the practices we deemed vital to foregrounding inclusivity in our research interactions. The end result of this focused and very dedicated work is the “Guiding Principles and Best Practices for Inclusive Reference” document and accompanying LibGuide, which we have begun to disseminate to the Harvard, New England, and greater LIS communities.²

Guiding Principles and Best Practices

In our work as the library’s Research Services Team, establishing guiding principles and best practices for inclusive reference has become central to how we serve our diverse campus community. Within research services, we recognize that every user—whether a student, faculty member, staff member, alumnus, or visitor—brings distinct backgrounds, identities, and research needs to our interactions. Grounded in inclusive pedagogy, our approach moves beyond broad ideals to practical steps that shape each reference encounter, whether in person, online, or at the point of need. By formalizing our commitment to inclusivity through these principles and practices, we aim to ensure that every research support interaction is meaningful, equitable, and welcoming, reinforcing the library as a space where all voices are acknowledged and valued.

Why Is Inclusive Reference Important?

Library users today are as diverse as their questions. We meet graduate and international students, faculty, alumni, and visitors from all walks of life, and each brings unique identities and experiences into our space. Traditional approaches to reference services, while

helpful, can miss critical opportunities to dismantle structural inequities or to recognize trauma, cultural context, and the full spectrum of knowledge traditions. Without intentional change, libraries can unintentionally reproduce the very exclusions we seek to challenge.³

A Shift in Mindset

Rather than relying solely on existing standards, we were inspired by the framework of inclusive pedagogy, a philosophy that “responds to learner diversity in ways that avoid the marginalization of some learners in the community of the classroom.”⁴ As our campus community grows more diverse and user needs continue to evolve, we recognize now is the time to adopt this approach in our library reference work. By doing so, we aim to meet users where they are and ensure our help reaches everyone, not just those best served by traditional structures.

Building Our Principles

We developed our principles through structured readings, discussions, and reflection on practice within our team. At the heart of this process is the commitment to cultural humility, a recognition that it is impossible to know everything about other people’s identities and experiences but essential to remain open, curious, and self-reflective.⁵ Coreen Getgen’s article on cultural humility recognizes that growth is ongoing, and though no training can prepare professionals for every situation, combining education with self-reflection fosters continuous improvement.⁶ Our inclusive reference principles also center on trauma-informed care, where we acknowledge that both patrons and staff may carry experiences of trauma, and we strive not only to recognize these but also to actively prevent retraumatization in our interactions.⁷

Putting Principles into Practice

Best practices emerged naturally from these shared values: (a) We encourage patrons to share and direct the flow of reference interactions, building trust and agency,⁸ and (b) we reflect regularly on our own assumptions and biases, welcome mistakes as opportunities for growth, and consciously seek out and recommend scholarship from marginalized voices. Our approach is also about striving for warmth, accessibility, and empathy, whether in person, over chat, or via email. While our work often takes place in environments that prioritize quick responses and high volume, intentionally slowing down to focus on the quality of our interactions ensures that all users feel seen, heard, and supported. The nature of our work often values speedy responses and number of interactions over quality, so in contrast, we thought it was important to take the time to build rapport and value each user’s perspective to help create an environment of psychological safety and intellectual growth. As Patricia Collins highlights in her work on Black feminist thought, “personal expressiveness, emotions, and empathy are central to the knowledge validation process.”⁹

Implications and Conclusion

Over the course of this article, we have discussed some of the possible implications for incorporating inclusive reference into our work as research librarians. One of the primary implications that has emerged is in the application of inclusive reference to our research

consultations. We now actively incorporate inclusive learning within our research consultations, which has naturally led us to the next stage of this process and prompted the question: How do we assess the implementation and success of inclusive reference? Consider these two perspectives for assessment: (a) the librarian's account of what took place during the encounter and (b) the student's perception of how they felt during the consultation. We believe that students likely perceive that staff sets the tone for libraries, and as such, librarians and library staff should look to find and implement ways to benefit a student's interaction with staff. With this, we are currently working on an assessment tool that will allow us to glean anecdotal and/or quantitative information from students and subsequently work toward actionable changes. Such feedback would have the dual effect of enabling us to maintain accountability and strengthen our positionality, both individually and as a group.

We have also asked ourselves how our colleagues outside of research services (but within Gutman Library) would implement this practice. Although we are not all research librarians, we all regularly conduct research consultations. Inclusive reference is something we continue to work toward as we must foster a mindset of continuous learning by seeking individual professional development opportunities, practicing self-reflection, and engaging in intentional conversations with colleagues. As librarians, we have the opportunity to lead the effort to dismantle stereotypical narratives through the provision of accurate information, thus supporting both cultural pride and culturally humble practices.¹⁰

It is our hope that what we have shared will guide others in their inclusive reference journey. These principles and practices are not static. They are a living part of our library's culture. By embedding inclusive reference into everything from staff training to daily interactions, we not only support users better but also foster our own learning as librarians. Above all, our goal is simple: to ensure every question, and every person, finds a place where they belong. ♪

Notes

1. Robert Perret, "Developing Policies and Best Practices for Virtual Reference," *PNLA Quarterly* 76, no. 1 (2011): 82–85.

2. Gutman Library Research Services Team, "Inclusive Reference," *Harvard Gutman School of Education* (2025), <https://guides.library.harvard.edu/inclusivereference>.

3. David A. Hurley, Sarah R. Kostecky, and Lori Townsend, "Cultural Humility in Libraries," *Reference Services Review* 47, no. 4 (2019): 544–55, <https://doi.org/10.1108/RSR-06-2019-0042>.

4. Jennifer Spratt and Lani Florian, "Inclusive Pedagogy: From Learning to Action. Supporting Each Individual in the Context of 'Everybody,'" *Teaching and Teacher Education* 49 (2015): 89–96, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2015.03.006>.

5. Sarah Kostecky, Lori Townsend, and David Hurley, "Is Cultural Humility Too Easy?" *College and Research Libraries* 84, no. 5 (2023): 638–44, <https://doi.org/10.5860/crl.84.5.638>.

6. Coreen Getgen, "Cultural Humility in the LIS Profession," *The Journal of Academic Librarianship* 48, no. 4 (2022), <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.acalib.2022.102538>.

7. Monte-Angel Richardson, Stephanie Rosen, Marna M. Clowney-Robinson, and Danica San Juan, “Bringing Trauma-Informed Practices to Underserved Patrons at University Libraries,” in *Underserved Patrons in University Libraries* (Bloomsbury, 2021), 91–108.
8. Meredith Knoff and Maya Hobscheid, “Enacting Service Policies through Pedagogy to Create a More Inclusive Student Experience,” *Public Services Quarterly* 17, no. 1 (2021): 12–25, <https://doi.org/10.1080/15228959.2020.1856017>.
9. Patricia Hill Collins, *Black Feminist Thought: Knowledge, Consciousness, and the Politics of Empowerment* (Routledge, 2000).
10. Hurley, Kostecky, and Townsend, “Cultural Humility in Libraries,” 545.

Leading through Loneliness

Personal Reflections on Surviving Burnout

If you've spent any amount of time leading in an academic library, you already know: This work will stretch you, inspire you, break your heart, and—on the worst days—make you wonder why you ever signed up for it. And that is perfectly OK to say out loud.

Most leadership literature still treats exhaustion as a personal failing. But leadership itself can be emotionally draining.¹ When you layer on the realities of higher education today—shrinking budgets, workforce reductions, political tension, intensified scrutiny toward diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) efforts, relentless technological change, and sociopolitical polarization—library leaders are carrying burdens that would have been unthinkable a decade ago.

Across two decades in leadership roles at multiple institutions, I've learned to stay optimistic by finding silver linings wherever I could. Still, the challenges academic libraries face today feel heavier and more continuous than at any point in my career. Many library leaders—often responsible for teaching support, research infrastructure, digital systems, community engagement, and crisis management—are emotionally depleted, chronically stressed, and profoundly alone.

Despite this reality, leadership burnout is rarely addressed with the candor it deserves. Institutions invest heavily in wellness programs for students, staff, and faculty, yet the emotional labor of leadership—particularly in libraries—often goes unnoticed. As Brett Farmiloe's collection of narratives reveals, even seasoned executives find themselves overwhelmed, quietly unraveling under pressure.² Without attention to self-care, the impact reaches far beyond the office, affecting health, well-being, and relationships with loved ones.

This article is my honest reflection on leadership fatigue and resilience. It's also a letter to myself—a reminder of the strategies that have helped me survive moments of frustration, loneliness, and emotional exhaustion. I offer these thoughts for library managers and leaders who feel overwhelmed or isolated, but the coping strategies apply to anyone experiencing work fatigue.

The Emotional Weight of Library Leadership

Let's be real. Library leaders operate at the crossroads of fiscal limits, service expectations, and rapid technological change. On any given day, we face:

- Budget cuts that require canceling resources faculty consider “essential”
- Personnel conflicts that escalate into grievances or union actions

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- Political tensions that turn libraries into symbolic battlegrounds
- Pressure to “do more with less” when “less” becomes even less
- Rapidly evolving technology that requires upskilling while teams shrink
- Crises like COVID-19 that rewrite your entire job overnight

These cumulative pressures shape an environment where leaders feel pressured to appear endlessly calm, empathic, and resilient, even while privately struggling.³ I’ve lived through moments when I felt like I was holding the institution’s fears, grief, and uncertainty on my back while trying to keep the library functioning. And that feeling of responsibility? It doesn’t go away. It accumulates.

Leadership Self-Care: Surviving the Work without Losing Yourself

Self-care for leaders is rarely recognized as essential leadership work, but it should be. It is the work of protecting yourself from collapse—emotionally, mentally, physically, and spiritually. Burned-out leaders make poorer decisions, react defensively, and struggle to maintain inclusive, psychologically safe environments for their teams.⁴ Below are strategies, grounded in research and lived experience, that have helped me.

Boundaries Are Not Selfish—They’re Necessary

Leaders often feel obligated to absorb everyone’s worry: student anxiety, faculty frustration, team conflicts, institutional mandates. But leaders cannot serve others without protecting their own emotional capacity. Healthy boundaries include:

- Saying “no” when your plate is full
- Protecting time for thinking and reflection
- Not internalizing every complaint or crisis

This aligns with Tomas Chamorro-Premuzic’s recommendation that “leaders should bring their best self—not their whole self—to work,” preserving parts of life that replenish identity and joy.⁵

Normalize Asking for Help

Leadership mythology says leaders are supposed to remain calm, steady, and all-knowing. However, reality says something different: Leaders who try to carry everything alone eventually break down quietly and painfully. Asking for help—from human resources (HR), mentors, your provost, or trusted colleagues—is a sign of strength and strategic awareness, not weakness.

Prioritize Health without Guilt

Untreated leadership stress manifests physically—neck pain, headaches, chronic fatigue, sleep disruption, and irritability. I’ve learned the hard way that ignoring these signs only makes everything worse. Taking care of your health isn’t indulgent—it is leadership stewardship. You cannot sustain others if you are crumbling. Protective practices include:

- Regular medical check-ins
- Sustainable exercise routine
- Mindfulness practice such as walking, journaling, or meditation

- Intentional unplugging for restoration
- Creative hobbies that restore joy and identity

Just remember that your health is part of your leadership toolkit.

Recognize When a Crisis Is Not Yours Alone

Library leaders often absorb the impact of universitywide crises—enrollment declines, political upheaval, shifting federal policies, or moments of collective trauma. There are days when it becomes painfully clear that the institution is wrestling with forces far bigger than you, bigger than your library, and far beyond your control.

Yet leadership culture conditions us to respond as if *everything* is ours to fix. A budget shortfall appears, and we immediately brace ourselves to solve it. A campus political conflict erupts, and we instinctively try to soothe it. A personnel issue escalates, and we absorb the emotional and procedural weight. A new technology arrives, and we quietly accept the expectation to implement it flawlessly and instantly.

But some crises belong to the institution, not to you. When enrollments tank, when senior leadership shifts, when political actors influence campus climate, or when federal policy changes cause chaos, these are structural realities, not personal failures. Let go of the immediate leadership impulse and ask: Who truly owns this issue? Where should accountability sit? What role should I play—and what emotional load must I release?

Leaders burn out when they try to solve crises no single person could ever fix. You cannot hold an entire institution—or even an entire library—on your shoulders. And you are not meant to.

Leadership as Community Work: Build the Network That Will Save You

Leadership is lonely. And the most powerful antidote to leadership loneliness is a genuine professional network—not performative connections but relationships grounded in trust and mutual care.

Early in my career, I learned that survival does not come from leadership books or strategy frameworks. It comes from people. I remember conversations with colleagues facing their own storms: a budget cliff, a hostile grievance, political pressure, a campus crisis, or the quiet heartbreak of a team in conflict. In those moments, something softened. We could finally say, “This is hard” without fear of judgment.

Building a network means finding the people who pick up the phone when you’re unraveling, who remind you that you’re not imagining the chaos, who share their failures so that you feel less alone in yours, and who tell you the truth when you’re too exhausted to see clearly. These relationships don’t just support leaders, they sustain them. When leaders isolate themselves, burnout accelerates. When leaders build networks, burnout loosens its grip.

Leading with Realism, Compassion, and Hope

Leadership is not sustained by vision alone. It requires endurance, perspective, and the willingness to acknowledge limits. Academic library leaders are asked to navigate complexity, uncertainty, and competing demands while remaining steady and responsive, often at great emotional cost.

Sustainable leadership depends on knowing when to pause, when to seek support, and when to let go of what cannot be carried alone. Library leaders support essential academic, democratic, and community functions. They deserve the same compassion and care they extend to others. By attending to our well-being and surrounding ourselves with trusted colleagues, we not only survive leadership, we make it possible to continue. And perhaps most importantly, we remind ourselves that we are human too. //

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Lilly E. Linden

National Chemistry Week

An Outreach Opportunity in Academic Libraries

I started my library career as a college science librarian at an undergraduate-only small liberal arts college. The scope of the job was broad, and being part of a small library team meant that it was all hands on deck when it came to most projects. There wasn't as much time to devote exclusively to any out-of-the-box department-specific programming. I did, however, have the uncommon advantage of having been a part of the faculty body which definitely had an impact on the success of my general outreach efforts, an advantage that I knew was unlikely to carry over to future jobs. So when I moved from my first librarian position, I was heavily invested in outreach and wanted to hit the road running.

National Chemistry Week

As a liaison to a smaller subset of STEM disciplines in my new position, I decided to explore more discipline-specific opportunities for outreach across the different stakeholder groups involved. The American Chemical Society (ACS) National Chemistry Week (NCW) seemed like an opportunity to connect with members of the chemistry department in my new role at an R1.¹ The ACS Office of Science Outreach has set an annual theme and released promotional materials to support NCW annually during the third week of October since 1994.² The week, which also tends to overlap with Mole Day (commemorating Avogadro's number), is used globally as an opportunity to educate the general public on the myriad ways in which chemistry research is a part of everyday life. Most of these opportunities usually initiate within academic departments. With some quick research and asking around, I was able to determine that the chemistry department in question hadn't done prior NCW programming at the department level.

Laying the Groundwork

Still learning the lay of the land, I started with the incorrect assumption that the patrons (especially faculty and graduate students) in the department would be busy and wouldn't have time to engage with the creation of any programming. After setting up a schedule of relevant topics/resources (SciFinder - n, Reaxys, NIST WTT, a Book Arts Workshop on



Flyer from 2022 National Chemistry Week celebrations.

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natural dyes, CRC Handbook of Chemistry and Physics) for each day of NCW 2022, I reached out to the chair of the department. My plan included a daily online thirty-minute drop-in session, which would include a short overview followed by an open discussion about the tool or resource in question. For context, the theme in 2022 was “Fabulous Fibers: The Chemistry of Fabrics.”³ Coincidentally, the Book Arts Workshop in the library was offering a natural dye-making class during that week, which fit the theme beautifully. The chair of the department responded promptly and suggested reaching out to the entire department to gauge interest in participation.

Planning for the Event

With the chair’s approval in hand, I connected with the department administrator to make sure that they were looped into the conversation. We then reached out to the entire department, and enthusiastic replies came back very quickly. It was gratifying to connect with different stakeholder groups, including faculty, graduate students, and even postdocs who were interested in participating in some way during the week. In collaboration with the department administrator, I set up timelines and structures to organize events during different days and time slots of the week. We decided to create a Google website to keep track of the various activities and labs participating during the events to use for outreach.⁴ We also had some faculty members connect with local middle schools to arrange chemistry demonstrations in the schools during the week.

While neither the library nor the department had accounted for any material costs in the annual budget, the department was able to support some expenses, including the cost of liquid nitrogen, half and half, vanilla concentrate, and sugar used to make ice cream, which has since become a popular way to have community members stop by to interact with members from the department. In 2022, all the programming was held inside the chemistry department building and was distributed across three days during the third week of October.

Sustainability

Although the first iteration of the program helped us set up a workflow and got members of the department excited, it was clear that there wasn’t as much foot traffic inside the department as we had hoped for. We started the planning process for NCW 2023 in late summer. This time around, with student and faculty input, we settled on a single two-hour outdoor session in a popular student corridor on campus. The event was a success, with more than 200 students stopping by to interact with members from the department across the two-hour window. However, the event setup and takedown, access to electricity, clean up, and so on was time consuming for the core organizing team (grad students and department admin) and the librarian (me).

While the programming around these events had helped build good connections with different stakeholders across the department, it was clear that it was time for me to step back and to pass ownership of the event to the department administration and the broader chemistry community. The chair



Fabric dyeing station from NCW 2022.

and others in the department recognized that the event offered a chance for the Dartmouth community to engage with research being done in the chemistry department. It increased the visibility of the department locally and gave its graduate students an opportunity to develop their science communication skills, in addition to meeting requirements of their funders.⁵ The event planning also created the space to have conversations about departmental programming continuity and clear documentation of workflows, especially for the graduate students who were thinking about how to pass the baton on to their successors. These conversations allowed us to talk about the importance of metadata, institutional continuity, commenting out code and readme files, and so on. Finally these events also increased communication and collaboration across labs within the department, which was an additional win.

In 2024, a small group of chemistry graduate students, the department administrators, and some key faculty members organized the whole event successfully. This time the planning group chose to set up all the demonstrations right outside the main chemistry department building, which reduced the distance that equipment had to be transported. After following up with the organizers, it seems that the department was happy with the scale of the events of the 2024 iteration, and they plan to continue with this format going forward. The 2025 NCW, themed “The Hidden Life of Spices,” was successful as well.⁶ Figure 1 outlines ideas for anyone planning to start disciplinary events.

National Chemistry Week and Other Event Ideas to Explore	Potential Collaborators
1. SciFinder - n 2. Reaxys 3. NIST WTT 4. CRC Handbook of Chemistry and Physics 5. History of the American Chemical Society 6. History of the Royal Society of Chemistry 7. National Chemistry Week website 8. Lab safety groups on campus 9. Any other database used frequently by the patrons 10. Any other large disciplinary publisher/society/organization 11. Any proprietary tool that is used in the discipline 12. Institutional Review Board and/or Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee	1. Your supervisor—for support and to ask whether any library funding is available 2. Department chair—for funding 3. Department administrator 4. Faculty and researchers 5. Undergraduate or graduate student clubs 6. Communications folks (whether in the department, the library, or the university/college) 7. Folks who work in facilities, both at the department and at the campus level, depending on scale of the event 8. Events coordinators at local schools

Figure 1. Quick checklist for programming for National Chemistry Week celebrations or similar at your institution.

Conclusion

I anticipate that this annual event, now four years strong, will continue on, with members of the chemistry department leading the charge to organize the planning efforts in collaboration with the chemistry librarian. Being a part of the planning committee gave me the opportunity to have informal conversations unrelated to the events with the department chair, administrators, faculty, and graduate students of the department, creating pathways for uninhibited exchange in other aspects of library work. The patrons in the department know that I am an approachable resource available to support their research, collections access, and teaching efforts. I am also able to have transparent, data-driven communication with members of the department around collections decisions (both additions and deaccessions).

Although they can be intensive time commitments, I strongly recommend developing and cohosting discipline-specific programming as a part of outreach strategies, especially when starting a new liaison position or charge. I hope to continue exploring such discipline-specific

outreach events to create opportunities for deep relationship building as a liaison librarian. Other events that I will be exploring include a local bioblitz with the biological sciences department and a game night at the mathematics department. *~*

Notes

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Ambra Gagliardi, Dorothy Terry, and Jasmine Kirby

A World of Collaboration

Insights from the 2025 Area Studies Teaching & Collections Symposium

The 2025 Area Studies Teaching & Collections Symposium¹ was a two-day in-person event hosted collaboratively by the University of Utah (UU) and Brigham Young University (BYU), which share a US Department of Education Title VI National Resource Center (NRC) grant. The primary goal of the symposium was to bring together those who use area studies library resources (faculty, students, staff) and those who manage them (library professionals) for the purpose of exploring ways to develop these interdisciplinary collections. The result was a statewide lesson on partnership, stewardship, and the unique uses of distinct academic library collections.

This conference report describes the growing collaborative relationship between area studies departments and libraries on the two campuses. It further highlights how federal grant funding promotes the learning of world languages and cultures and the development of academic library collections that support such programs. Lessons learned from planning to implementation are shared, as well as ideas for moving forward during a time when federal funding for area studies programs and collections is changing.

About Title VI NRC Grants

NRC grants were established by the federal government shortly after World War II, when the global geopolitical climate prompted a need for experts trained in less commonly taught languages. Today, universities across the nation receive NRC grants under various geographical categories (e.g., Africa, East Asia/Pan Asia, Middle East). The grants support the teaching of world languages and sustain teaching and research about the areas, regions, and countries where these languages are used. For more than a decade, federally funded NRC grants have supported area studies centers and programs on UU and BYU campuses, with the most recent funding focusing on Asian and Latin American studies.

The partnership between UU and BYU is a strategic collaboration that enables academic programming and the sharing of diverse library collections to support students and faculty



2025 Area Studies Teaching & Collections Symposium planning members. From left to right: Robert Behra, Marie Paiva, Annelise Xiao, Timothy Davis, John D. Moore, Dorothy Terry, Jasmine Kirby, Ismaeil Hakimi, Ambra Gagliardi, and Matthew J. K. Hill.

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across campuses. UU has one of North America's largest Middle East collections—a world region encompassed in the Pan-Asian NRC grant category for which the two institutions are awarded. BYU has strong collections for Latin American resources and hosts one of the most robust Asian studies collections in the Intermountain West.

The partnership between UU and BYU has enhanced cross-campus support, though the distinct focus of each institution's collections has posed challenges to deeper integration. While cooperative collecting on paper allows library users at both universities to access physical materials regardless of affiliation, in practice, collaboration between the libraries has lacked intentionality. To address these silos, the UU library proposed hosting a symposium as a way to foster a more immersive and meaningful partnership between the libraries and their respective academic departments.

Although the majority of the joint NRC grant supports academic departments and programs, a small line item to fund the symposium was written into the most recent grant's budget (funding cycle 2022–25) by UU's International and Area Studies Department, which administers the grant for both campuses. Dedicated funding made it easier to get buy-in from library administrators to host the symposium as the two campus libraries were responsible for planning and implementing the event.

About the Symposium

The 2025 Area Studies Teaching & Collections Symposium was a first-of-its-kind event. The first day was held at UU and the second day at BYU, and each day consisted of unique content. The symposium was free to participants, with each institution's library covering the cost of catering. The team responsible for planning the symposium consisted of library professionals from each campus, mostly area studies librarians and collections management staff, and colleagues from UU area studies departments.

Scholars from within Utah and other states presented on a variety of ways they have used, discovered, or created collections related to Asian, Latin American, Middle Eastern, Indigenous, and Pasifika studies. The event attracted more than a hundred registered participants. Each day saw approximately sixty-five attendees from higher education institutions across Utah, many of whom were unique from one day to the next. Participants gained a deeper understanding of what makes area studies collections distinctive and how to integrate them into teaching, research, and learning on their campus. Some presentation topics included:

- The origins and continued management of the most extensive South Asian comics collection in US academia
- How the Tongan diaspora in Utah honors its heritage through library and museum collections
- How to foster collaboration between librarians and faculty to develop collections with indigenous peoples
- How historians use primary sources to engage with students
- How librarians and faculty members can partner to build graded reader collections with the aim of increasing second language proficiency

In addition to fostering connections within the area studies community in Utah, the symposium provided an opportunity to strengthen the relationships between the academic libraries at UU and BYU. The cooperative collecting efforts between UU and

BYU libraries, established at the start of their joint Title VI grants many years ago, have struggled to remain effective due to changes in library leadership, shifting priorities, and staff turnover—inevitable shifts that many partnerships experience.

Planning the symposium enabled library professionals from both UU and BYU to engage with each other more frequently and discuss how their collections are developed and managed. As planning spanned over a year, the committee became much more familiar with each library's structure and collection strengths. Ideas to promote cross-campus use of each library's collections were discussed and obstacles identified. Ultimately, the most impactful outcomes were the relationships among the committee members, which will enable continued collaboration beyond the symposium.

Lessons Learned

The symposium planning committee learned many things and will share key lessons to encourage similar partnerships. These insights come from three (all from UU) of the ten committee members who planned and hosted the symposium.

1. *Define a scope.*

Area studies is a truly interdisciplinary field of research that includes any study of language or culture outside of the United States or Canada. Within this vast scope, and given our institutions' NRC funding focus, our symposium planning committee decided to concentrate on Latin American and Asian studies. Keeping the focus on regions "outside the U.S." was challenging as many of us became interested in area studies due to either being part of or having family or friends in a diasporic community. Additionally, Latin America and Asia are both large, diverse parts of the world, making it challenging to define a clear scope. We drew guidance from parameters created by the UU and BYU departments' programs and colleagues. For example, we reached out to Russian and Middle East departments after consulting with our Asian studies departments as these regions fall under the large "Asian" umbrella.

2. *Reach out to potential collaborators early.*

The committee had several iterations, with people coming and going, before we settled on the ten individuals who worked on the idea over the past year to bring it to life. Additionally, it is important to recognize that various institutions, particularly those with private versus public status (UU is a public institution and BYU is private), have distinct processes and organizational cultures. Figuring out those processes and reaching a point of comfort where you can have honest conversations about them takes time.

3. *Ask people what they want.*

Doing so will give you a better sense of whether hosting an area studies symposium is a good idea in the first place and who might attend. Throughout our planning process, we had numerous opportunities to receive direct feedback from stakeholders. One crucial aspect of this was having stakeholders serve directly on the committee, which was especially true on the UU side, where we had strong involvement from the Latin American studies program. Another integral part of this was surveying faculty and librarians, via an online survey, about what they would like to see at an area studies symposium and using the results as we developed our programming.

4. *Define roles and structure for the committee.*

Establish a committee chair early, someone who is the defined project manager. Assign at least one person from each institution to regularly attend all meetings and answer questions on behalf of their institution. Prepare to rotate tasks, such as note-taking responsibilities for meetings, and encourage the chair to delegate tasks to avoid the risk of burnout.

5. *Keep good records.*

This is crucial for adapting to change and collaborating across institutions. Create clearly defined and delineated tasks so it is easy to track what is being done and who is doing it, as well as what is being left behind. A little data management planning goes a long way. Sticking to one platform (e.g., Google Drive or Box) and putting meeting notes in one place will make everything easier. Along with templates in Canva and Qualtrics surveys, one of the project's outputs is an email list of individuals engaged in area studies in Utah.

6. *Logistics are time consuming.*

Hosting an event in one place is hard. Having it in two places that are forty-five miles apart is harder. We were excited to host a two-day symposium at two different locations, but we were concerned about attendance given the substantial distance between the two campuses. We explored chartering a bus from Salt Lake City (UU's location) to Provo (BYU's location) and vice versa, but the cost was prohibitive. In the end, attendees needed to figure out their own transportation. Bringing in external speakers and arranging their travel requires significant administrative support. Therefore, looping in colleagues with experience coordinating travel logistics is essential. Moving money around will occur up to the event date, so stay flexible.

7. *Embrace new ideas.*

Creating an event from scratch can be a lot of work. Take advantage of the different personalities and passions of the people involved. You never know if you have a creative type or someone who thinks outside the box. Some of the highlights from the symposium included fifteen-minute chair massages for participants throughout the day, as well as unique swag and handouts. Just because this is academia doesn't mean it has to be boring.

8. *Get ready to work.*

Preparation the day before the event is extremely important. Last-minute challenges always arise, whether it's name tag organization or a speaker forgetting something in their hotel room. Having clearly delineated tasks for committee members to carry out on the day before and the day of the event will help limit chaos and alleviate stress. For example, we had a list of who was staffing the registration desk and bringing wireless microphones for fielding questions from the audience. However, there are always things you cannot account for, so be prepared.

Future Work

UU and BYU's joint Title VI NRC grant catalyzed this symposium, providing the primary source of funding and uniting the two institutions in a shared mission to support area studies programming. Currently, the US Department of Education is facing significant changes at the federal level, and the future of Title VI NRC grants remains uncertain.

We aim to maintain the momentum from the symposium while also acknowledging the evolving landscape.

The partnerships we have developed are now more critical than ever, given the shifting priorities of universities and national security. Collaboration among institutions will help better align our work with new priorities and encourage us to find the words to effectively describe and convince administrators, stakeholders, and politicians that area studies collections and programming remain worth funding.

UU and BYU libraries plan to host a similar, potentially virtual, event in the future. In doing so, we aim to find innovative ways to maximize the value of our diverse global collections while delivering excellent services. The experience of working together on this symposium has renewed our desires to create a library environment where our students can learn about the wider world and feel safe and represented among our stacks.

Acknowledgments

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Note

1. 2025 Area Studies Teaching & Collections Symposium, May 2025. <https://ias.utah.edu/news/2025-library-symposium.php>.

Deborah Lee

Technology Redux

A Librarian's AI Journey

The year was 1992. I had the opportunity to serve as a trainer at the liberal arts college where I worked as it first joined the Internet. A strange new world of “FTP” and “Telnet” was introduced, but even in the earliest days, it was obvious that this was going to touch every aspect of our work in the library. The response of one of my colleagues has always stayed with me. At a staff meeting I excitedly shared what this may mean, and in all seriousness, she turned to me and said, “Deborah, if we ignore it, maybe it will go away.” The Internet did not go away.

Now, decades later, I find myself in a strangely familiar place. In 2024, I assumed the role of director of research impact and artificial intelligence (AI) strategy for my university library. The names and tools are different, but the questions sound similar. What will happen to academic integrity? How can we trust what's online? Will this technology make us obsolete? And once again, I feel that same blend of excitement and responsibility that came with those early Internet years.

When the Internet was introduced on our campuses, libraries were among the first to make sense of it. We built web pages, digitized collections, subscribed to online databases, and taught users to evaluate what they found. The library became a bridge between technology and the academic community, where we offered not just access but also support for digital literacy.

Looking back, what strikes me is how central librarian values were to that transition. We focused on teaching users to think critically, preserving equitable access, and protecting privacy even as information went global. And that history matters. Because now, as generative AI begins to reshape higher education, I see the same need for thoughtful mediation. Once again, we're navigating a frontier filled with both promises and challenges, and once again, our communities are looking for guidance they can trust.

When ChatGPT became publicly available in November 2022, the campus conversation was immediate and intense. Faculty members asked if they could ban it. Students experimented (sometimes wisely, sometimes not). Administrators debated what, if any, policies would be needed. Libraries have historically sat at the crossroads of research, teaching, and technology. We already teach students to evaluate sources and think critically about the information they use. AI literacy is a natural extension of this traditional focus on information literacy.

Important conversations about AI are happening on college campuses across the globe. It is important that librarians have a seat at the table where those conversations

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are taking place. But we can't engage in these conversations if we are not conversant about this technology. That's why standards such as the recently released ACRL AI Competencies for Academic Library Workers is so important.¹ These standards can help frame the discussion of AI-related skills and services within academic libraries.

In 2024, the opportunity arose to propose a new position for our library. Although there were a lot of questions across campus about AI, there were few answers and even fewer resources available to help guide those questions. This opportunity came with risks. The job description was deliberately vague, as were the benchmarks for success. Having a supportive dean, one comfortable with experimentation and not afraid of failure, was vital.

There was, bluntly, an opportunity on our campus to become part of the AI story as it unfolded. Many on campus were intrigued by AI's potential but unsure how to begin. Others were worried about ethics and academic integrity. Librarians are uniquely equipped to bridge these concerns. We understand pedagogy, research workflows, and the complex relationship between people and information in a way that few other organizations or groups are equipped to provide.

Taking on this role has allowed me to draw on both the core values of librarianship and my prior experience with technological change. The introduction of an AI ethics workshop filled a vital role that was missing across campus. Building a key partnership with the campus Office of Research Compliance and Security helped expand the audience and incorporate this option into the Responsible Conduct of Research (RCR) activities on campus. This key partnership has helped ensure that we routinely have sixty or more faculty and students enroll in the online workshop each semester. It served as the springboard for more opportunities to discuss AI usage and ethics as part of a broader library instruction program. And it opened the door for the development of other instructional programming and resources. Recent instruction sessions included a session for an upper-level undergraduate engineering class on the use of AI in the writing of lab reports, as well as instruction sessions for several graduate seminars on the use of AI in scholarly publishing.

There have been other opportunities: a campus project aimed at building an AI "portal" with information for undergraduate students; a regional event that provided support for education faculty and a discussion of the role of AI in secondary education; and lectures for campus and community groups on the opportunities and challenges of AI. These and other opportunities became available because the library became a partner with campus efforts to support the ethical development and inclusion of AI within the Mississippi State University community.

AI may be the latest frontier, but for libraries, it's another chapter in a much longer story. A story that is built on curiosity and founded on an ethos of service. When I look back on my early Internet workshops and my current AI work, I see continuity, not disruption. Each era brings new tools, new fears, and new opportunities to reaffirm what librarianship stands for.

The goal isn't to become an "AI expert." Rather it is to remain what we've always been as information professionals: trusted guides in a changing information landscape. The challenge of this moment is not just to understand artificial intelligence but also to ensure that intelligence in all its human, ethical, and creative forms remains at the heart of our work.

That's why I took on this role. I get to help write the next chapter of how knowledge is discovered and shared. And I can't think of a better place for that work to take place than the library. //

Note

1. "AI Competencies for Academic Library Workers," American Library Association, October 6, 2025 (accessed October 20, 2025), <https://www.ala.org/acrl/standards/ai>.

Megan Oakleaf and Becky Croxton

AI as Assessment Partner

Practical Applications and Critical Cautions, Part 1

Making Assessment Matter is a five-part *C&RL News* series focused on maximizing the impact of academic library assessment. The first article introduces strategies for launching assessment projects designed for action and impact. The second explores how centering participants and stakeholders increases the likelihood that assessment results will be used. The third article identifies common pathways for translating assessment results into decisions and action, and the fourth focuses on communicating evidence in ways that resonate with key audiences and support meaningful change. The fifth and final article, published in two parts, examines how artificial intelligence (AI) can thoughtfully support assessment across the entire assessment cycle while keeping expert judgment, ethical practice, and human responsibility at the center. This first part addresses the guardrails necessary for responsible AI use in assessment and the institutional opportunities and risks practitioners should consider. Together, the series equips librarians to use assessment as a driver of learning, decision-making, and continuous improvement.

Introduction

Academic library assessment practitioners have much to consider, starting with the end in mind to ensure assessments lead to action; centering participants to generate meaningful, collaborative evidence; anticipating pathways that connect findings to decisions; and communicating results in ways that reach the right audiences and inspire change. Each of these practices requires knowledge, skill, and professional judgment. Into this established and evolving practice, AI has become impossible to ignore, and library practitioners engaged in assessment work are increasingly confronted with new questions: What **guardrails** are necessary to ensure that AI supports, rather than undermines, trustworthy, user-centered assessment work? In what ways does it make sense to incorporate AI into library assessment practices across the **assessment cycle**? And what **institutional opportunities and risks** should practitioners keep in mind as they incorporate AI into their assessment work? This first part of a two-part article—grounded in the principles, guidance, and competencies outlined in ALA’s draft *Guidance on the Use of Artificial Intelligence in Libraries*,¹ ACRL’s recently approved *AI Competencies for Academic Library Workers*,² and ACRL’s *Proficiencies for Assessment in Academic Libraries*³—addresses the first and third of these questions. The second question, focused on practical AI applications across the assessment cycle, is taken up in part two, appearing in the September 2026 issue of *C&RL News*.

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Essential Guardrails

Current popular and scholarly literature abound with cautions regarding the use of AI and articulation of ethical concerns; four guardrails in particular should be top of mind for practitioners engaged in AI-supported assessment.



Assessment Cycle (adapted from Maki).

1. **Safeguard assessment data.** Among the most obvious guardrails are those associated with **data security**. To ensure data remain protected and secure, one basic precaution is to limit AI use to only institutionally approved tools.⁴ Any inclusion of library data in “free” AI options risks sharing protected data outside the institution. Practitioners should also be cautious when considering connecting AI systems to live production databases, lest they introduce data security risks.⁵ In all cases, practitioners should be aware of institutional regulations and practices governing the use of licensed AI tools and confirm that data-protection safeguards are in place for information exchanged through institutionally approved platforms.⁶ Of course, practitioners must also carefully follow additional guidelines when conducting any IRB-approved research.
2. **Maintain critical judgment.** Because AI has significant limitations (e.g., it cannot think, feel, or know), a **skeptical mindset** can serve as a guardrail as well. AI outputs are often sycophantic, misleading, or wrong, and at the same time, they are often grammatically polished, confidently asserted, and superficially authoritative. Practitioners using AI for library assessment work should maintain a critical, evaluative, and discerning stance toward AI outputs rather than accepting them as genuinely authoritative. “[Institutional] systems are built on context, experience, and interpretation;”⁷ thus assessment practitioners must know their own data intimately in order to accurately evaluate AI results and resist the temptation to turn meaning making over to an AI tool.⁸ Ultimately, “data, analytics, and AI don’t make decisions, people do.”⁹ In the case of assessment, practitioners may use AI to more quickly accomplish tasks they already know how to do; if AI introduces misinterpretations, errors, or other concerning content, knowledgeable practitioners will recognize problems and can subsequently choose to course correct or discontinue AI usage for a particular task. Practitioners who experiment with allowing AI tools to assist with tasks they are less familiar with should identify colleagues who can serve as a human interlocutor, recognizing that AI-assisted assessment without human oversight is not responsible practice.
3. **Honor planning fidelity.** When engaging with AI, a practitioner can use **assessment planning fidelity** as a third important guardrail. AI outputs can beguile even the most sincere assessment practitioner through confident assertions, unsolicited tangents, and plausible-sounding but largely unfounded conclusions while simultaneously tending to

agree with users in ways that quietly reinforce confirmation bias, even when prompts explicitly request objectivity. Using an initial research question or user story as a touchstone can help librarians stay focused, resist tangential AI outputs that pull attention away from the original assessment purpose (rabbit holes), and avoid undirected data exploration in search of something interesting to say (data fishing).¹⁰

4. **Document and disclose AI use.** Because AI capabilities and usage are advancing quickly, it's especially necessary to use **transparency** as a guardrail as well. As standards evolve to expand or limit AI use in assessment, practitioners are obligated to be clear about how their work is augmented by AI usage. Failing to document and disclose use of AI undermines any assessment undertaken. If participants, partners, and target audiences of assessment feel uncertain of whether, how, or to what extent AI was used to support an assessment endeavor, they are likely to (rightfully) question the integrity of the work,¹¹ undermining the trust they have in the process, the results, and the assessment team itself. As Carol Damm and Lance Eaton note, "Documenting without disclosing risks opacity, and disclosing without documenting risks unverifiability."¹² Documentation should include archiving AI interactions, preserving version histories, recording metadata, and ensuring secure storage.¹³ EDUCAUSE's *Framework for Transparent GenAI Use in Higher Education* suggests a four-part framework for disclosing AI use.¹⁴ Practices for AI transparency will continue to evolve, but the expectation that AI use in assessment be thoroughly documented and clearly disclosed so results can be questioned, overridden, or reproduced will remain.¹⁵

For further exploration of necessary AI-related guardrails, please see ALA's draft Guidance on the Use of Artificial Intelligence in Academic Libraries.¹⁶

These guardrails are essential for responsible, trustworthy AI-supported assessment practice. They shape how assessment work is perceived, valued, and used, both within the library and across the institution. Library assessment practitioners must also consider how their AI use positions the library within broader institutional efforts that are already being augmented by AI-informed decision-making. The implications extend beyond individual projects to questions of institutional relevance and participation, which are explored in the following section.

Institutional Opportunities and Risks

Academic libraries are inextricably linked to their overarching institutions, so any consideration of AI-supported library assessment must be considered within both institutional and library contexts. Certainly, academic library assessment centers many of the same foci and values that higher education assessment prioritizes, including student learning, success, and experience; teaching excellence encompassing curricula, pedagogy, and

What might this look like in practice? A librarian seeking to process focus group transcripts to identify trends in discussion should not rely on AI for thematic analysis without first working through their own interpretative framework. Although the AI should be able to identify patterns in the transcripts, it should not be trusted to unilaterally ascribe meaning or identify which anomalies or outliers are significant. AI tools cannot know everything a librarian may know about local context, stakeholder groups, individual perspectives, and voices that are often marginalized or omitted. Even with skilled prompting, AI may miss moments of insight that a human instinctively recognizes as meaningful. And if AI were to someday achieve this level of expertise, librarians should still not rely on AI agents to work independently, if for no other reason than doing so would likely limit the depth of understanding needed to clearly articulate the work and its implications to colleagues, stakeholders, and impacted groups and individuals.

learning assessment; and research productivity and funding. This emphasis is reinforced in the recently revised and approved (April 2026) *ACRL Standards for Libraries in Higher Education*, which highlight the importance of aligning outcomes, building evidence of impact, and communicating the library's role in student learning and institutional success.¹⁷ Library assessment intersects other areas of institutional interest as well, including admissions and affordability, rankings and prestige, post-graduation outcomes, global and community impacts, and so on. Increasingly, higher education institutions are leveraging AI to analyze and assess qualitative and quantitative data in all these areas. The growing use of AI at the campus level enables institutional leaders to **track fast-paced changes** at their institutions specifically and in higher education more generally; **ask and answer more questions; identify areas of excellence or vulnerability;** and **make decisions and take action more quickly.** The scale and pace of AI use for these purposes at an institutional level is rapidly transforming how thinking and decision-making occur in the academy.

In the context of higher education AI-supported assessment, librarians, assessment practitioners, and library leaders have new opportunities to engage in institutional conversations, though they risk being left out if they choose not to participate. Assessment practitioners who are attuned to AI-informed campus conversations and initiatives are better situated to contribute to institutionally important discussions and problem-solving efforts. Those who go a step further by engaging in these conversations—either by contributing library data to institutional analyses to create more complete pictures of student and faculty experiences or by conducting AI-supported library assessments that complement institution-level analyses—can position the library as essential to institutional success.

Beyond institutional positioning, those who engage with AI-informed approaches have an opportunity to shape what responsible, equity-conscious assessment looks like in higher education. Assessment practitioners have a professional commitment to user-centered inquiry, a skepticism toward data that privileges “average” and flattens complexity, and a habit of asking whose perspectives are represented and whose are missing. Indeed, library assessment practitioners are among the best-prepared professionals to **critically evaluate AI-informed assessments, advocate for their thoughtful use, and model expert AI literacy skills** for their institutional colleagues. At this moment, a window of opportunity exists for libraries to shape campus use of AI-informed analyses. In the years to come, librarians will be needed to continue this work as technologies proliferate. Librarians who seek to engage with their institutions might begin by identifying the questions their institutional research office, provost's office, or similar units are using AI-supported analysis to investigate and determine whether and/or how library data might augment the work, contribute to more complete findings, and lead to enhanced library-campus partnerships. At an institutional level, libraries may also share their data and assessment expertise as campus AI literacy, governance, and compliance evolve.

Conversely, libraries that opt not to contribute library data to institutional AI analyses or use AI in their own library-controlled assessment endeavors risk being **omitted from institutional assessment, decision-making, and action-taking** in areas central to library missions and institutional success. Over time, this exclusion may **marginalize the library and perceptions of its relevance** in areas that have long been core library contributions. Institutions that do not include library data in their campuswide analyses risk having a **skewed or incomplete picture** of areas of institutional importance.

Libraries that choose to contribute data to institutional AI-supported analyses can benefit from **productive partnerships with library vendors**. Vendors often possess substantial data about engagement with resources and services, which can be significant for building a **complete picture of student and faculty experiences**. Libraries are best positioned to contribute meaningfully to institutional analyses when vendors share relevant data in **accessible formats** and support integration with institutional systems using open **interoperability standards**. In turn, libraries can advise their vendor partners on **deidentification practices** that align with **library and institutional privacy policies** and inform other AI-related decisions affecting vendor-supplied library resources and services, including tailoring vendor contributions to reflect institution-specific contexts and governance expectations.¹⁸ Vendors who collaborate with the library in these endeavors can be genuine partners in better understanding and supporting their libraries and the institutions of which they are a part.

Conclusion

Together, the guardrails and institutional considerations outlined here provide a foundation for AI-supported assessment that is both responsible and strategically positioned. Practitioners who approach AI with data security, critical judgment, planning fidelity, and transparency in mind are better prepared to engage with it as thinking partners that augment rather than displace the professional judgment, contextual knowledge, and ethical grounding that assessment requires. Libraries that engage with these institutional opportunities from a foundation of responsible practice are better positioned to contribute to campus analyses, shape emerging AI governance conversations, and resist the risk of being sidelined from decisions central to library missions. Part two of this article, appearing in the September 2026 issue of *C&RL News*, builds on this foundation by walking through practical AI applications at each phase of the assessment cycle. //

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BRIN Library in the Age of AI and Open Science

Institutional Strategies, Librarian Skills, and Digital Infrastructure

The National Research and Innovation Agency (BRIN) is Indonesia's national research institution that must adapt its library role to the current era of artificial intelligence (AI) and open science. The BRIN library has successfully developed an institutional repository, though there is still considerable room for improvement. In the future, with this repository, the library hopes to serve as a research partner for BRIN researchers, data managers, and a hub for digital scholarships.

This shift reflects a broader trend in academic and research libraries worldwide. The rapid development of AI technology and the global movement toward open, accessible, and collaborative science are challenging libraries to evolve beyond their traditional book storage functions. For libraries in developing countries, there is an urgent need to adapt swiftly and bridge gaps in infrastructure, capacity, and policy while ensuring that local researchers remain connected to the international scientific community.¹ The experience of the BRIN library shows a case of how an institution navigates this complex transformation.

Institutional Strategies for a New Era

The BRIN library's transformation covers a rethinking of its institutional mission. The library has aligned itself with Indonesia's national research ecosystem and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). This alignment is realized through concrete strategies, such as preserving research data, expanding collaborative networks, and ensuring equitable access to information. Alignment with the SDGs is a fundamental step in library transformation.²

Indonesia's research environment has undergone significant changes in the past decade. The establishment of BRIN in 2019 consolidated multiple research institutions under one umbrella, creating new opportunities and challenges. For the BRIN library, this reorganization required a clear vision: How could the library support national research priorities while also responding to global shifts in science and technology?

To answer this, the library embraced a digital-first approach. Initiatives such as building comprehensive digital collections, acquiring electronic resources, and experimenting with AI tools were prioritized. Importantly, the library adopted the research life cycle framework, recognizing that support for researchers must span the entire process—from idea generation and data collection to publication and long-term preservation.

By positioning itself as a digital research library, BRIN is also contributing to Indonesia's rising profile in the Global Innovation Index. While rankings alone do not capture the full

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picture, they indicate that the library's efforts are part of a broader national push toward innovation-driven development.

Another critical institutional strategy has been advocacy. BRIN library actively communicates its value to policymakers and funders, emphasizing its role in fostering open access, digital inclusion, and data-driven research. Such advocacy is essential in resource-constrained environments, where libraries must compete for attention and investment alongside other priorities.³

Building Librarian Skills

Technology alone cannot transform a library—people remain at the center of change. Recognizing this, BRIN library has invested heavily in developing the skills and competencies of its librarians.

The rapid rise of AI tools has generated both excitement and anxiety among library professionals worldwide. At BRIN, librarians are being trained to use tools such as ChatGPT, Scispace, Grammarly, iThenticate, and Catchii. These tools help them assist researchers in managing data, checking originality, refining academic writing, and conducting literature reviews.

But skill development goes beyond mastering software. BRIN librarians are encouraged to participate in workshops, webinars, and collaborative projects that enhance their understanding of research methodologies, bibliometrics, and knowledge management. By fostering peer-to-peer learning and knowledge sharing, the library is building a culture of continuous professional growth. Importantly, BRIN emphasizes that librarians are not passive service providers. Instead, they are seen as strategic partners in research. By collaborating directly with scientists, librarians contribute to shaping research agendas, improving publication quality, and ensuring compliance with open science mandates. This approach reframes librarians as agents of change. Rather than fearing displacement by technology, they are empowered to harness it in ways that expand their professional roles and strengthen the research ecosystem.

Digital Infrastructure for Research

Infrastructural readiness is another cornerstone of BRIN library's transformation. The library has prioritized investments that make services more accessible, secure, and impactful. One notable innovation is the introduction of twenty-four-hour online services. Researchers can now access collections, consult with librarians, and use digital tools at any time. This flexibility is particularly valuable in a country as geographically diverse as Indonesia, where researchers may be spread across multiple islands and time zones.

The library has also integrated AI-driven platforms to improve research productivity and quality. Subscriptions to tools like ChatGPT and iThenticate provide practical support for writing, originality checking, and data analysis. Tableau-based data visualization helps researchers interpret complex datasets and communicate findings more effectively.

Security is another priority. The BRIN library has strengthened its digital infrastructure by adopting secure repository systems and exploring the development of security operations centers. Such measures ensure that sensitive research data is preserved responsibly and remain accessible for future use.

Looking ahead, the library plans to implement Copilot applications for document management and expand training in systematic literature reviews and bibliometrics. These initiatives

demonstrate a commitment to staying ahead of technological trends while addressing the specific needs of BRIN's research community.

Moving toward Digital Scholarship

Among the BRIN library's most challenging projects is its digital scholarship (DS) program, currently in development. *Digital scholarship* refers to the integration of digital tools, methodologies, and platforms into research and scholarly communication.⁴ For BRIN, DS represents both a challenge and an opportunity: how to create services that not only support research but also actively shape it. The program is closely tied to the research life cycle concept. By embedding library services into every stage of research—from data planning and collection to dissemination and preservation—the library seeks to become an indispensable partner in scholarly work.

A key component of this initiative is the National Scientific Repository (RIN). Managed by BRIN, RIN serves as a secure platform for storing and sharing research data. Researchers are encouraged to deposit datasets, particularly those from government-funded projects.⁵ Over time, RIN could evolve into a national hub for open data, supporting transparency, reproducibility, and collaboration.

The digital scholarship program also reflects a broader cultural shift. Traditionally, libraries were viewed as service providers operating at the margins of research. Today, BRIN is reimagining its library as an active participant in knowledge production, one that contributes to shaping scholarly norms and practices in the digital age.

Challenges Ahead

Despite these advances, BRIN library faces significant challenges. One major issue is the need for institutional recognition. Although the digital scholarship program is promising, it has not yet been fully integrated into BRIN's official vision and mission. Without this recognition, it may be difficult to secure long-term funding, staffing, and infrastructure support.

Another challenge is sustainability. Implementing new technologies and training programs requires continuous investment. In developing countries, budgetary constraints can threaten the continuity of innovative initiatives. For BRIN library, maintaining momentum will depend on strong advocacy and strategic partnerships.

Finally, there is the challenge of cultural adaptation. Encouraging researchers to share data, adopt open science practices, and embrace AI tools requires more than infrastructure—it requires building trust, changing habits, and fostering a culture of openness. This cultural dimension may prove to be the most difficult yet most rewarding aspect of the transformation.

Lessons for Librarians Worldwide

While BRIN library's context is unique, its experience offers valuable lessons for librarians elsewhere. Three insights stand out:

1. Integration is key.

Libraries cannot afford to treat AI, open science, or DS as separate initiatives. They must be integrated into institutional strategies, daily practices, and long-term visions.

2. People matter as much as technology.
Investment in digital infrastructure must be matched by investment in human capacity. Librarians who are confident, skilled, and innovative can turn technology into meaningful services.
3. Advocacy ensures sustainability.
In resource-limited environments, demonstrating the value of libraries to policymakers and funders is critical. Data on library impacts, compelling narratives, and evidence of contributions to national goals can secure the necessary support.

Conclusion

BRIN library's journey illustrates both the possibilities and complexities of reimagining a research library in the age of AI and open science. Through institutional strategies, capacity building, and technological innovation, the library has positioned itself as a forward-looking partner in Indonesia's research ecosystem.

Ensuring sustainability, embedding digital scholarship into institutional frameworks, and fostering a culture of openness will be ongoing challenges. For librarians worldwide, BRIN's experience serves as a reminder that libraries, regardless of context, must be adaptable, innovative, and proactive to remain relevant in a rapidly changing scholarly landscape. By embracing both the opportunities and the challenges of the digital age, BRIN library is not only supporting national research priorities but also contributing to the global conversation on the future of libraries. //

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Sarah Drerup

Framing Your Approach to AI Instruction

Navigating Competing Interests and Shared Goals in Academic Support

Academic institutions are racing to stay relevant in the development of artificial intelligence (AI) and other emerging technologies. Librarians, in particular, are being asked to quickly upskill in order to lead workshops, offer one-shot instruction, or develop an online module.¹ Meanwhile, institutions vary widely in their stages of AI adoption, creating uneven expectations and support structures. All of these factors can leave librarians feeling unsure of where to start with AI instruction or their role in AI adoption. This challenge is compounded by the complex web of institutional support units.

Universities and colleges typically have multiple entities that support faculty, students, and researchers. They may be libraries, writing centers, research institutions, or centers for teaching and learning. When new administrative requirements emerge that affect teaching and research, it's not always clear who will take the lead in providing training and support. The rapid development of AI technology has prompted nearly every service-oriented department to reconsider its role and what type and level of support they will provide. As a librarian, I have been forced to ask: How am I developing AI instruction within an already crowded support landscape?

Framing AI Instruction through the Research Life Cycle

This year a faculty member asked me to provide instruction on AI, and I spent a long time considering how best to approach such a broad and rapidly evolving topic. As a STEM liaison librarian, I decided to frame my presentation around the research life cycle. It's a familiar structure and reflects how I support researchers in their work. Using AI as the lens, I aimed to reinforce the value of librarian expertise throughout each phase of the research process.

AI tools are often developed to address specific challenges, whether it's through machine learning, deep learning, or generative AI. The research life cycle is full of its own complexities, and many researchers are already turning to AI to help navigate them. I ultimately shaped my presentation around a guiding question: In what ways might AI tools contribute to or hinder the development of essential research skills? This question helped ground the conversation in both practical application and critical reflection.

The research life cycle begins with planning as researchers define a topic, the scope, and research goals. Researchers then move into searching, finding, and evaluating sources to gather credible and relevant information. Finally, they synthesize their findings into coherent insights and share their work through publications, presentations, or other forms

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of dissemination. Talking through the stages of the research life cycle afforded me the opportunity to discuss multiple AI tools and highlight support I currently provide to faculty, students, and researchers.

Breakdown of Instruction

In the planning phase, the challenge is clear: Defining a focused research question can be difficult, especially when the topic is broad or unfamiliar. This is where I introduced generative AI tools, particularly large language models (LLMs), to support brainstorming and question refinement. These tools help researchers analyze the structure and intent of their questions, identify key concepts and relationships, and clarify scope and purpose. While more advanced researchers may lean on disciplinary expertise, AI tools can be especially valuable for those exploring new or complex topics.

During the searching, finding, and evaluating phases, the challenge lies in locating credible sources, navigating paywalls, and assessing the reliability and relevance of information in a dynamic information ecosystem. In my instruction, I selected an AI research tool already familiar to our campus community and presented a balanced view of its capabilities. I emphasized its strengths in citation analysis and its ability to identify supporting and contrasting sources while also noting that its coverage depends on the repositories and databases it can access.

In the synthesizing and disseminating phase, the challenge is integrating diverse findings into a coherent narrative and choosing the right platform or format for sharing results, tasks that can be complex and time consuming. I highlighted how traditional tools, like citation managers, are evolving with AI integration and introduced newer technologies such as retrieval-augmented generation (RAG) tools, which support concept mapping and overview generation within a closed corpus. I also demonstrated how AI is being used in journal matching, helping researchers identify appropriate publication venues.

Through instruction, librarians can help researchers understand not just how to use these tools but also how to maintain academic integrity, transparency, and ethical awareness in the process. I wound down my presentation by shifting focus to the ethical considerations surrounding AI, an area that is both expansive and essential. I briefly addressed key concerns such as academic integrity, privacy and security, and environmental impacts. I support researchers who do work in environmental resources and sustainability, and if I don't highlight those concerns in my presentation, it feels like a disservice. I ended the presentation by providing more clarity into the roles of other organizations that provide AI research and instruction support. I pointed attendees to other campus resources and contacts who specialize in areas like course policy development, data analysis, and discipline-specific AI applications.

Call to Reflection

As you consider your own approach to AI instruction, I encourage you to reflect on your role within your library and institution. What kinds of support do you already provide to researchers? What is your subject matter expertise? Use that foundation to shape AI instruction that feels authentic to your role. For example, data librarians and OER specialists can offer highly tailored instruction by connecting AI tools to their existing areas of proficiency. By grounding our instruction in what we already do well, we can provide meaningful, relevant support in a rapidly changing landscape.

The way I see it, if we don't define our roles in the context of AI support and instruction, the work can quickly become overwhelming and may even duplicate efforts already underway in other campus units. At the same time, this moment presents librarians with a valuable opportunity for cross-campus collaboration to support shared goals. ʘʘ

Note

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The Bibliography of Library History, 1990–Present is a publication of Penn State Libraries Open Publishing, the open-access imprint of Penn State University Libraries. This database of library history resources is based on bibliographies created by Ed Goedeken, emeritus, Iowa State University, and David Lincove, emeritus, The Ohio State University, and work completed by a number of Pennsylvania State University employees, including Eric Novotny, database project editor, and Ashoo Kumar, who supervised data entry. Complete access to the works on which this resource is based is available through ALA’s Library History Round Table and the Duke University Press Scholarly Publishing Collective websites. This resource can also be accessed through the Penn State Open Publishing website, its parent site.¹

The actual bibliography itself contains 7,464 items at the time this review was written, comprised of books, articles, and theses related to libraries over the past thirty-five years. The site appears to be relatively easy to navigate, and users can access resources easily after verification through CAPTCHA. Once verified, users are taken to a standard search screen, similar to a library catalog, where they can begin searching for library history resources from 2025, moving backward in time. To assist users in using the bibliography, they may consult a “How to Search” section with tips for searching the webpage, a comments and suggestions section, and the option to download an Excel file containing all currently available resources in the bibliography.

This resource will be most useful to LIS students, early career LIS professionals, and students and professionals in related fields such as history, English, and other similar fields of study. Outside these fields, it is not anticipated that many will find this resource particularly useful. —Aaron Khan, *Tennessee State University*, aaronkhan41@gmail.com

Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History. *Access:* <https://www.gilderlehrman.org/>. Founded in 1994 by philanthropists Richard Gilder and Lewis Lehrman, the Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History is an independent nonprofit organization that aims “to promote the knowledge and understanding of American history through educational programs and resources.” Despite the politically conservative views of its founders, the institute has a solidly nonpartisan, mainstream approach to history. The institute’s website features its many programs as well as hosts a robust digital collection of primary sources.

The institute’s American history education programs reach 14 million K–12 students and 97,000 educators at 36,000 schools globally, including 30% of all US schools. It offers lesson plans, classroom resources, and professional development for K–12 teachers; study guides and enrichment for K–12 students; and self-paced courses (seventy of them) and lectures for all audiences, including the general public. Courses are taught by leading academics and feature video lectures, readings, and quizzes, with teachers receiving up to fifteen professional development contact hours per course. The institute created a Hamilton Education Program in partnership with *Hamilton* creator Lin-Manuel Miranda. Ninety interactive exhibits cover

topics from “Black Lives in the Founding Era” to “Spanish Influence on American History.” These resources are free or available at a reasonable cost to individual users. The institute also awards numerous prizes and scholarships and publishes a free magazine, *History Now*.

The institute owns the Gilder Lehrman Collection, providing access to 87,000 digitized letters, diaries, maps, pamphlets, printed books, newspapers, photographs, and ephemera that cover 500 years of American history. To view or download images of these primary sources, individual users must subscribe to the collection for a month (\$25) or a year (\$100). However, anyone can search the collection, view the object-level metadata and thumbnails, and consult the research guides for free. Users benefit from a powerful advanced search and extensive metadata with subject tagging and content summaries. However, the institute’s description of this small but informative collection as “one of the great archives in American history” stretches a point.

The Gilder Lehrman Institute facilitates a deeper understanding of American history. Its website connects students, teachers, and members of the public with enriching learning opportunities, teaching aids, historical documents, and other resources. Although optimal for K–12 constituencies, lower-division undergraduates may benefit too. The curricular applications are endless. —*Michael Rodriguez, Lyrasis, topshelvr@gmail.com* ❧

Note

1. The parent website for the resource, “Bibliography of Library History, 1990–Present,” and through which one can gain access to the resource, can be accessed at <https://open-publishing.psu.edu/bibliographies>. The article “The LHRT Bibliographies: The First Thirty Years” can be accessed on the following website: <https://scholarlypublishingcollective.org/psup/libraries/article-abstract/4/1/81/198785/The-LHRT-Bibliographies-The-First-Thirty-Years?redirectedFrom=fulltext>. The work *American Library History: A Comprehensive Guide to the Literature* can be accessed on the following website: <https://www.ala.org/lhrt/popular-resources/amerlibhis>.



Tricia Edwards has been named director of Smithsonian Libraries and Archives, effective Monday, April 20. Edwards served as interim director since September 2025. Prior to joining Smithsonian Libraries and Archives, Edwards served as deputy director of the Smithsonian Institution Traveling Exhibition Service and Smithsonian Affiliations (SITES | SA), where she provided executive leadership for strategic planning, development, and operations. From June 2024 to June 2025, she also served as interim director of SITES | SA. Earlier roles included deputy director for Smithsonian Affiliations and interim deputy director for exhibits, finance, and administration at SITES. Earlier in her Smithsonian career, Edwards spent twelve years as head of education at the Lemelson Center for the Study of Invention and Innovation at the National Museum of American History. During that time, she created Spark!Lab, a pioneering hands-on invention space for children that now operates in museums across the United States and internationally and launched an award-winning consumer product line under the Spark!Lab brand.



Kristen Merryman has been appointed head of the North Carolina Digital Heritage Center (NCDHC) at the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill University Library. As head of the NCDHC, Merryman will lead the center's work with historical and cultural organizations across the state to develop and implement digitization projects. She will guide the center's strategy based on partner feedback, developments in digital librarianship, and institutional trends in North Carolina. Merryman will also work to build and expand relationships with stakeholders, peer organizations, and prospective partners. Merryman has served as interim head of the NCDHC since November 2025. She has worked with the center since 2016, first as digital projects librarian and then as digital projects and outreach manager. Prior to working at the NCDHC, Merryman held roles as a librarian at North Carolina State University Libraries and the Durham County Library.

Rachel Wishkoski has been appointed music librarian and head, arts and humanities, at the University of Washington Libraries.

Katherine Wyly is now business research and instruction librarian at the University of Washinton Bothell and Cascadia Campus Library.

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