Core Technical Services Directors of Large Research Libraries Committee
"Big Heads" Round Robin Report | ALA Annual, June 2022
The New York Public Library

Staffing
Most staff resumed full-time on-site work schedules in July 2021

After more than four years of service, Andrew Medlar, the Director of BookOps, left us at the end of May to become President & Director of Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh. Recruitment for a new Director is in progress.

Enito Mock joined BookOps as Assistant Director, Acquisitions in January. Enito began his career at the Brooklyn Public Library nearly 20 years ago. Prior to joining BookOps, he served for three years as Manager, Integrated Library Systems. Enito earned a Master's Degree in Liberal Studies from CUNY in 2014 and soon after received his MLS from Queens College. He is a member of the American Society of Training and Development, the American Library Association, and the Chinese American Library Association.

Christine Hesch began at BookOps in September as Senior Librarian in the Cataloging Department. Christine comes to BookOps with cataloging experience at the Leo Baeck Institute's Center for Jewish History and the Gagosian Gallery, and her language skills in Japanese, German, and western European languages will serve well on the Research Libraries cataloging team.

Karen Timko joined BookOps in December as Collections Cataloging Associate on the Research Libraries team. Karen comes to BookOps from the Herman B. Wells Library of Indiana University Libraries in Bloomington, where she worked for eight years in technical services, including the monograph cataloging and acquisitions units. In addition to her library experience, Karen has a strong working knowledge of Polish and Russian, as well as western European languages, which will greatly help in cataloging the world language collections.

In the NYPL Research Libraries, Elizabeth Muller joined Preservation and Collections Processing in July 2021 as the Assistant Director for Special Collections Processing. In that role, Liz provides leadership for the archival processing and special collections cataloging teams and works with partners in Preservation, the research libraries, BookOps, and Digital Research to make NYPL's special collections as discoverable and accessible as possible..

Budget
All of last year's funding has been restored by the Mayor and City Council. NYPL received over $74 million in new capital funding from the city, which will be used for branch improvement projects, technology upgrades, and other uses. NYPL received additional operating funding from the City Council, which will help offset rising costs.

Systems

NYPL continues to use a single instance of Innovative Interfaces' Sierra ILS serving both Research and Branch libraries, updated in FY22 to release 5.3.

A 910 local field was introduced in FY22 to mark bibliographic records as Research or Branch, following on a FY21 project that duplicated bibliographic records having both Research and Branch libraries holdings. This allows attached records to be presented separately and supports the separate business logic required for researchers (closed-stack, offsite, and EDD requesting) vs. branch holds management and circulation.

EBSCO Discovery Service was selected for e-resource discovery and will be integrated with the NYPL's internally developed discovery layer (the "Research Catalog"). The implementation project kicked off in March, with a target launch date by the end of 2022.

Vega Discover from Innovative Interfaces was selected to replace Innovative's Encore product for discovery of Branch Libraries collections. Vega is currently in staff beta with a public beta release planned for late summer.

NYPL's Digital team is responsible for developing the Research Catalog and made numerous enhancements in FY22 including improvements to indexing and display of non-Roman scripts; display of serial issues; refinements to request functionality.

The legacy catalog interface for Sierra (WebPAC) remains available, but is not being developed. It displays combined Research and Branch holdings and is unable to incorporate records for ReCAP Shared Collection holdings from our partner institutions.

Implementation of Atlas Systems' Aeon software for special collections requesting and workflow management, begun in 2020, is expected to complete in fall 2022.

Cataloging workflows

Several open-source applications written by Tomasz Kalata, Manager, Cataloging Metadata, contribute to productivity.
- The "babel" application creates MARC order records from spreadsheets listing on-order items for NYPL Branch libraries and Brooklyn PL.
- "WorldCat2Sierra" is used to automate copy cataloging for both NYPL and BPL by querying and downloading bibliographic records from OCLC Worldcat based on Sierra's report or a list of identifiers.
- The "NightShift" copy cataloging bot continues to be developed and tested by the Metadata team. It is designed to upgrade brief-level catalog records for e-formats to full-level OCLC records.

Diversity, Equity, Inclusion & Access
The Cataloging department played an active role in advancing the library's DEI initiatives, notably on a grant-supported initiative to change the subject terminology for "Illegal aliens" and "Aliens" in the public catalogs of both NYPL and Brooklyn Public Library.

- The work involved local authority records created by a vendor according to specifications developed by Cataloging, to be used in ongoing subject authority processing for new bibliographic records in each institution's catalog. This allows department catalogers to continue to employ standard LCSH in original metadata they contribute to WorldCat and copy cataloging they export to the ILS.
- Project funding was awarded in January 2021, and the project completed in fall 2021.
- The recent change to LCSH introduced by the Library of Congress replacing "Illegal aliens" prompted BookOps to update the local authority terms that were already in use for NYPL and BPL catalogs. The new LC heading for "Illegal immigration" has been mitigated by BookOps with a new local heading of "Undocumented immigration."
- Tomasz Kalata and Steven Pisani, Assistant Director, Cataloging presented the project to numerous internal and external audiences during FY22. In December, a webinar titled "Tackling Racism and Bias in the Library Catalog" hosted by the Public Library Association (PLA) showcased the ongoing collaboration of NYPL, BPL, and BookOps in the use of local subject headings that eliminate offensive Library of Congress terminology for immigrants. Steven Pisani presented the local metadata changes, and Amy Mikel (BPL), Melissa Gasparotto (NYPL) and Paloma Celis Carbajal (NYPL) shared the public engagement efforts surrounding this initiative. A recording was made available to ALA members on their eLearning website.

Tomasz Kalata and Steven Pisani continue to meet with colleagues in NYPL Special Collections Processing to discuss reparative description in metadata and how the work of the Cataloging Department in this area coincides with other divisions across the Library.

Binding
NYPL Research Libraries continue to collect and retain a significant number of print serials, despite a shift to online journals and ebooks over the years. The pandemic has had a significant impact on the library binding sector and resulted in disrupted transportation, price increases, and even closure of production facilities. Nonetheless, we were able to negotiate a contract renewal with our long-time bindery vendor that temporarily locked in lower prices than originally scheduled. Following a pandemic-related disruption in transportation, shipments resumed in late Q2. The binding budget for FY23 is unchanged from previous years.

Submitted by Heide Miklitz, Assistant Director, NYPL Research Materials, BookOps
BookOps is the shared technical services of New York Public Library and Brooklyn Public Library