
Librarians are natural collaborators. As professionals we enjoy working with colleagues within the same institution and beyond. This is particularly fitting when it comes to collection development. Academic libraries strive to support the research needs of our users by providing access to a wide range of materials. In a world of shrinking budgets and limited staff, we turn to collaboration as a way to continue to deliver excellent services to our patrons. Collaborative partnerships between regional institutions or across state lines allow individual organizations to reallocate their resources and better serve the local needs. If you are ready to begin the planning stages of a collaborative collection development project, this book is a great starting point. Shared Collections: Collaborative Stewardship is a gathering of essays that discusses an array of cooperative collection development projects in a variety of institutions. It covers everything you need to know from how to create a partnership of shared collections (chapter 2) to specific examples of current projects covering everything from serials (chapter 4), monographs (chapters 6 and 8) and digital collections (chapter 7).

Shared Collections brings together a number of perspectives on collaborative collection building for the twenty-first century. The book is divided into three parts: “Building Shared Collections,” “Shared Collections: Case Studies,” and “Future Directions.” The content of each section is as obvious as the titles suggest. Part 1 lays the foundation of shared collections. It lists historical examples of collaborative projects while at the same time providing direction for the future. Strieb argues that “this volume collectively addresses the challenges of learning how to operate cooperatively and to reorganize and repurpose past investments” (4). Part 2 includes a variety of examples of cooperative agreements ranging from serials projects and electronic books to digital collections. In each case, the authors describe the steps taken to set the consortial agreement. In some cases, there is a discussion or evaluation on how the project is evolving and what future direction it may take. Part 3 consists of a single chapter that ties all the individual chapters together. It addresses the issues and solutions presented in the previous chapters, highlighting the main points in each while also adding similar projects not described in the book.

This book is a must-read for collection development librarians. It contains valuable information to keep abreast of current collaborative projects across the academic landscape. Many of the lessons and processes described can be extrapolated to new collaborative projects. An unanticipated benefit of this collection is that the chapters describe and evaluate a variety of vendors’ products used in collaborative projects, therefore providing the reader with a unique assessment of the products. This valuable insight can assist in determining whether to implement a particular platform for digital collections, as is the case with the UCLA project with Nuxeo in chapter 9. Another example is how to build a digital collection for electronic books using University Press Scholarship Online in chapter 7. All but one of the chapters end with a list of notes to further expand the conversation.

Shared Collections provides a one-stop-shop approach to collection sharing. The examples of joint collection development run the gamut from for the traditional serials, monographs (print and electronic), digital collections, and how to handle scarce materials. The detailed descriptions of the various shared projects provide the necessary tools for other librarians and administrators to implement similar plans on their campuses. Take for example, the preservation challenge described in chapter 3’s “Scarce and Endangered Works” where Nadal, Peterson, and Aveline describe their approach to outline the decision-making process to take preservation action of the materials in the UCLA system. Their work looks at “propose[d] methods of making preservation decisions based on holdings data for library collections” (27) in the UCLA library system. They suggest the need to look at the holdings of an individual item in the system at large (e.g., WorldCat) before making the decision to either replace or withdraw that particular title. The methods and lessons outlined in this preservation project can be implemented on a smaller scale at any institution that wants to apply a data-driven aspect to the process that handles their endangered materials.

This book covers important aspects of collaboration across institutions in order to build shared collections. It begins by providing readers with early examples of consortial agreements. These examples serve as a foundation for current and future projects. They are the blueprint upon which
we can continue to build as we explore new avenues for collaboration. It is important to point out that even though
the book supplies its readers with many details on consortial agreements, it is not a “how-to” type of book. This book is
also not an instruction book to create consortial agreements with other institutions, or a conference proceeding. It does
not take a narrow approach to shared collection building for serials or monographs. Rather, it is a selection of a wide
variety of ongoing collaborative projects across the nation covering a wide range of formats that provide enough details
on the individual projects to serve as a basis for new projects. Readers can easily draw from the experiences outlined
and explore the tools and vendors mentioned as they assess which direction to take for their own projects. As such, the
whole book brings different voices and experiences to the conversation of shared collection building. Shared Collec-
tions is a must-read for all collection development librarians in academic libraries.—Betsaida M. Reyes (breyes@ku.edu),
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