

Book Review

Michael Fernandez, editor

Rethinking Institutional Repositories: Innovations in Management, Collections, and Inclusion. Edited by Josh C. Cromwell. Chicago: Association of College & Research Libraries. 2023. 259p. \$70.00 softcover (ISBN: 979-8-89255-543-2).

Rethinking Institutional Repositories: Innovations in Management, Collections, and Inclusion by Josh C. Cromwell offers an appealing set of examples of how to rethink the development and innovation of institutional repositories (IRs) in academic libraries. Author contributions provide readers with practical strategies for effective IR management and use cases that offer models for developing a variety of content held in IR collections. Cromwell divided the book into three sections with the first titled “IR Management,” followed by a section on “IR Projects,” and closing with “IR For All,” a section describing efforts to make IRs more inclusive spaces. Each individual chapter contains notes and a bibliography.

Josh C. Cromwell, a seasoned IR administrator at The University of Southern Mississippi, brings over a decade of experience to his role. As a lead organizer of the Southern Miss Institutional Repository Conference, Cromwell is well-suited to take a deep dive into the state of academic IRs. In this twenty-two chapter book, Cromwell asked IR practitioners to reimagine their repositories with a lens on innovative strategies to broaden both the type of content held and the level of repository participation. Cromwell’s interest is to move the IR conversation forward. Noting that recent scholarship on IRs has focused on justifying why repositories are needed, Cromwell encouraged authors to share innovative strategies to increase repository content, as well as greater participation and inclusion. Framing the approach this way, Cromwell seeks to answer how are IRs accomplishing their function rather than why they exist. Whether establishing a new IR or assessing a mature IR, there is a wealth of insight in this book. From effective IR management to innovative projects, this book describes how IRs in academic libraries serve the university and their communities.

Cromwell organized the book into three parts with the first part focused on IR strategies for effective management. This includes approaches for IR implementation, assessment, and migration. Chapters 1 through 3 of the book include discussions on evaluation and improvement of IRs by reimagining IR opportunities during transitions to other platforms. In the last chapter of that group, practitioner Kaleena Rivera reminds those undertaking a repository migration not to rush the process. An IR implementation with careful planning will afford a smoother transition and a key takeaway to heed. In chapter 4, Jeanne Pavy describes the benefits and challenges of a consortial model for an IR when resources or technical support may be lacking. Karen Ramsden and Darren Sweepers’s chapter 7 closes the IR management section of the book with an examination of how effective outreach and engagement strategies can help when IR uptake by faculty has been low.

The second section of the book groups chapters with a focus on innovative IR projects; chapters 8 through 14 highlight a range of IR use cases from records management to the hosting of unique collection materials in various formats. Chapter authors explore the IR’s ability to support local partnerships and to host or preserve nontraditional materials including podcasts, gray literature, and white paper collections. In chapter 11, Scott D. Bacon describes how IRs that capture student

scholarship can demonstrate the significant role of faculty when students engage in scholarly activities. Innovative academic IR projects highlight collaborative campus partnerships and important research conducted across the academic institution. Chapter 12 advocates for partnerships between university presses and IRs and chapter 13 examines local historical community collaborations with repositories. The closing chapter of this section looks at the challenges and success of collaborations to integrate archival collections into the IR initiative undertaken at Ohio Northern University.

The last section of the book, titled “IR For All,” brings together examples of IRs developing strategies to make repositories more inclusive spaces. The closing section covering chapters 15 through 22 begins with a case study by Rebecca Kati that details an assessment of content in the Carolina Digital Repository for its representation of diversity, equity, and inclusion principles. The following chapter is an examination of web accessibility issues by David Rodriguez and Bryan Brown that looks at automated audits for repositories. Angela Hackstadt’s chapter 18 details a case study on minority health disparities in New York during the COVID-19 pandemic. In this case study, a working group contributed a collection of white papers to the University of Albany’s IR and this impactful research led to a campus commitment to fostering health equity. Notable in chapter 20 is the advocacy of Rachel Fleming and Carolyn Runyon for a commitment to open pedagogy and the view that IRs are places that can amplify the voices of historically marginalized groups. The closing chapters remind practitioners that effective outreach to students, faculty, and campus partners will reduce barriers to contributing to the IR. Effective outreach enables greater IR participation, a wider array of IR content, and the creation of a more inclusive IR.

In compiling this book, Cromwell positions each case or project to highlight the lessons learned and knowledge gained to inform practitioners and to improve the next generation of repositories in academic libraries. This book offers recommendations, best practices, and guidance for IR practitioners in academic libraries. Whether breaking ground with a new IR platform or looking to expand your collections to be more inclusive, Cromwell’s monograph succeeds in answering the question of how practitioners are engaging with repositories at their institutions and the projects shared are inspiring.—*Joanne C. Parandjuk (jparandj@fau.edu), Florida Atlantic University Libraries, Boca Raton, Florida*