



# Stronger Together: Celebrating 60 Years of Partnership

**T**he Association of Southeastern Research Libraries was founded in 1956 as an informal networking group of library directors. The first meeting was held in February 1956 at the then-new Fontainebleau Hotel in Miami Beach. Today ASERL is the largest regional research library consortium in the US, with partnerships around the globe. We mark our 60th year of operation with important new programs and milestones.

In early 2016, ASERL formed a “New Metrics for Research Libraries” pilot project to explore ways research libraries can better use the myriad data points they collect to convey compelling stories about the impact of their programming and services to audiences outside of libraries. This concept proved hugely attractive to our membership – more than half our member libraries volunteered to participate. Beth Martin from UNC Charlotte’s Atkins Library is serving as the Visiting Program Officer to lead this effort. An initial prototype will be ready for public review and comment by Summer 2017.

ASERL launched a new assessment process for monograph collections within selected ASERL libraries in Spring 2016, using the Gold Rush tool developed by the Colorado Alliance of Research Libraries. This is envisioned as a first step toward devising a shared monograph

process for our membership. Our Collaborative Federal Depository Program and Scholars Trust print journal archiving programs also continued their growth, remaining in their roles as important leaders in the field.

ASERL is also partnering with the WEST Program, the Big Ten Academic Alliance (formerly CIC) Shared Print Retention program, the Florida Academic Repository (FLARE), and the Washington Research Library Consortium (WRLC) to form the “Thinking Bigger” program. This ad-hoc group seeks to identify ways our large-scale shared print journal archiving programs can better collaborate to reduce unnecessary redundancy and increase the coverage of print journal retention efforts.

ASERL once again joined forces with WRLC to pilot test the use of Occam’s Reader software, an innovative tool for sharing e-book content among library patrons. The ASERL-WRLC cohort doubles the number of libraries using Occam’s Reader. In addition to testing the functionality of the software itself, we seek to bring a new critical mass to discussions with e-book providers regarding content sharing permissions.

Our professional development activities continued to grow into new topical areas and serve more users. In 2015-2016, ASERL hosted 30 professional webinars serving more than 2,400 librarians and staff in our ‘live’ sessions, with

recordings being viewed more than 2,500 times by persons from around the globe. Topical areas included a continuation of our “Beyond Our Stacks” series of future-think conversations, multiple sessions around emerging scholarly communications issues, and a series of “how to” webinars to share experiences with website planning and development. ASERL’s reputation for fast, easy, and open access to our session recordings and the speakers’ presentation materials continue to receive wide acclaim and broad usage within the profession.

ASERL’s organizational development continued to mature as well, ensuring it remains a strong and viable consortium that is well-positioned to serve its membership for the foreseeable future. ASERL members revised the Association’s bylaws to better reflect the importance of programmatic participation by our existing members, and to re-calculate how the financial threshold for membership is determined. We secured new agreements from multiple partners to ensure ASERL’s back-office operational needs are well served, and we drafted long-term budget projections to aid in program planning and expectation-setting within our membership. As of July 1, 2016, ASERL transitioned from being hosted by Duke University Libraries to an affiliate agreement with Emory University. ASERL’s office relocated to Emory’s Robert W. Woodruff Library at the same time.

# RESOURCE SHARING & SHARED PRINT STEWARDSHIP

*Thinking Bigger to Cooperatively Manage Legacy Print Collections*

## Collaborative Federal Depository Program

- ASERL has signed MOUs for 39 Centers of Excellence libraries in the region, a small increase since 2015. Of these COEs, 28 are Selective Depositories, and seven COEs are not ASERL members.
- A Centers of Excellence agreement was completed for the U.S. Office of the Vice President, bringing the count of cabinet-level agencies covered by COE agreements to six;
- Four additional agencies were chosen for COE collections FY16. COE agreements now cover 218 SuDoc classifications. During the last year, a number of SuDoc classifications within the House and Senate Hearings were consolidated, so while the number of classifications decreased during this period, the depth of coverage increased.
- Publications from 13 federal agencies are archived by a second Center of Excellence, and an agreement for a 14th collection is currently in process.

## ASERL Documents Disposition Database

In 2015-16, nearly 225,000 documents were offered for adoption by FDLP libraries in the Southeast Region.

- Of these, 11,878 documents were claimed by another depository to build their FDLP collection.
- Of these, 4,657 documents were within the scope of the library's Center of Excellence collection.

## Scholars Trust Print Journal Archive

- A new governance structure was implemented in February 2016 to foster growth of the partnership and to better support efficient and effective operations.
- Twenty-nine ASERL libraries retain content as part of Scholars Trust.

Together with our WRLC and FLARE partners, the archive continues to grow:

- The archive contains 25,777 holdings records, of which 14,713 (75%) are unique titles within the archive.
- Eleven libraries – including the National Agriculture Library – have pledged to retain 1039 Agriculture journals, creating the first subject-based collection of “core” titles in Scholars Trust. Architecture has been identified as the second subject-based collection with a title list of approximately 100 titles.
- The JRNL database is being used by ASERL, WRLC, FLARE, TRLN and WEST to manage print journal archive data. A recent enhancement will allow the addition of approximately 472 retained titles that had previously been precluded due to data requirements.
- Discussions continue with WEST, the Big 10 Academic Alliance (formerly CIC), WRLC, and FLARE on the “Thinking Bigger” project, exploring strategies to coordinate print journal archiving efforts among these four major retention programs.

## Resource Sharing

- The 53 ASERL & WRLC Libraries that participate in our baseline Reciprocal ILL Agreement shared more than 185,000 items during the 2105-16 program year via OCLC resource sharing. The represents a modest decrease over 2014-15;
- The 25 libraries that participate in the KUDZU enhanced resource sharing group shared 88,000 items last year; the 15 libraries using the ASERL Pod in the RAPID-ILL system shared more than 10,000 electronic items during the same time period.
- ASERL also implemented a new tracking portal for items shipped via the Lanter Delivery Systems courier network.



## ASERL IN “SHARED STEWARDSHIP: AN ALCTS MONOGRAPH”

The workings of ASERL’s Collaborative Federal Depository Program (CFDP) are described in a chapter of a new scholarly monograph published in February 2016 by the Association for Library Collections and Technical Services (ALCTS). ASERL’s Cheryle Cole-Bennett co-authored the chapter with partners from the University of Kentucky Libraries, one of the initial pilot sites for the CFDP. The authors describe the opportunities and benefits of serving as an ASERL Center of Excellence — cooperatively cataloging, storing, preserving, and digitizing a collection of federal government publications.

# OUTREACH & COMMUNICATION

ASERL's website continues to serve a surprising number of users from around the world. During 2015-16, our website saw more than 14,500 sessions. Unsurprisingly, much of our web traffic comes from commercial search engines – 6,336 users accessed ASERL's site from searches on Google, Bing, and others. Almost as many users (5,632) surfed directly to our website from links embedded in emails or via bookmarks, and more than 2,500 visited our site as a result of links in social media channels such as Twitter and Facebook.

## Top Five Web Pages within ASERL's website

1. ASERL home page: 7,104 views
2. ASERL webinar archive: 2,635 views
3. CFDP project home page: 1,267 views
4. ASERL member listing page: 960 views
5. Journal Retention program home page: 868 views

## Top Five Countries using ASERL's website

1. United States: 10,165 visitors
2. Brazil: 174 visitors
3. India: 163 visitors
4. Canada: 118 visitors
5. United Kingdom: 116 visitors

ASERL also operates 35 listservs to communicate with a wide variety of interest communities. Through these channels we are able to reach more than 1,000 subscribers. ASERL's Facebook page and Twitter feeds continue to see activity growth as well. See <https://www.facebook.com/aserl/> and <https://twitter.com/ASERLJEB> for more information on our social media activities.

# PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES

ASERL's professional development activities saw significant increases in 2015-16. We offered 30 webinar sessions to more than 2,400 'live' attendees – nearly twice the number of attendees compared to our previous year. Our webinar recordings were viewed more than 2,300 times by people in 100 countries around the globe.

## Top Five Webinars by 'Live' Attendance, 2015-16

1. "Library Copyright First Responders"
2. "Resource Sharing with Alma"
3. "Transformativeness in Fair Use"
4. "Emory's OA Collection Development Policy"
5. What is "Good Enough Collection Assessment?"

## Top Five Archived Webinar Recordings, 2015-16

1. "Overview of BitCurator" – 222 plays
2. "Using Trello to Manage Tech Services Workflows" – 175 plays
3. "Helping Student Make Sense of Fair Use" – 113 plays
4. "Alma's Resource Sharing Capabilities" – 83 plays
5. "Digital Preservation 101 – Intro to PREMIS" – 71 plays

## Top Five ASERL Webinar Users

1. Virginia Commonwealth University: 143 registrants
2. University of Kentucky: 116 registrants
3. Virginia Tech: 106 registrants
4. University of Alabama at Birmingham: 101 registrants
5. Florida International University / University of Mississippi (tie): 97 registrants



# ORGANIZATIONAL STRENGTH

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### **ASERL Staff**

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