



Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL)

2018 Membership Research Survey

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Overview & Methodology

The Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL) retained Avenue M Group, LLC (Avenue M) to conduct a comprehensive needs assessment of current ACRL members. The goal of this research is to enable ACRL to better understand the needs and concerns of ACRL members in order to design programs and services to address those needs.

The survey launched on March 13, 2018 and closed on April 4, 2018. An invitation to participate in the survey was successfully delivered to 9,504 individual email addresses. A total of 3,029 surveys were completed (309 of these partially completed), for an overall response rate of 33%. This response rate far exceeds the 7% to 11% response rates typically seen by Avenue M. The survey's margin of error of $\pm 1.6\%$ at the 95% confidence level is a more important measure. The industry standard for member research studies is to achieve a margin of error of $\pm 5\%$ at the 95% confidence level. ACRL is well within that goal; thus, the results are considered representative of ACRL's audience overall. In other words, if the survey were conducted over and over, 95 times out of 100, one would obtain results within $\pm 1.6\%$ of the results garnered in this survey.

Interpreting the Data

This report summarizes key findings from the study across the following areas:

- Demographics and professional profile of academic and research librarians
- Drivers of ACRL membership
- State of academic/research librarianship
- Current professional issues and anticipated challenges
- Role of ACRL and other professional associations and information sources
- ACRL benefits: importance and satisfaction

This report contains key findings from the study and recommendations based on those key findings. The key findings section does not address all discoveries from the survey, but rather areas with enough significant and relevant information to support themes that emerged from the survey results. Additional statistically significant points and findings can be found throughout the overall survey results section. The overall survey results include the survey questions and responses. Each question will have a chart, graph and/or table representing the percentage of respondents that chose each answer. A brief explanation of the data will be located above each chart, graph or table. A summary of notable differences in responses for important member segments will be located below select tables.

Every study has some bias due to an overrepresentation by a certain portion of its audience. In this particular study, the following audience groups are overrepresented: Regular Members (82%), committee members (35%) and those who attended the 2017 ALA Annual Conference (31%), 2017 ACRL Conference (26%) and 2017 ALA Midwinter Conference (14%). It is important to understand the level of influence by an overrepresented segment and take it into consideration during the analysis. To identify differences within a group when compared to the overall findings, Avenue M cross-tabulated the results by the following demographic attributes:

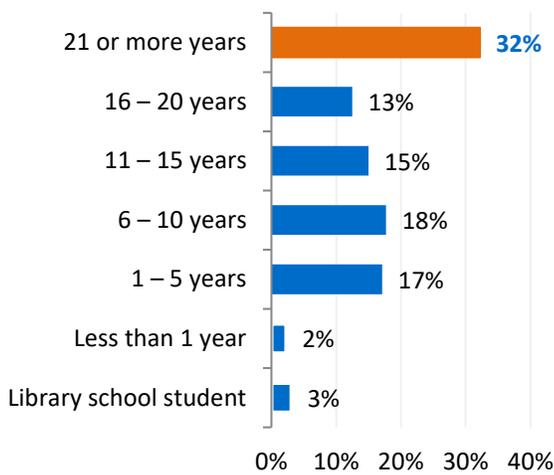
- ACRL chapter participation
- ACRL role
- Age
- Conference/event registration payment
- Current position
- Job function
- Likelihood to recommend ACRL
- Member category
- Persona segments
- Persona segments within key demographic segments
- Primary section/interest group
- Who pays membership dues
- Work setting
- Years a member
- Years of experience

Avenue M Group, LLC, an independent research and consulting firm, conducted the survey, analyzed the data and prepared this white paper report. All respondent information is displayed in the aggregate and remains confidential. This report does not reveal information from any individual source.

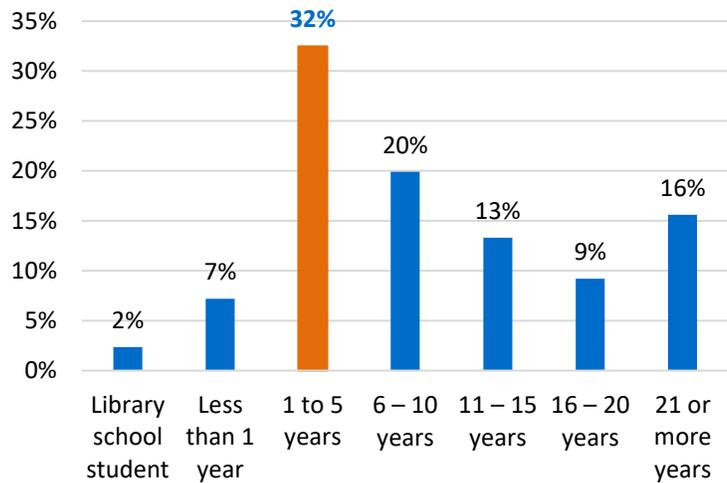
Demographic Overview

The following demographic overview of survey respondents provides the context needed to better understand the key findings and overall results that emerged from this study. The profile includes only current members of ACRL. This demographic profile is similar to the profile of survey respondents in 2015 except that the percentage of respondents who are younger than 45 years old is slightly higher in 2018. **Please note, percentages in the demographic overview and overall survey results have been rounded to the nearest whole number; therefore, they may not always total 100%. Some of the percentages for Years of Experience and Length of Membership below may differ slightly from the percentages for these questions in the Overall Survey Results. Any differences are due to the removal of small categories (e.g., Not a librarian, Unsure) from these charts.*

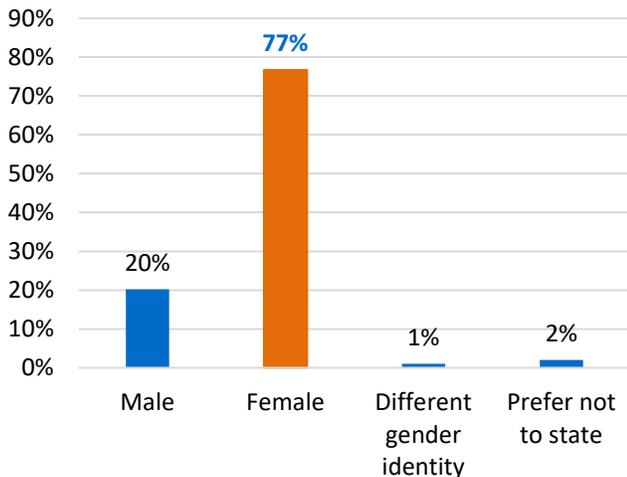
Years of Experience



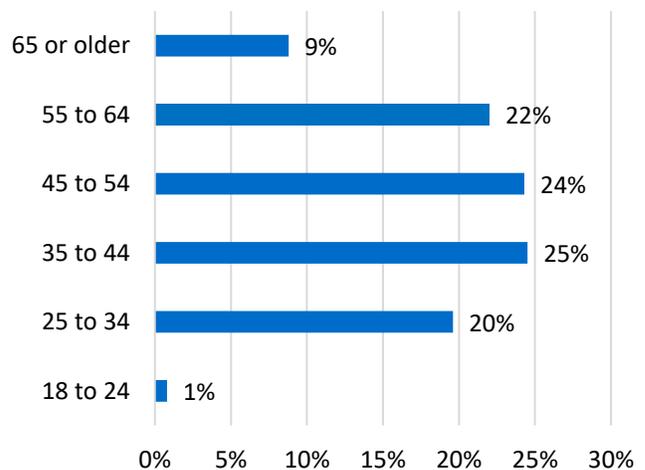
Length of Membership



Gender



Age Ranges



Key Findings

1. **Key Drivers of Membership:** The decision to be an ACRL member is most influenced by the need to keep up-to-date through ACRL publications and the desire to maintain and expand a network of peers, closely followed by learning new skills to increase job proficiency and the belief that it is a professional obligation. In 2015, keeping up-to-date was the most influential of these factors.

Keeping up-to-date is a stronger driver for more experienced members (more than 20 years in the profession) and those in a director/dean/chief officer/administrator position. These members are also likely to believe that being an ACRL member is a professional obligation. The need to learn new skills to become more proficient is stronger among those who are very new to the field (less than 1 year or library school student).

Total agreement (agree or strongly agree) among members that ACRL is a leading publisher of research and practice that advances the field declined from 77% in 2015 to 72% in 2018. Similarly, agreement that ACRL is a leading provider of professional development for academic and research librarians declined from 82% in 2015 to 74% in 2018. Members have maintained their agreement that ACRL is a leader in connecting academic and research librarians to each other (69% in 2015, 70% in 2018).

Most members indicate that their primary affiliation among ACRL's communities of practice is with one of six groups: Instruction Section (17%), University Libraries Section (12%), Rare Books and Manuscripts Section (10%), College Libraries Section (10%), Science and Technology Section (7%) and Community and Junior College Libraries Section (6%).

(See Questions 13, 32, 36)

2. **Overall Evaluations of ACRL:** A large majority of members rate ACRL as either very good or good for overall performance (82%), value provided (73%) and benefit of using products and services (74%). Less than one in ten assign ACRL the top rating of excellent for any of these areas, so there is room to improve these member assessments. Similarly, 42% of members feel connected to ACRL, 38% are neutral, and only 5% feel very connected.

A majority of members are very likely (47%) or extremely likely (24%) to recommend ACRL to someone who is an academic and research librarian or is studying to be one. Only 3% are not very likely, and less than 1% are not at all likely to recommend ACRL. Based on these top two and bottom two box response, a Net Recommender Score (NRS) of +68 can be calculated for ACRL among total members.

ACRL Chapter participants evaluate ACRL more positively on all of these measures than members who do not participate in a chapter. Members in a director/dean/chief officer/administrator or LIS Educator position are also likely to view ACRL favorably, while members in a libraries/archives/museums position are less favorable toward ACRL.

(See Questions 15, 17-19, 21)

- 3. State of the Profession, Top Issues and Professional Challenges:** A majority of members feel optimistic about the state of academic/research librarianship today. Twenty-eight percent feel very optimistic, another 56% feel somewhat optimistic, and only 12% are not very optimistic or not at all optimistic.

The top two issues that members currently face are budget constraints (e.g., staffing cuts, flat/decreased funding, rising cost of resources) and demonstrating value and assessing impact (e.g., to gain support from campus administration, or state and federal government). Directors/deans/chief officers/administrators are more likely than other members to be concerned about these issues. A second tier of current issues are keeping up with change, human resources issues, and information literacy and student success.

Most members believe that ACRL is addressing the issues of demonstrating value and assessing impact, keeping up with change, and professional development, rating ACRL as 6 or higher on a 1-10 scale for these issues. Just 25% feel that ACRL is addressing budget constraints, and 17% feel that ACRL addresses human resources issues.

Over the next 3 to 5 years, members think their biggest professional challenges will be keeping up-to-date with new trends and developments in the field, expanding their knowledge/level of expertise and personal considerations (e.g., work/life balance, family commitments).

Members' anticipated professional challenges are strongly influenced by their level of professional experience. Library school students think that finding a job or making a job change will be their biggest challenge. New members (less than 1 year) are most concerned with expanding their knowledge/level of expertise and finding a job or making a job change. Students and new members are significantly more likely than others to believe that expanding their network/connections with other information professionals will be a challenge. Inexperienced members (1 to 10 years) are likely to expect obtaining a promotion and/or tenure and gaining management and leadership skills to be among their top challenges. Personal considerations peak as an anticipated challenge among members with 6 to 15 years of experience. More experienced members (16 years or more), as well as those in an administrative job role, believe that keeping up-to-date with new trends and developments in the field will be their top challenge over the next 3 to 5 years.

(See Questions 23-26)

- 4. Role of ACRL:** More than half of ACRL members rely on ACRL as a primary organization for education (57%), 36% consider ACRL to be a primary organization for networking, and 15% use ACRL as a primary organization for another purpose. Only 15% do not consider ACRL to be a primary organization.

ACRL is more likely to be a primary source of education for members who work in a comprehensive (undergraduate/graduate), four-year/baccalaureate or two-year/technical school. Members who work in a university (large research/doctoral granting) setting are less likely than those in other work settings to use ACRL as a primary source of education but are more likely to rely on ACRL as a primary source of networking.

Respondents who work in instruction and/or reference are more likely than those in other job functions to use ACRL as a primary source of education, while members who work as a rare books/special collections/archivist or in cataloging/technical services are less likely to view ACRL as one of their primary organizations.

Four out of five ACRL members regularly participate in ALA or access ALA website, and about two in five participate in or engage with an ACRL Chapter and another library association (e.g., special libraries, law libraries, state). Among those who are active in ALA, 30% use it as a primary organization for education, 32% as a primary organization for networking and 27% as a primary organization for another purpose. Those who participate in an ACRL Chapter are most likely to use it as a primary organization for networking (54%). Other library associations are likely to be a primary organization for both networking (69%) and education (49%).

(See Questions 28, 29)

- 5. Information Sources and Education Formats:** When searching for information on a work-related issue or for their own professional use, members are more likely to turn to a search engine (77%) or library web site (53%) than the ACRL website (45%). The ACRL website is more frequently used than the ALA website (37%), an academic search engine (29%), social media site (20%) or another organization/association website (20%).

Members prefer to use multiple formats for their own professional education. Popular formats include one-day and multi-day in-person seminars/meetings/conferences, live webinars, online or downloadable publications, print publications and pre-recorded, on-demand webinars or workshops.

Members with 1 to 10 years of experience are more likely than others to use social media when searching for professional information and to include social media and/or blogs among their preferred formats for professional education.

(See Questions 34, 35)

- 6. Opportunities to Improve ACRL Benefits:** ACRL's most important benefits are providing members with professional development opportunities and networking with other professionals in their field. Although a majority of members are satisfied with these benefits, satisfaction with *College & Research Libraries News* is even higher. Impact analysis shows that improving satisfaction with professional development and networking opportunities is likely to further increase evaluations of ACRL's overall performance.

Overall evaluations of ACRL can also be enhanced by increasing satisfaction with opportunities to gain leadership experience and with career information and employment opportunities, which are highly important for less experienced members (10 years or less). Members are less satisfied with current leadership and career/employment opportunities than with most other ACRL benefits.

(See Impact Analysis and Questions 30, 31)

7. **Increasing Connectedness with ACRL:** Members are most likely to indicate that meeting and collaborating with their peers is what makes them feel connected and can make them feel more connected to ACRL. Learning new things from ACRL educational offerings also helps members feel connected to ACRL. Providing guidance/coaching/mentoring to new members (less than 1 year) and library school students can help them feel more connected with ACRL.

Members who feel extremely connected to ACRL are especially likely to belong to ACRL in order to maintain/expand their network of peers, and they value opportunities to network with other professionals in their field above other ACRL benefits.

(See Question 22)

Recommendations

The research conducted by Avenue M has revealed several strategic issues with respect to ACRL's membership value and the future of the organization. Below and on the following pages, Avenue M has provided a number of recommendations for consideration based on the key findings from this report. This is an effective, easy way to introduce the key findings so that they can be translated into actionable next steps. Additional discussion around feasibility and implementation will be necessary to achieve measurable results. It's important to acknowledge that ACRL may already be implementing some of these recommendations and will need to prioritize efforts and make accommodations to its existing program of work.

Theme: Academic and research librarians continue to view ACRL as a primary source of professional education, but many are also accessing other sources of information and education. Members prefer to access professional information in a variety of formats, including in-person, live and on demand online webinars, as well as publications.

Avenue M recommends that ACRL develop an omnichannel strategy for delivering professional information and education so that members can choose and use their preferred channels and formats for staying up-to-date and learning new skills.

Specific Recommendations:

1. Increase online education offerings, both live webinars and self-study formats such as recorded webinars, PowerPoint presentations and online study based on journal articles.
2. Allow international members and members who are unable to travel to ACRL conferences to participate remotely. Offer live streaming of sessions at regional locations where members can gather to watch together and discuss locally. Videotape conference sessions and allow members to purchase on-demand online access to a package of sessions.
3. Increase the variety and depth of professional information provided through the ACRL website. Alternatively, ACRL could create/invest in microsites or an app focused on delivering education. This will make it easier for individuals who are seeking specific information to quickly find what they need.
4. Use Search Engine Optimization (SEO) to increase the likelihood that ACRL programs and content will appear at the top of searches that academic and research librarians make through Google and other search engines.
5. Optimize content and learning for mobile devices or for microlearning opportunities. Create content that can be accessed in short bursts.
6. Create lifelong learning paths to assist members at various stages of their careers. This will both save them time and reinforce the need to access ACRL education and information. Create profiles of members from various work settings and career stages and include the education and information they've used to stay up-to-date.
7. Test novel approaches for ACRL education. Possibilities might include:

- a. Podcasts: According to Edison Research, podcasts are growing in popularity and are particularly likely to be used by adults between 18 and 34 years of age and those with a 4-year or advanced degree.
- b. Flipped classrooms: This approach reverses the traditional model of lecture-based education by having participants review instructional materials before attending a course and engage in discussion and problem solving with their peers during the course.
- c. Massive Open Online Courses (MOOC): Offer MOOC course modules or webinars, open to everyone, to engage non-members and start them on a path to paid courses and membership.
- d. Open Learning Initiative (OLI) Courses: This approach supplements passive learning with interactive activities that allow students to learn by doing. A Carnegie-Mellon University study of online learning found that the OLI approach was more than six times as effective in promoting learning than purely passive watching or reading.

Theme: Academic and research librarians join ACRL for both information/education and networking/career development. However, members are less likely to rely on ACRL for networking than for education.

Avenue M recommends the enhancement of opportunities for members to network and develop their careers through ACRL.

Specific Recommendations:

1. Maximize the usefulness of the new version of ALA Connect for ACRL. Map out a plan to identify and implement the discussion groups that will provide the most value to ACRL members. Introduce paid or volunteer moderator(s) to each group to ensure the discussions are active and informative. Publicize the in-person training sessions for the new ALA Connect and encourage members who are unable to attend to watch the how-to and demo videos.
2. Increase networking opportunities at ACRL conferences. Include a networking component in as many conference sessions as possible. Add more social events to conference programs.
3. Develop a conference track for members who are seeking to establish or advance their career. Include sessions on developing professional skills, building their credentials and resume, panel Q&A and mentoring sessions.
4. Direct the ACRL Membership Committee to explore opportunities to increase mentoring opportunities for newer research and academic librarians through the new ALA Connect Mentor Connect.
5. Collaborate with ACRL chapters to increase the number of local/regional networking events that are available to ACRL members.
6. Encourage members to promote their affiliation on LinkedIn or on other social media sites. Follow ACRL members on Instagram and Twitter and share their posts when relevant.
7. Create a marketing or communications one-sheet focused exclusively on networking opportunities within the organization to share with new members and renewing members each year.
8. Create and use a new icon or tag to promote all ACRL activities that enable or offer opportunities to network with colleagues and peers.

Theme: Although some members want to access the full range of ACRL benefits, others are more focused on specific areas of need, notably information/education or networking and career development.

Avenue M recommends that ACRL create targeted marketing and communications programs based on the distinct needs and interests of its important member segments.

Specific Recommendations:

1. Promote the full range of ACRL benefits to *Enthusiastic Leaders*. Emphasize benefits that address the issues that are more relevant to those who are currently in leadership positions or aspire to such positions (e.g., demonstrating value, assessing impact, emerging trends, senior level networking).
2. For *Lifelong Learners* and *Online Learners*, promote opportunities to learn and network remotely (e.g., ACRL publications, online discussion forums).
3. For *Career Builders* and *Mandatory Members*, prioritize communication of benefits that will help them advance their career (e.g., committee service, networking opportunities at conferences, online discussion forums, leadership training).
4. For *Lifelong Learners*, prioritize communication of benefits that will keep them up-to-date (e.g., ACRL publications, eLearning, educational opportunities at conferences).
5. Create a conference or webinar series for young academic and research librarians. Topics might include finding a job, developing skills, leadership training and work/life balance.
6. Use social media to call attention to new benefits or upcoming events that are relevant to library school students and academic and research librarians who are newer to the profession.
7. Increase the use of personalized messaging and content to members based on their profile data and website behavior.

Opportunity Algorithm

ACRL members evaluated several benefits based on importance and satisfaction using a 5-point scale, where “5” represented “Extremely Important” or “Very Satisfied,” and “1” represented “Extremely Unimportant” or “Very Dissatisfied.” An analytical method known as the “Opportunity Algorithm” identified ACRL’s greatest opportunities to create value based on expressed member needs.

The following algorithm creates the opportunity metric:

$$\text{Opportunity} = \text{Importance} + \text{Max}(\text{Importance} - \text{Satisfaction}, 0)$$

Opportunity equals the sum of importance and either zero or importance minus satisfaction, whichever is larger. Members allocate a higher score to a benefit when they feel more satisfied or find the item more important to their careers. The column titled “gap” equals importance minus satisfaction. When this difference is positive, members value the benefit, but additional opportunity remains for ACRL to improve satisfaction. When the gap is negative, members are deriving enough satisfaction from the benefit, and there is less need for improvement.

Respondents to this study rated the importance of opportunities for professional development, networking and leadership experience higher than their satisfaction with these benefits. This indicates that ACRL may need to dedicate additional resources to increase delivery of these benefits to members. The satisfaction rating for *College & Research Libraries News* is higher than its importance rating and higher than satisfaction with other benefits. This indicates that further improvement of ACRL *College & Research Libraries News* is a lower priority than improvement of the benefits with gaps between importance and satisfaction.

Benefit	Importance	Satisfaction	Opportunity I+max(I-S,0)	Gap	Ever Used
1. Professional development opportunities	4.24	3.82	4.65	0.42	94%
2. Opportunities to network with other professionals in my field	4.26	3.86	4.65	0.39	95%
3. Opportunities to gain leadership experience (e.g. service on ACRL committees)	3.85	3.63	4.07	0.22	91%
4. College & Research Libraries News	3.97	4.08	3.86	- 0.11	98%
5. Access to career information and employment opportunities	3.73	3.68	3.78	0.05	91%
6. Member discounts	3.44	3.44	3.44	0.00	86%

Measurement of Impact on Overall Satisfaction

The importance and user satisfaction with ACRL benefits were determined by direct questioning (See Questions 30, 31). However, the importance of ACRL benefits offerings was also measured statistically. The statistical approach calculated the correlation between ratings of satisfaction with ACRL benefits and ratings of ACRL's overall performance. An offering with a high correlation and high satisfaction is likely to bolster overall performance while an offering with a high correlation and low satisfaction may undermine overall performance.

For ACRL, the offerings with the highest correlation between satisfaction and overall performance are professional development opportunities and opportunities to network with other professionals. Satisfaction with these benefits falls short of satisfaction with *College & Research Libraries News* but exceeds satisfaction with other ACRL benefits.

	% Ever Used	Average Satisfaction*	Correlation with Overall Performance**
Professional development opportunities	94%	3.82	.50
Opportunities to network with other professionals in my field	95%	3.86	.45
Opportunities to gain leadership experience (e.g. service on ACRL committees)	91%	3.63	.40
<i>College & Research Libraries News</i>	98%	4.08	.38
Access to career information and employment opportunities	91%	3.68	.35
Member discounts	86%	3.44	.34

* average on 1-5 scale, where 5 = extremely satisfied

** Correlation between satisfaction with benefit and ACRL's overall performance; possible range is -1 to +1

Member Segment Personas

To obtain a deeper understanding of ACRL’s members and identify opportunities to increase engagement, Avenue M segmented the respondents into Persona groups based on their level of agreement or disagreement to the following psychographic statements.

I enjoy seeking out new approaches to my work
I belong to ACRL to support the academic librarian profession
I strive to hold a leadership position in my field/association
I participate in ACRL activities to increase my professional skillset and marketability
I use ACRL as my primary resource to stay up-to-date on issues in my field
I like to network with my peers through online communities
I primarily attend ACRL events for continuing education
I participate in ACRL activities to socialize with others in my field
I regularly attend ACRL events for professional development
I prefer online self-study to in-person continuing education
I am a member of ACRL to meet promotion and/or tenure requirements
I am a member of ACRL only because it is expected/required of me
I will join a professional association only if my employer pays for membership dues
I am a member of ACRL for discounts on products and services
I participate in continuing education only when I am required to do so

A multivariable analytic technique, latent class analysis, identified response patterns across these statements that occurred more frequently than expected. The technique used these patterns to identify the following five Persona segments within ACRL’s member audience: Enthusiastic Leaders, Career Builders, Lifelong Learners, Online Learners and Mandatory Members. The individuals within each Persona will typically agree or disagree more strongly with several statements compared to all members and the other Personas. It’s rare that respondents will disagree or strongly disagree with the statements. When a segment is described as less positive than others, it may really reflect a neutral rather than negative attitude.

ACRL member segments may share some traits, yet their motivations and behaviors differ. Because most members fall into one of five distinct Personas, ACRL should promote and deliver value propositions that ensure each group is satisfied. Members of each segment can be identified through their behaviors and demographics and sent targeted messaging based on the benefits they value. The following pages contain a summary of the data used to create the Persona segments, a narrative profile of each Persona, and tables that display key profiling data for the Personas.

The following table summarizes the data, from Question 33, that was used to create the Persona segments.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Enjoy seeking out new approaches to my work	0%	1%	8%	57%	34%
Belong to ACRL to support the academic librarian profession	2%	5%	12%	55%	26%
Strive to hold a leadership position in my field/association	4%	12%	29%	36%	18%
Participate in ACRL activities to increase my professional skillset and marketability	3%	8%	24%	52%	14%
Use ACRL as my primary resource to stay up-to-date on issues in my field	4%	16%	28%	41%	11%
Like to network with my peers through online communities	4%	18%	34%	36%	8%
Primarily attend ACRL events for continuing education	4%	16%	35%	37%	8%
Participate in ACRL activities to socialize with others in my field	4%	15%	31%	42%	8%
Regularly attend ACRL events for professional development	5%	22%	31%	35%	7%
Prefer online self-study to in-person continuing education	10%	30%	38%	16%	6%
Am a member of ACRL to meet promotion and/or tenure requirements	28%	30%	19%	18%	5%
Am a member of ACRL only because it is expected/required of me	39%	36%	14%	9%	2%
Will join a professional association only if my employer pays for membership dues	47%	37%	10%	4%	2%
Am a member of ACRL for discounts on products and services	23%	34%	28%	14%	2%
Participate in continuing education only when I am required to do so	45%	41%	11%	3%	0%

n = 2674 to 2689

Most of these statements were also included in the 2015 survey. The following statement was added in 2018: “I like to network with my peers through online communities”. The following three statements from the 2015 survey were not used in 2018 because analysis of the 2015 data showed them to be redundant with other statements (highly correlated with responses to other statements) or did not contribute to the identification of segments in 2015 (low variations in ratings across segments):

- Attending meetings and events is fun and enjoyable.
- I participate in ACRL to identify contacts/resources to help address work issues.
- I am a member of ACRL to gain access to a specific member benefit.

ACRL's Persona Segment Descriptions

Enthusiastic Leaders (48% of members)

Enthusiastic Leaders hold, or are striving to hold, a leadership position in their profession. They belong to ACRL to achieve their goal by maintaining/expanding their network of peers, keeping up-to-date through ACRL publications and learning new skills to become more proficient in their job. Most ACRL benefits are important to them, especially opportunities for networking and professional development, and they are highly satisfied with these benefits. They are likely to attend ACRL and ALA conferences. They participate in ACRL activities to socialize with others in their field as well as to increase their professional skillset and marketability. They expect keeping up-to-date with new trends and developments in the field to be their biggest professional challenge over the next 3 to 5 years.

Most Enthusiastic Leaders feel optimistic about the state of academic/research librarianship, feel connected to ACRL, and are likely to recommend ACRL to another academic and research librarian. They support the profession and participate in ACRL activities because they want to, not because it is required. Many are directors/deans/chief officers/administrators or hold a position where they manage others.

In addition to ACRL, Enthusiastic Leaders are also likely to participate in ALA and their ACRL chapter. Most consider ACRL to be their primary association for education. Slightly less than half consider ACRL to be among their primary associations for networking, while others view ALA or their ACRL chapter as their primary association for networking. Their primary section or interest affiliation does not differ significantly from the affiliation of other members.

Career Builders (17% of members)

Career Builders are likely to be newer or moderately experienced members of the profession who are employed in a university setting and aspire to reach a position in library administration. They become ACRL members to advance their career by performing volunteer service, usually on an ACRL committee, and attending ACRL and ALA conferences. Their ACRL activities help them expand their network of peers, gain leadership experience and find opportunities to collaborate with colleagues/peers. For some, ACRL membership is required to meet promotion and/or tenure requirements.

Most Career Builders feel connected to ACRL and are positive (although not as positive as Enthusiastic Leaders) about their overall ACRL experience and the value of membership. Opportunities for networking, professional development and leadership experience are important to members of this segment, and they are likely to be satisfied with the opportunities they are finding through ACRL. They tend to rely on ACRL as a primary association for both education and networking. Members of this segment also tend to engage with and rely on an ACRL chapter for networking. They tend to affiliate with the Instruction Section or Science and Technology Section.

Lifelong Learners (15% of members)

Lifelong Learners belong to ACRL to keep up-to-date and to support the academic librarian profession. They view ACRL and its publications as their primary resource for addressing their biggest professional challenge, keeping up-to-date with new trends and developments in the field. Members of this segment

are especially satisfied with *College & Research Libraries News*, which is an important benefit for them. They prefer live and on-demand webinars to in-person meetings for their professional education. When they do attend in-person events, it is primarily for continuing education rather than for socializing and is most likely to be the ALA Annual Conference. Few members of this segment serve on an ACRL committee.

Lifelong Learners feel less connected to ACRL than Enthusiastic Leaders and Career Builders but have positive feelings about their overall experience with ACRL, the value of membership and their likelihood of recommending ACRL to an academic and research librarian. Enthusiastic Leaders are the only other segment that assesses ACRL as favorably. For Lifelong Learners, feelings of connectedness are more likely to be reinforced by learning new things through ACRL educational offerings than through interpersonal activities.

Most Lifelong Learners are 45 years or older and work at a comprehensive, four-year/baccalaureate or 2-year/technical institution.

Online Learners (10% of members)

Most Online Learners are relatively new to ACRL (1 to 5 years, including some student members). They enjoy seeking out new approaches to their work and are striving to hold a leadership position in their field/association, but they also have a strong preference for engaging with ACRL online. They prefer online self-study to in-person continuing education and like to network with their peers through online communities. They are less likely to have attended the 2017 ALA Annual Conference than members of the other segments and are below average in committee participation. Meeting expenses may be a barrier for some, as they are more likely to be responsible for paying these expenses than members of other segments.

Online Learners are less positive toward ACRL than the average member. They are less likely than others to feel connected to ACRL or to evaluate ACRL's overall performance, value and benefit as very good or excellent. Nearly half do not view ACRL as a primary professional organization. Some indicate that ALCTS or "other library associations" are the primary organization for education and networking.

Mandatory Members (10% of members)

Mandatory Members belong to ACRL only because it's expected/required by their employer or is a professional obligation. Their committee service and ACRL Conference attendance is similar to that of Enthusiastic Leaders, but they take part in these activities to meet promotion and/or tenure requirements and advance their career, not for enjoyment. They are not very interested in keeping-up-to-date or in opportunities for professional development or networking. They are less optimistic than other members about the current state of the profession, although slightly more than half are "somewhat optimistic."

The Mandatory Members segment has the least positive view of ACRL. Most feel neutral or disconnected to ACRL and rate ACRL's overall performance, value and benefit as fair or good. They tend to be somewhat likely or not very likely to recommend membership in ACRL. Most members of this segment are employed in a university setting and are fairly new to the profession (1 to 10 years). They are more likely than members of other segments to be dealing with human resources issues (e.g., burnout, stress, job insecurity, low pay, imposter syndrome). They are more likely than other members to affiliate with the Rare Books and Manuscripts Section.

Profile of Persona Segments: Attitudes and Behaviors

	Enthusiastic Leaders	Career Builders	Lifelong Learners	Online Learners	Mandatory Members
Biggest Professional Challenges					
Keeping up-to-date with new trends and developments in the field	48% ↑	41% ↓	58% ↑	40%	30% ↓
Expanding knowledge/level of expertise	39%	39%	43%	39%	29% ↓
Personal considerations (e.g., work/life balance, family commitments)	34%	40%	33%	35%	40%
Obtaining a promotion and/or tenure	20% ↓	41% ↑	12% ↓	22%	32% ↑
High Influence on Decision to Join					
Keep up-to-date through ACRL publications	42% ↑	27% ↓	54% ↑	29% ↓	11% ↓
Maintain/expand network of peers	46% ↑	48% ↑	17% ↓	20% ↓	15% ↓
Believe it is a professional obligation	36%	35%	35%	23% ↓	33%
Learn new skills to become more proficient in job	41% ↑	30%	37%	17% ↓	10% ↓
Advance career through volunteer service on a committee	26%	58% ↑	5% ↓	13% ↓	21%
Top Three Ratings					
Overall Performance	60% ↑	55%	61% ↑	29% ↓	15% ↓
How Likely to Recommend	80% ↑	74%	83% ↑	49% ↓	36% ↓
How Connected to ACRL	58% ↑	60% ↑	45%	24% ↓	16% ↓
Engagement with ACRL					
Committee Service	38%	59% ↑	11% ↓	26% ↓	42%
Attended 2017 ALA Annual Conference	35% ↑	41% ↑	26% ↓	13% ↓	28%
Attended 2017 ACRL Conference	30% ↑	38% ↑	12% ↓	19% ↓	29%
Attended 2017 ALA Mid-Winter Conference	18% ↑	19% ↑	5% ↓	10% ↓	11% ↓
ACRL is Primary Association for					
Education	63% ↑	57%	79% ↑	30% ↓	26% ↓
Networking	43% ↑	50% ↑	22% ↓	17% ↓	24% ↓
Not a primary association	12% ↓	13% ↓	10% ↓	42% ↑	41% ↑
Primary Section or Interest Group Affiliation					
Instruction Section	16%	22% ↑	20%	6% ↓	14%
University Libraries Section	13%	9%	13%	11%	12%
Rare Books and Manuscripts Section	9%	11%	4% ↓	14%	18% ↑
College Libraries Section	11%	6% ↓	13%	10%	8%
Science and Technology Section	6%	11% ↑	5%	10%	6%
Community & Junior College Libraries Section	6%	2% ↓	10%	9%	3%
n =	1298	468	397	269	270

↑↓ Indicates responses that are significantly higher/lower for segment than for total respondents

Profile of Persona Segments: Demographics

	Enthusiastic Leaders	Career Builders	Lifelong Learners	Online Learners	Mandatory Members
Years in Profession					
Average Years in Profession	17.0 ↑	13.6 ↓	19.4 ↑	14.7 ↓	13.7 ↓
Average Years as a Member	11.4 ↑	9.7 ↓	12.1 ↑	7.2 ↓	8.3 ↓
Average Age in Years	47.9 ↑	44.8 ↓	52.4 ↑	44.9 ↓	43.6 ↓
Work Setting					
University Work Setting	44% ↓	63% ↑	33% ↓	45%	57% ↑
Comprehensive Work Setting	20%	22%	27% ↑	14% ↓	19%
Four-year/baccalaureate Work Setting	13%	8% ↓	16%	11%	10%
Two-year/technical Work Setting	10%	4% ↓	15% ↑	12%	6%
Current Position					
Professional who does not supervise	36% ↓	50% ↑	47%	41%	52% ↑
Professional who manages others	32%	38% ↑	24% ↓	29%	29%
Director/Dean/Chief Officer/Administrator	26% ↑	9% ↓	24%	21%	11% ↓
Gender					
Female	78%	81%	78%	69% ↓	72%
Male	20%	16%	20%	25%	23%
n =	1298	468	397	269	270

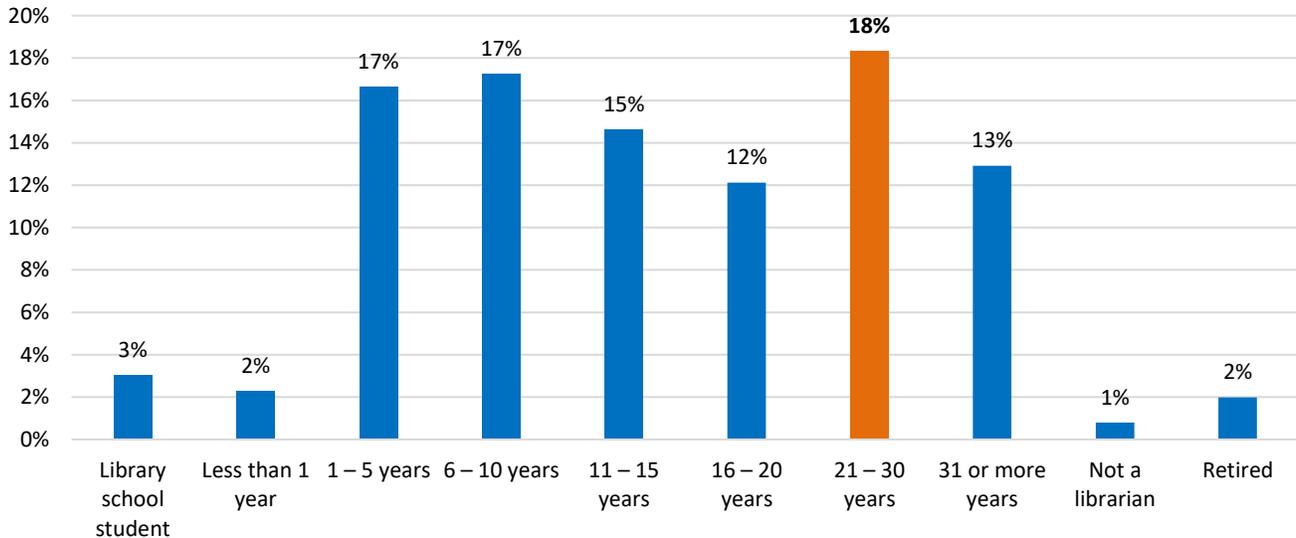
↑↓ Indicates responses that are significantly higher/lower for segment than for total respondents

Overall Survey Results

All Respondents

Question 1: How many years have you been a member of the profession?

The average respondent has been a member of the profession for 13 years. Large groups of respondents have 10 or fewer years of experience and 21 or more years of experience.



n = 2845

A libraries/archives/museums professional who does not supervise is significantly more likely to have been in the profession for 10 years or less. A libraries/archives/museums professional who manages others is significantly more likely to have been in the profession for 6 to 30 years, and a director/dean/ chief officer/administrator is significantly more likely to have been in the profession for 21 years or more.

Representation of library school students is higher in 2018 than in 2015 (3% vs. 1%), while representation is lower in 2018 for those in the profession for less than 1 year (2% in 2018, 3% in 2015) or 1-5 years (17% vs. 19%).

All Non-Retired Respondents

Question 2: What type of organization best describes your work setting?

The largest work setting represented is universities (large research/doctoral granting) with nearly half of respondents working at this type of organization. Respondents are also employed at comprehensive (undergraduate/graduate), four-year/baccalaureate and two-year/technical schools.

	Percent
University (large research/doctoral granting)	48%
Comprehensive (undergraduate/graduate)	20%
Four-year/baccalaureate	12%
Two-year/technical	9%
Graduate school of library/information science	1%
Independent research library	1%
Information-related organization	1%
Other, please specify:	7%
<i>n</i> = 2944	

Other, please specify (ranked by frequency):

- Public Library
- Unemployed
- Federal/government Library
- Non-profit
- Museum Library
- Public Research Library

All Non-Retired Respondents

Question 3: What is your primary job function?

Instruction and/or reference and administration are the most common primary job functions, with each function being represented by more than twenty percent of respondents.

	Percent
Instruction and/or reference	23%
Administration	22%
Rare books/special collections/archivist	6%
Liaison	6%
Cataloging/technical services	5%
Research services	5%
Subject specialist	4%
Access Services	4%
Collection development/management	4%
Library faculty/education	2%
Digital initiatives/projects/services	2%
Scholarly communications/repository services	2%
Electronic resources	1%
Outreach and/or marketing	1%
Distance education/learning	1%
Acquisitions	1%
Assessment	1%
Data curation/management/services/visualization	1%
Systems and network services	1%
Information technology	0%
Preservation	0%
Librarian in residence	0%
User experience	0%
Web services	0%
Government information	0%
Learning commons	0%
Development/fund-raising*	0%
Other, please specify:	7%
<i>n = 2950</i>	

**fewer than 5 respondents*

Other, please specify (ranked by frequency):

- Student
- Unemployed
- All the above
- Consulting

All Non-Retired Respondents

Question 4: Which of the following best describes your current position?

The largest group of respondents, at just over forty percent, currently hold a position as a libraries/archives/museums professional who does not supervise. Slightly less than one-third are a libraries/archives/museums professional who manages others, and one in five are a director/dean/chief officer/administrator.

	Percent
Libraries/Archives/Museums professional who does not supervise	42%
Libraries/Archives/Museums professional who manages others	32%
Director/Dean/Chief Officer/Administrator	20%
Student	3%
LIS Educator	2%
Not Employed in Libraries/Archives/Museums	2%
Resident/Intern/Temp	1%
Vendor	0%
Not listed, please specify:	4%
Prefer not to state	0%
<i>n</i> = 2931	

Other, please specify (ranked by frequency):

- Retired
- Associate Dean
- Faculty
- Consultant
- Unemployed

All Respondents

Question 5: Which of the following describe your educational background?

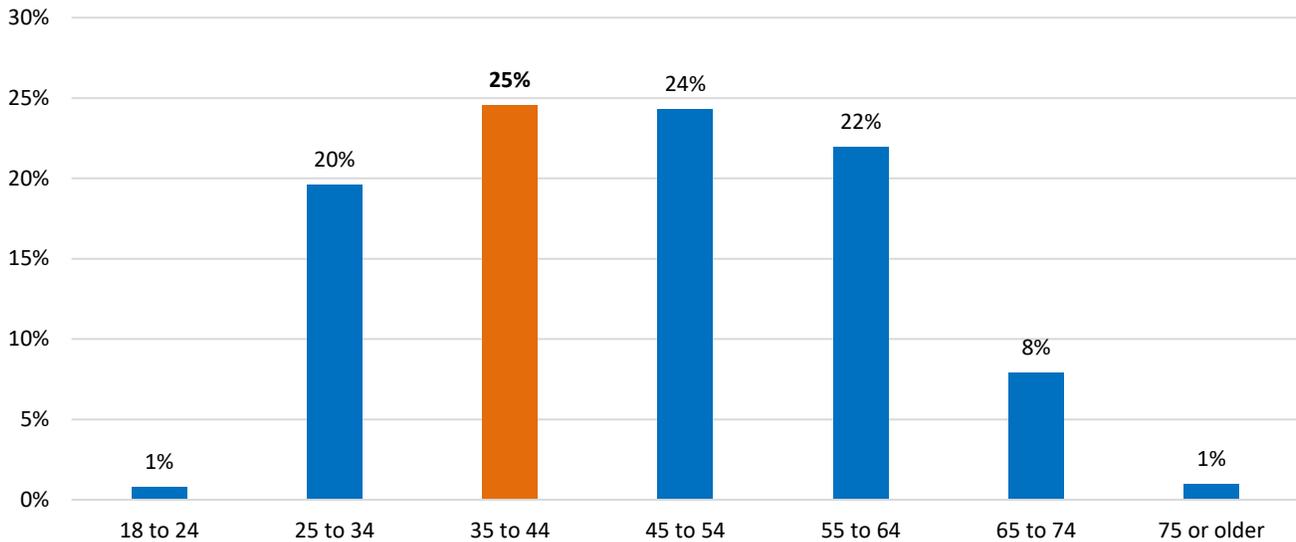
Slightly less than nine in ten respondents report having a master's degree in library/information science. More than a third have a master's degree in another subject.

	Percent
Master's degree in library/information science	88%
Master's degree in another subject	37%
PhD/EdD in another subject	9%
Current graduate student	5%
PhD in library/information science	3%
Certificate of advanced study in library/information science	3%
BA/BS only	1%
<i>n</i> = 3007	

All Respondents

Question 6: What is your age in years?

Respondents between 25 and 64 years of age are well represented. The 35 to 44 and 45 to 54 age groups are slightly larger than the 25 to 34 and 55 to 64 age groups.



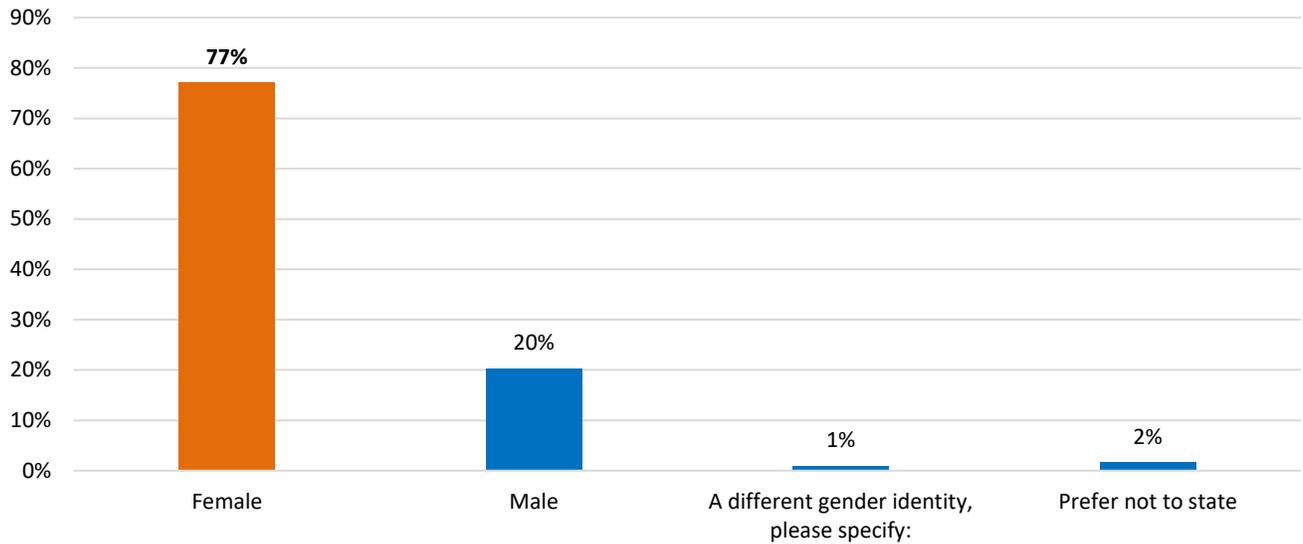
n = 2995

Representation of ages 18 to 44 is higher in 2018 than in 2015 (45% vs. 41%). The percentage of respondents increased by 1% in 2018 among 18 to 24-year-olds (88% of 18 to 24-year-olds are Student Members), 2% among 25 to 34-year-olds and 2% among 35 to 44-year-olds.

All Respondents

Question 7: Which of the following best describes your gender identity?

More than three-quarters of respondents describe their gender identify as female, and a fifth of respondents are male.



n = 3005

Other, please specify (ranked by frequency):

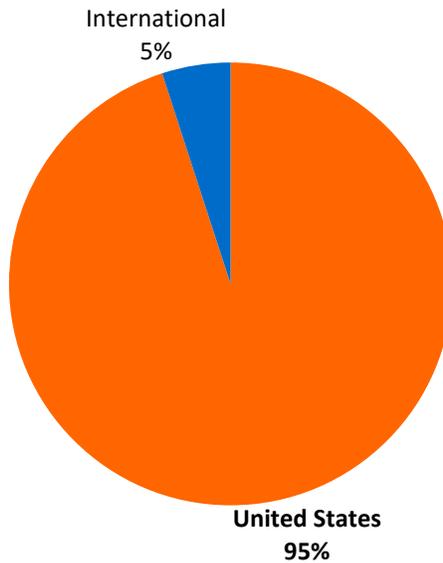
- Non-binary
- Transgender
- Gender non-conforming

There is little difference in the gender identities reported by respondents in 2015 and 2018. The percentages of 2018 respondents who describe themselves as female, male, a different gender identity, or prefer not to state changed by 1% or less from 2015.

All Respondents

Question 8: In what country do you currently reside?

The vast majority of respondents are from the United States, with a small representation from other countries. In 2015, the percentage of respondents from the United States was also 95%.



n = 2038

All United States Respondents

Question 9: In what state do you currently reside?

The largest group of respondents reside in California, with a sizable number of respondents residing in New York, Pennsylvania, Illinois and Texas.

	Percent
California	8%
New York	7%
Pennsylvania	6%
Illinois	6%
Texas	5%
Massachusetts	4%
Ohio	4%
Florida	4%
Michigan	4%
Virginia	4%
<i>n</i> = 2077	

All Respondents

Question 10: With which racial or ethnic group(s) do you most identify?

The vast majority of respondents identify as white, with small groups of respondents identifying as Asian, Black or African-American or another ethnicity.

	Percent
White	87%
Asian	4%
Black or African American	4%
American Indian or Alaska Native	1%
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	0%
Other, please specify:	3%
Prefer not to state	4%
<i>n</i> = 2962	

Other, please specify (ranked by frequency):

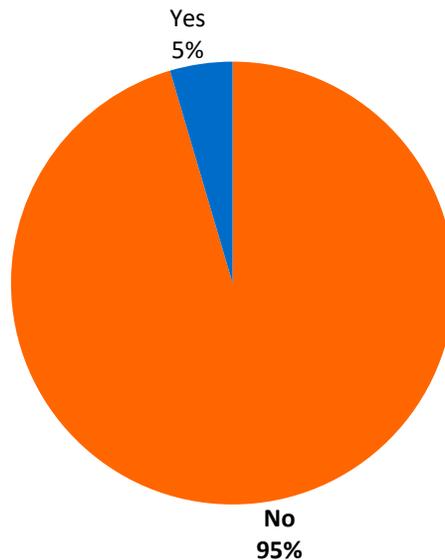
- Hispanic
- Mixed
- Jewish
- Middle Eastern
- Arab

The percentage of respondents who identify as white is higher in 2018 (87%) than in 2015 (83%), while the percentage who preferred not to state is lower in 2018 (4%) than in 2015 (6%). There is little difference between 2015 and 2018 in identification as Asian, Black or African American, or other ethnicities. Note that the 2018 survey used separate questions to measure ethnicity and Hispanic origin (see Question 11), while the 2015 survey identified Hispanic origin within its ethnicity question.

All Respondents

Question 11: Are you of Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin?

Five percent of respondents identify their origin as Hispanic, Latino or Spanish. In 2015, four percent of respondents identified their ethnicity as Hispanic.

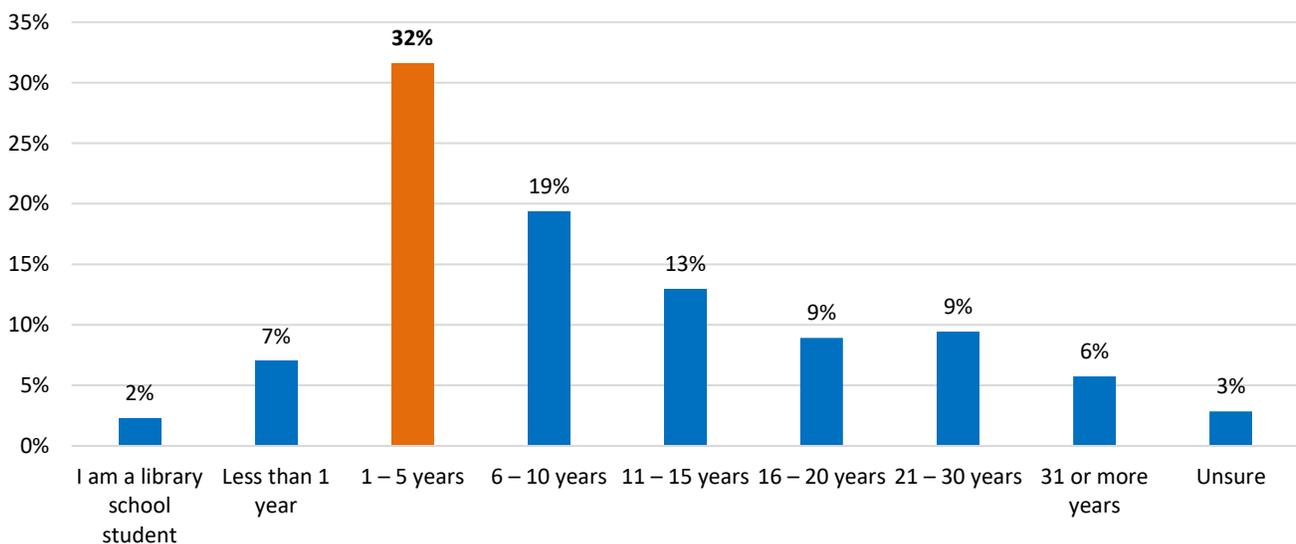


n = 2916

All Respondents

Question 12: How long have you been a member of ACRL?

The largest group of respondents have been members of ACRL for between one and five years, with the majority having been members for 10 years or less.



n = 2826

All Respondents

Question 13: How much do the following factors influence your decision to be a member of ACRL?

More than one-third of member respondents report keeping up-to-date through ACRL publications and maintaining/expanding peer networks as high influencers, with professional obligation and learning new skills also influencing the decision to be a member. These were also the most influential factors in 2015, with keeping up-to-date rated highest for influence.

Note that the rating scale used for this question was expanded from three rating levels in 2015 to four levels in 2018. This distributed the ratings across more scale points and yielded lower percentages for the “high influence” response level in 2018 than in 2015.

	No Influence	Low Influence	Medium Influence	High Influence
Keep up-to-date through ACRL publications	5%	17%	41%	36%
Maintain/expand my network of peers	6%	18%	41%	36%
Believe it is a professional obligation	8%	18%	39%	34%
Learn new skills to become more proficient in my job	7%	18%	42%	33%
Advance my career through volunteer service on a committee	19%	27%	27%	26%
Gain leadership experience through volunteer service	22%	31%	28%	19%
Employer pays my dues	77%	7%	7%	9%
Receive member discounts for continuing education	35%	33%	23%	9%
Membership is expected/required by employer	57%	19%	15%	9%
Access members-only areas of the ACRL website	31%	39%	24%	7%
<i>n</i> = 2898 to 2953				

Influences on the decision to be an ACRL member vary considerably between respondents who are newer to the library profession and those who are more experienced. Respondents with less than one year of experience are significantly more influenced by learning new skills to become more proficient. Career advancement through volunteer service on a committee has significantly higher influence among respondents with 1 to 10 years of experience. Respondents who have 31 or more years of experience or who are retired are significantly more influenced by keeping up-to-date and believing it is a professional obligation.

Respondents who work in a university setting are significantly more influenced by advancing their career through committee service and gaining leadership experience through volunteer service, while those at a four-year/baccalaureate or two-year/technical school are significantly more likely to rate keeping up-to-date as a high influencer. Directors/deans/chief officers/administrators are significantly more likely to indicate keeping up-to-date and professional obligation as having high influence on their decision to be a member, while librarians who do not supervise are significantly less likely to do so.

All Respondents

Question 14: What is the most important thing you receive from your membership in ACRL that you can't obtain anywhere else?

Top Themes:

- Access to a community of like-minded professionals
- Publications
- Networking opportunities
- Access to up-to-date information
- Continuing education and professional development opportunities
- Volunteer opportunities
- Discounts

n = 1868

Sample Verbatim Responses:

"ACRL publications are high quality. The ACRL conference is also specific to my work and many sessions are genuinely useful for either information or meeting people who are working on the same problems I am."

"Ability to meet with academic librarians from across the globe, who are committed to our profession, and who share the same interests and concerns I have about how our profession and our services impact higher education and student learning."

"Academic library-related volunteer opportunities at the national level. However, I would say that my employer is moving toward placing higher value on volunteerism in organizations outside the profession (i.e., related to my liaison areas)."

"Access to a professional network of other library leaders- through webinars, listservs, and publications."

"Discount on professional development and the Journal of College and Research Libraries and College and Research Libraries News."

"Great articles that show me new ideas that I may implement in my own library. All of our librarians read the journals and find them useful. We enjoy the conferences but can usually only afford to go if they are on the west coast."

"I really like the publications, and the biennial conference. I think that ACRL members take their work seriously, and I've gained knowledge and network opportunities by attending."

"Information that is exactly what I need for my job, with no need to comb through and pick out the couple of articles that are about my type of library."

"Keeping me abreast of relevant trends and issue on topics related to academic library operations and academic librarianship as a profession."

"Leadership through volunteer service leading to career advancement."

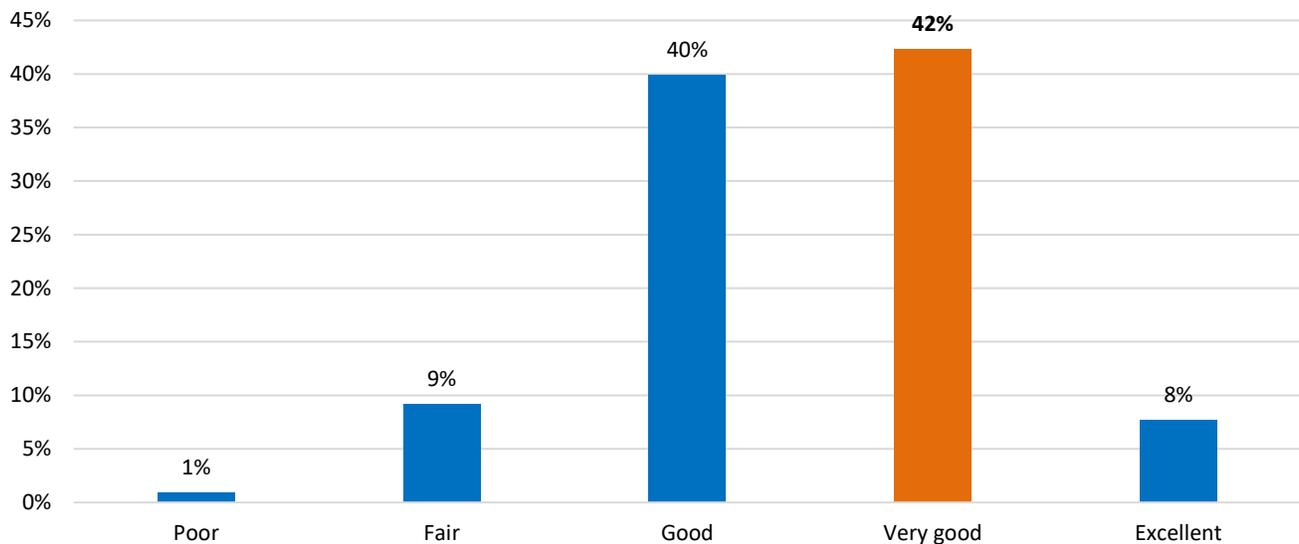
"Networking opportunities. Ability to expand my professional competencies through expertise of my colleagues and peers."

“Professional development opportunities through leadership and collaboration with other professionals who do what I do in the environment I do it.”

All Respondents

Question 15: Based on your experiences, could you please rate ACRL’s overall performance?

Eighty-two percent of members rate ACRL’s overall performance as good or very good.



n = 2913

Directors/deans/chief officers/administrators rate ACLR’s performance significantly more favorably than libraries/archives/museums professionals who do not supervise. Library administrators also rate ACRL more favorably than respondents with other job functions. Performance ratings increase with age, with significantly higher ratings among members age 55 or older.

All Respondents

Question 16: On average, how are each of the following expenses usually paid?

Membership dues are usually paid out of pocket by a large majority of respondents. Conference and event fees, as well as travel expenses, are often paid by the employer or split between employer and respondent.

	I pay 100%	My employer pays 100%	My employer and I share the costs	Other
Membership dues	78%	18%	3%	1%
Conference/event travel expenses (lodging, meals, logistics, etc.)	17%	33%	44%	6%
Conference/event registration fees	17%	50%	28%	6%

n = 2892 to 2938

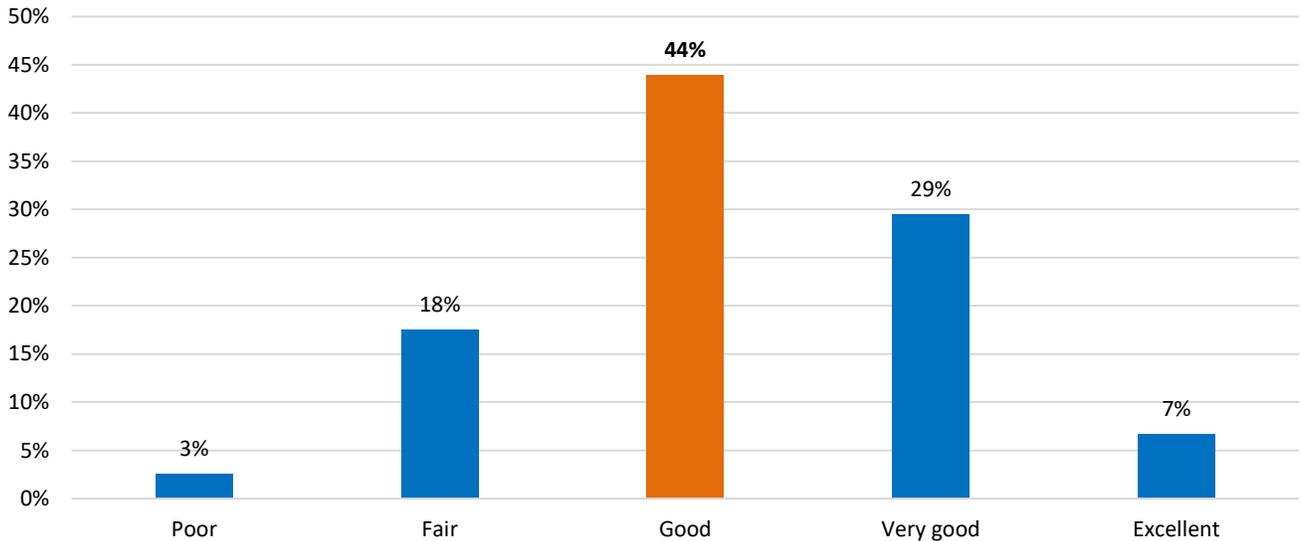
Directors/deans/chief officers/administrators are significantly less likely than others to pay 100% of membership dues or conference expenses, while libraries/archives/museums professionals who do not supervise are significantly more likely to pay 100% of membership dues. Respondents in a university work setting are significantly more likely to pay 100% of their membership dues but less likely to pay 100% of conference travel expenses and registration fees.

Current respondents, compared to those in 2015, are more likely to have an employer who pays 100% of their conference/event travel expenses (33% in 2018, 30% in 2015) and are less likely to be sharing the costs with their employer (44% vs. 48%). Current respondents are more likely than respondents in 2015 to pay 100% of their conference/event registration fees (17% vs. 15%).

All Respondents

Question 17: Based on current membership dues, please rate the value provided to you as a member of ACRL.

Somewhat less than half rate the value of ACRL membership as good, with more than a third rating membership value as very good or excellent.



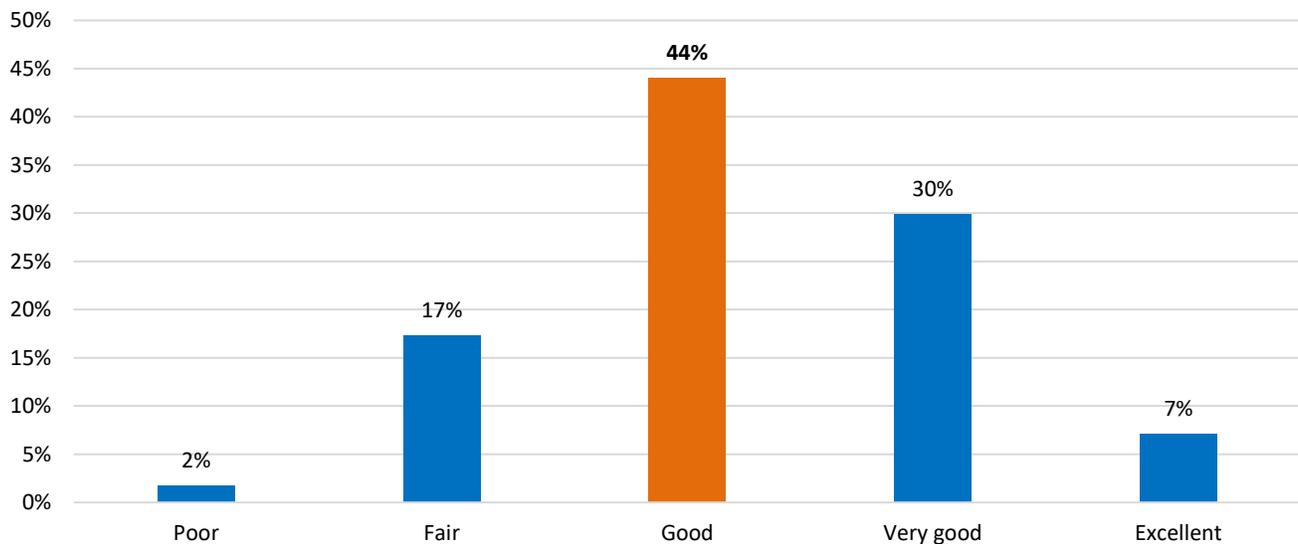
n = 2930

Directors/deans/chief officers/administrators are significantly more positive about the value provided by ACLR than libraries/archives/museums professionals who do not supervise. Library administrators also rate ACRL's value more positively than respondents with other job functions. ACRL's value ratings increase with age, with significantly higher ratings among members age 65 or older and with significantly lower ratings among those 25 to 44.

All Respondents

Question 18: How would you rate the benefit of using ACRL products and services?

The benefit of using ACRL products and services is rated very similarly to the value of membership, with somewhat less than half rating the benefit as good and with more than a third rating the benefit as very good or excellent.



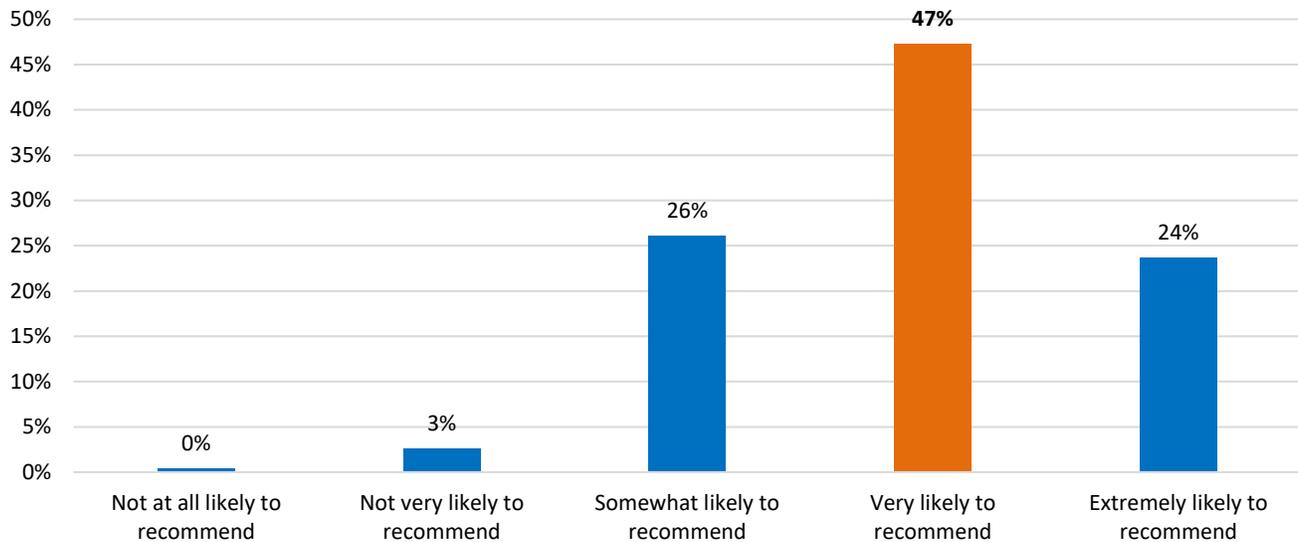
n = 2911

Directors/deans/chief officers/administrators are significantly more positive about the benefit of using ACRL products and services than libraries/archives/museums professionals who do not supervise. Library administrators also rate the benefit of ACRL products and services more positively than respondents with other job functions. Ratings of ACRL's products and services increase with age, with significantly higher ratings among members age 65 or older and with significantly lower ratings among those 25 to 44.

All Respondents

Question 19: If someone who is an academic and research librarian, or is studying to be one, asks your advice on joining a professional association, how likely would you be to recommend ACRL?

Slightly more than seven in ten respondents would be very likely or extremely likely to recommend ACRL to an academic and research librarian (or someone studying to be one) who asks their advice on joining a professional association.



n = 2934

Directors/deans/chief officers/administrators are significantly more likely to recommend ACRL than libraries/archives/museums professionals who do not supervise. Willingness to recommend ACRL increases with age, with significantly higher ratings among members age 55 or older and with lower ratings among members who are 44 years or younger.

All Respondents Who Are Not Likely to Recommend ACRL

Question 20: Why are you not likely to recommend ACRL?

Top Themes:

- The cost of membership is too high
- The value does not outweigh the cost
- Benefits of membership are not relevant enough
- ACRL is not inclusive enough

n = 76

Sample Verbatim Responses:

“Low value for early career librarians, few scholarships, few conference support opportunities, very management focused.”

“Too expensive; also comes across as very elitist. Not welcoming.”

“The cost is prohibitive for students. I recommend waiting until you find a position before you take on the cost of membership. I also find that joining committees/participating is difficult if you aren't already established in the profession.”

“Overall, there isn't much benefit to a librarian who may be on a lower pay level. There are other organizations where they can gain experience with committee work and build their professional network, such as state chapters.”

“Normally have to pay out of pocket, value is almost exclusively tied to increasingly un-affordable expensive conferences which in turn rarely speak to the smaller academic organization regardless of numbers.”

“It just doesn't offer anything. It's basically a dead page that sends out a newsletter. There are no real opportunities. Also, I think the insularity of colleges/universities is becoming a serious problem within the profession--just look at the job listings and their ridiculous requirements that can only be met internally.”

“It would depend what areas they work in. For a new general academic librarian, I might recommend ACRL, but I increasingly feel like I get more value from more specialized organizations without the overhead of ALA.”

“I think other organizations and/or attendance at other conferences might better serve librarians working in digitization, data curation, and newer areas of librarianship.”

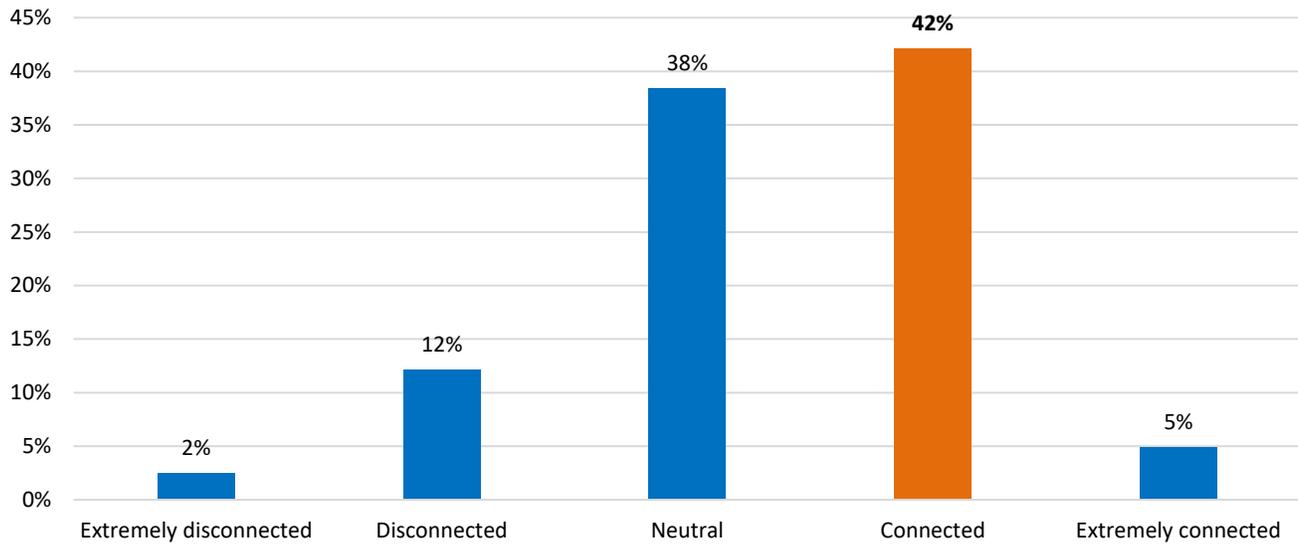
“I have yet to see the value of this membership. I applied to be a volunteer and was never taken up on it. I've tried to present at the conference and have never been accepted, so I haven't been able to justify going.”

“ACRL seems to only care about academic librarians who are instruction librarians. The overwhelming majority of conference sessions at ACRL conferences focus on instruction. While that's an important service for the academic library, it is not the ONLY service. We also still do reference, are engaged with scholarly communication endeavors, and, oh yeah, we still buy materials for the collection, too. ACRL also comes up short on offering sessions that address leadership/management/working with others.”

All Respondents

Question 21: As a member, how connected do you feel to ACRL?

A large majority of respondents feel connected or neutral to ACRL, with small proportions of respondents feeling disconnected or extremely connected.



n = 2938

Connectedness with ACRL increases with age and years as an ACRL member. Connectedness is significantly higher among those who are 45 years or older and those who have been an ACRL member for 11 or more years, and connectedness is significantly lower among ages 18 to 34 and among those who have been a member for 5 years or less.

Directors/deans/chief officers/administrators feel significantly more connected to ACRL than libraries/archives/museums professionals who do not supervise.

All Respondents

Question 22: What [makes you feel connected/would make you feel more connected] to ACRL?

More than half of respondents report that meeting other academic and research librarians would make them feel connected, or more connected, to ACRL. Collaborating with colleagues/peers, learning from ACRL educational offerings and meeting colleagues/peers at events would also enhance feelings of connectedness with ACRL.

	Percent
Meeting other academic and research librarians	52%
Collaborating with colleagues/peers	42%
Learning new things from ACRL educational offerings	42%
Meeting colleagues/peers at events	41%
Volunteering on behalf of ACRL	25%
Receiving guidance/coaching/mentoring from ACRL	14%
Seeing people with my background in leadership positions	13%
Coaching/mentoring colleagues/peers	9%
Having my voice heard by ACRL leadership	6%
Individual recognition from ACRL staff	2%
Individual recognition from ACRL volunteer leaders	2%
Other, please specify:	8%
None of the above	4%
<i>n</i> = 2871	

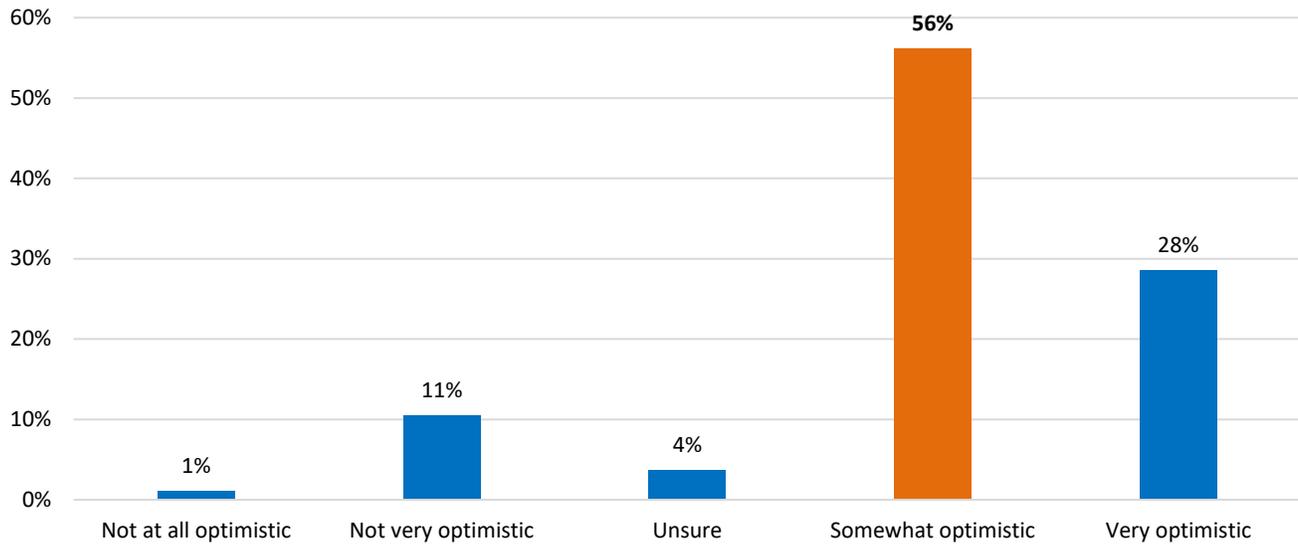
Other, please specify (ranked by frequency):

- ACRL publications
- ACRL conference
- Committee membership
- Less emphasis on specific group issues and more on librarianship as a whole
- More attention paid to the issues of small academic libraries.

All Respondents

Question 23: In general, how do you feel about the state of academic/research librarianship today?

A large majority of respondents feel somewhat optimistic or very optimistic about the current state of academic/research librarianship.



n = 2892

Directors/deans/chief officers/administrators feel significantly more optimistic than students and libraries/archives/museums professionals who do not supervise.

All Respondents

Question 24: What are the top two issues facing you as an information professional today?

The top two issues currently facing respondents as information professionals are budget constraints and demonstrating value and assessing impact.

Similar issues (demonstrating value and relevance to stakeholders, budget cuts and declining financial support) were identified as the most concerning workplace issues by respondents in 2015.

	Percent
Budget constraints (e.g., staffing cuts, flat/decreased funding, rising cost of resources)	39%
Demonstrating value and assessing impact (e.g., to gain support from campus administration, or state and federal government)	38%
Keeping up with change (e.g., changes in higher education, technology, political environment, higher education)	25%
Human resources issues (e.g., burnout, stress, job insecurity, low pay, imposter syndrome)	22%
Information literacy and student success (e.g., ACRL Framework, assessing student learning outcomes)	22%
Professional development (e.g., learning new skills, advancing in my profession)	12%
Scholarly communication (e.g., copyrights, open access, institutional repositories, digital scholarship)	11%
Collaboration with faculty	10%
Changes in federal government (e.g., heightened uncertainty, impact on higher education)	6%
Data management (e.g., need for specialized assistance from libraries)	4%
Other, please specify:	6%
I am not facing any issues as an information professional	1%
<i>n</i> = 2897	

Other, please specify:

- Diversifying the profession
- Finding a permanent job
- Competition with other campus units that encroach on library areas of responsibility

All Respondents Who Selected an Issue in Question 24

Question 25: How well do you feel ACRL addresses each of these issues?

Among the top two previously selected issues, most respondents rate ACRL in the positive range (6 or higher) for demonstrating value and assessing impact, while few rate ACRL positively for addressing budget constraints. A majority of respondents also rate ACRL in the positive range for keeping up with change, information literacy and student success, professional development and scholarly communication.

	Not well at all-1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Very well-10	Don't know
Budget constraints (e.g., staffing cuts, flat/decreased funding, rising cost of resources)	8%	6%	10%	10%	11%	12%	9%	3%	1%	0%*	30%
Demonstrating value and assessing impact (e.g., to gain support from campus administration, or state and federal government)	1%	1%	3%	5%	9%	13%	20%	22%	8%	6%	12%
Keeping up with change (e.g., changes in higher education, technology, political environment, higher education)	0%*	1%	2%	3%	7%	12%	23%	22%	11%		11%
Human resources issues (e.g., burnout, stress, job insecurity, low pay, imposter syndrome)	13%	10%	14%	8%	11%	8%	7%	1%	1%*	0%*	27%
Information literacy and student success (e.g., ACRL Framework, assessing student learning outcomes)	1%*	0%*	2%	2%	5%	7%	20%	27%	19%	14%	4%
Professional development (e.g., learning new skills, advancing in my profession)	1%*	1%*	2%	5%	8%	13%	23%	23%	9%	5%	11%
Scholarly communication (e.g., copyrights, open access, institutional repositories, digital scholarship)	0%*	0%*	2%	2%	11%	13%	20%	24%	12%	7%	8%
Collaboration with faculty	3%	4%	8%	11%	14%	15%	14%	8%	3%	1%*	17%
Changes in federal government (e.g., heightened uncertainty, impact on higher education)	3%	5%	5%	10%	12%	9%	9%	15%	2%*	2%*	28%
Data management (e.g., need for specialized assistance from libraries)	3%*	2%*	6%	8%	18%	11%	14%	10%	2%*	1%*	24%
Other, please specify:	28%	10%	15%	7%	12%	6%	3%*	3%*	1%*	1%*	15%

n = 125 to 1105

*fewer than 5 respondents

All Respondents

Question 26: Which of the following do you think will be your biggest professional challenges over the next 3 to 5 years?

Respondents think that their biggest professional challenges over the next 3 to 5 years will be keeping up-to-date with new trends and developments, expanding their knowledge/level of expertise and personal considerations such as work/life balance and family commitments.

	Percent
Keeping up-to-date with new trends and developments in the field	45%
Expanding my knowledge/level of expertise	38%
Personal considerations (e.g., work/life balance, family commitments)	35%
Obtaining a promotion and/or tenure	24%
Gaining management and leadership skills	23%
Finding a job or making a job change	21%
Expanding my network/connections with other information professionals	19%
Time management	19%
Receiving career support or guidance from an advisor or employer	9%
Developing interpersonal skills (e.g., working with a team, communicating with colleagues)	5%
Other, please specify:	10%
None of the above	3%
<i>n</i> = 2850	

Other, please specify (ranked by frequency):

- Retirement
- Avoiding burnout
- Budget constraints
- Age discrimination
- Obtaining additional degrees

Library school students and respondents with less than 5 years of professional experience are significantly more likely to indicate that finding a job or making a job change and expanding their network/connections with other information professionals will be among their biggest challenges over the next 3 to 5 years. Those with 1 to 10 years of experience are significantly more likely to expect that obtaining a promotion and/or tenure and gaining management and leadership skills will be among their biggest challenges. Respondents with 6 to 15 years of experience are more likely to indicate that personal considerations will be a challenge. Respondents with 16 years or more experience are likely to indicate that keeping up-to-date with new trends and developments in the field will be one of their top challenges. Similar trends are seen by age, with adults between the ages of 25 and 44 more challenged by personal considerations, obtaining a promotion and/or tenure, and gaining management and leadership skills, and those 45 years or older are more challenged by keeping up-to-date with new trends and developments in the field.

All Respondents

Question 27: What could ACRL do or provide to help you address these challenges?

Top Themes:

- More educational and professional development opportunities through webinars or workshops
- Increase the relevance of ACRL offerings
- Programming on a wider variety of topics
- Offer more leadership development opportunities
- There is nothing that ACRL could do
- Unsure about what ACRL could do

n = 1254

Sample Verbatim Responses:

“Programming or professional development on leadership, programming on the path to upper level management or dean/director positions.”

“More educational offerings regarding technologies that are changing academic librarianship and the disciplines that we support, like the sciences. AI is a paradigm changer!”

“Continue providing educational/professional development opportunities, especially webinars and asynchronous learning venues.”

“Workshops on career changes in later years of the profession--how to pursue meaningful career changes; Continue webinars and other sessions to talk about new trends in libraries--examples of libraries in the field doing new innovative services and piloting new ideas.”

“Webinars dealing with the technicalities of library systems, such as understanding proxy servers and SSO systems. More and more, we need to communicate with IT, but there is a barrier that is hard to bridge.”

“The content at ACRL meetings is too heavily weighted toward information literacy. There's more to libraries than that. I increasingly feel like ACRL is mired in info lit discussions of the 1990s, or cultural identity issues that don't advance my professional skills.”

“Publish highly relevant articles in C&RL and C&RL News. Articles should be probing, challenging and interesting enough to get cited and talked about outside the profession”

“Providing low cost professional development. The webinars are useful for those who can't attend ACRL or ALA. I've greatly appreciated the Framework and all the publications on the value of academic libraries. The AIA project was very useful and the upcoming grants are a great opportunity”

“Offer mentorship/guidance for academic librarians involved in community engagement work.”

“More leadership programming and leadership opportunities (that didn't involve conference attendance).”

All Respondents

Question 28: Which of the following associations do you regularly participate in or access for professional information or education?

A large majority of respondents regularly participate in or access the ALA, and two-fifths participate in or engage with an ACRL Chapter. Several specialty associations are utilized by a limited number of respondents.

	Percent
American Library Association (ALA)	80%
ACRL Chapter	40%
Reference and User Services Association (RUSA)	18%
Subject discipline associations (e.g., American Historical Association)	15%
Library Leadership and Management Association (LLAMA)	15%
Educause	12%
Library Information Technology Association (LITA)	11%
Association for Library Collections and Technical Services (ALCTS)	11%
Other library associations (e.g., special libraries, law libraries, state), please specify:	38%
Other higher education associations, please specify:	10%
Other, please specify:	16%
None of the above	2%
<i>n</i> = 2816	

Other library associations (ranked by frequency):

- SLA
- Medical Library Association
- Texas Library Association
- MLA
- ARL

Other higher education associations (ranked by frequency):

- CNI
- AAUP
- ASEE
- AACU
- ALISE

Other, please specify (ranked by frequency):

- Society of American Archivists
- CNI
- SPARC
- IASSIST

Directors/deans/chief officers/administrators are significantly more likely to participate in the ALA, LLAMA and Educause than libraries/archives/museums professionals who do not supervise. Libraries/archives/museums professionals who manage others are significantly more likely to participate in LLAMA and LITA. Academic and research librarians with 21 or more years of experience are more likely than other respondents to report participation in LLAMA and Educause.

All Respondents

Question 29: Please indicate the role each association plays in your professional life.

A majority of respondents indicate that ACRL is among their primary organizations for education, and more than one in three indicate that ACRL is a primary organization for networking.

Members who also participate in ALA use it as a primary organization for education (30%), networking (32%) or some other purpose (27%). For members who also participate in other organizations, an ACRL Chapter (54%) and other library associations (69%) are often primary organizations for networking, while ALCTS (69%), LITA (55%), Educause (51%), subject discipline associations (48%), RUSA (47%), LLAMA (45%) and other higher education associations (52%) are often primary organizations for education.

	Primary organization for education	Primary organization for networking	Primary organization for other purpose	Not a primary organization	n=
Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL)	57%	36%	15%	18%	2745
American Library Association (ALA)	30%	32%	27%	25%	2139
ACRL Chapter	33%	54%	15%	22%	1067
Reference and User Services Association (RUSA)	47%	23%	21%	25%	488
Subject discipline associations (e.g., American Historical Association)	48%	34%	33%	17%	396
Library Leadership and Management Association (LLAMA)	45%	31%	18%	23%	391
Educause	51%	8%	16%	31%	327
Library Information Technology Association (LITA)	55%	18%	16%	23%	300
Association for Library Collections and Technical Services (ALCTS)	69%	32%	17%	12%	293
Other library associations (e.g., special libraries, law libraries, state), please specify:	49%	69%	27%	7%	1046
Other higher education associations, please specify:	52%	42%	34%	11%	281
Other, please specify:	61%	58%	34%	5%	423

Respondents who work in instruction and/or reference job functions are more likely to use ACRL as a primary source of education, while 38% of members who work as a rare books/special collections/archivist and 30% of those in cataloging/technical services do not consider ACRL to be among their primary organizations. Respondents who work in a university (large research/doctoral granting) setting are less likely than those in other work settings to use ACRL as a primary source of education but are more likely to rely on ACRL as a primary source of networking.

All Respondents

Question 30: Please rate the importance of the following ACRL benefits.

More than eighty percent of members find professional development opportunities and networking opportunities to be important or extremely important. Nearly eighty percent consider *College & Research Libraries News* to be important or extremely important.

	Extremely Unimportant	Unimportant	Neutral	Important	Extremely Important	Aware but never used
Professional development opportunities	2%	2%	10%	41%	41%	5%
Opportunities to network with other professionals in my field	1%	1%	10%	42%	40%	5%
Opportunities to gain leadership experience (e.g., service on ACRL committees)	3%	7%	19%	34%	27%	11%
College & Research Libraries News	2%	4%	16%	50%	27%	2%
Access to career information and employment opportunities	3%	8%	20%	38%	21%	10%
Member discounts	4%	11%	27%	31%	14%	13%
n = 2789 to 2808						

Ratings of importance (% important or extremely important) decreased from 2015 to 2018 for all member benefits. The largest decline occurred for career information and employment opportunities (68% to 59%).

All Respondents

Question 31: Please rate your satisfaction with the following ACRL benefits.

Members are most satisfied with *College & Research Libraries News*, with 79% satisfied or very satisfied. About two-thirds of members are satisfied or very satisfied with opportunities for networking (67%) and opportunities for professional development (66%).

	Very Dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Neutral	Satisfied	Very Satisfied	Don't Know
Professional development opportunities	1%	5%	23%	49%	17%	6%
Opportunities to network with other professionals in my field	1%	5%	23%	46%	21%	5%
Opportunities to gain leadership experience (e.g., service on ACRL committees)	1%	7%	31%	37%	15%	9%
College & Research Libraries News	0%	2%	18%	48%	31%	2%
Access to career information and employment opportunities	1%	4%	32%	44%	12%	9%
Member discounts	1%	5%	40%	33%	6%	14%
n = 2344 to 2667						

Ratings of satisfaction (% satisfied or very satisfied) increased from 2015 to 2018 for networking opportunities (64% to 67%), leadership opportunities (46% to 52%) and member discounts (35% to 39%). Satisfaction with other benefits remains within 1% of 2015 levels.

All Respondents

Question 32: What is your level of agreement with the following statements about ACRL?

Between seventy and seventy-five percent of respondents agree or strongly agree that ACRL is a leader for academic and research librarians in several areas: as a provider of professional development, in helping demonstrate the value of academic and research libraries, in connecting academic and research librarians, as a publisher of research and practice, and in helping librarians transform student learning, pedagogy, and instructional practices.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Leading provider of professional development for academic and research librarians	1%	4%	21%	54%	20%
Leader in helping librarians demonstrate the value of academic and research libraries	1%	4%	24%	53%	19%
Leader in connecting academic and research librarians to each other	1%	4%	25%	51%	19%
Leading publisher of research and practice that advances the field	1%	4%	24%	53%	19%
Leader in helping librarians transform student learning, pedagogy, and instructional practices	1%	4%	25%	53%	18%
Leader in helping the academic and research library workforce effectively navigate change in higher education environments	1%	7%	33%	48%	10%
Leader in helping librarians to accelerate the transition to a more open system of scholarship	1%	6%	48%	39%	6%
<i>n</i> = 2715 to 2721					

Since 2015, agreement with several statements has shifted downward from “strongly agree” to “neutral”. Strong agreement that ACRL is a leading provider of professional development declined by 8% (28% in 2015, 20% in 2018) and declined by 4% to 6% for most other statements. However, agreement that ACRL is a leader in connecting academic and research librarians to each other has remained level. The statement “ACRL is a leader in helping the academic and research library workforce effectively navigate change in higher education environments” was not part of the 2015 survey.

All Respondents

Question 33: Please indicate your level of agreement with each of the following statements.

See the table on page 15 for the response to this question.

All Respondents

Question 34: During your workday, when searching for information on a work-related issue or for your own professional use, which sources do you most frequently turn to?

A majority of respondents indicate that a general search engine is among the sources they most frequently turn to when searching for information on a work-related issue or for professional use. Approximately half frequently turn to their library web site (53%) and the ACRL website (45%), and more than one in three turn to the ALA website.

	Percent
General search engine (e.g., Google, Bing)	77%
Library web site	53%
ACRL website	45%
ALA website	37%
Academic search engine (e.g., iSeek Education, Academic Index)	29%
Social media site (e.g., Facebook, LinkedIn)	24%
ACRL-Choice mobile app	1%
Other organization/association website, please specify:	20%
Other website, search engine or mobile app, please specify:	11%
None of the above	4%
<i>n</i> = 2679	

Other organization/association website (ranked by frequency):

- ARL
- Society of American Archivists
- Medical Library Association
- EDUCAUSE

Other website, search engine or mobile app (ranked by frequency):

- Google Scholar
- LISTA
- Discussion lists
- Chronicle of Higher Education
- Twitter

Directors/deans/chief officers/administrators report significantly more frequent usage of the ACRL website, the ALA website and an academic search engine. Those between 55 and 64 years old report significantly more frequent usage of a library website, the ACRL website and the ALA website. Respondents between 25 and 34 years old and those with 1 to 10 years of experience are significantly more likely to turn to social media.

All Respondents

Question 35: Which of the following formats do you prefer to use for your own professional education?

Most respondents prefer to use multiple formats for their own professional education. One-day in-person seminars, meetings and conferences are slightly more widely preferred than several other formats.

	Percent
One-day in-person seminars, meetings and conferences	55%
Live webinars	50%
Multi-day in-person seminars, meetings and conferences	49%
Online or downloadable publications	48%
Print publications	45%
Pre-recorded, on-demand webinars or workshops	44%
Online discussion lists	32%
Social media and/or blogs	20%
Interactive video/live demos (the instructor can see students and vice versa)	12%
Podcasts	10%
Mobile apps	2%
Other, please specify:	2%
None of the above	0%

n = 2679

Other, please specify (ranked by frequency):

- Discussion lists
- MOOC's
- Asynchronous online courses

Respondents with less than 10 years of experience are significantly more likely to prefer social media and/or blogs, and library school students are more likely to prefer podcasts. Webinars and print publications are significantly more likely to be preferred by those with 31 years or more experience. Respondents who have been an ACRL member for 5 years or less are significantly more likely than other respondents to prefer pre-recorded, on-demand webinars, social media and/or blogs and podcasts, and they are significantly less likely to prefer one-day in-person conference and print publications.

All Respondents

Question 36: ACRL has many communities of practice, including 15 sections and 22 interest groups. If you belong to one or more of these groups, please indicate your primary affiliation.

About half of members select one of four communities of practice as their primary affiliation with ACRL: Instruction Section, University Libraries Section, Rare Books and Manuscripts Section and College Libraries Section.

	Percent
Instruction Section	17%
University Libraries Section	12%
Rare Books and Manuscripts Section	10%
College Libraries Section	10%
Science and Technology Section	7%
Community and Junior College Libraries Section	6%
Distance Learning Section	4%
Education and Behavioral Sciences Section	3%
Digital Scholarship Section	3%
Technical Services Interest Group	2%
European Studies Section	2%
Health Sciences Interest Group	2%
Anthropology and Sociology Section	2%
Access Services Interest Group	2%
Women and Gender Studies Section	2%
Politics, Policy and International Relations Section	2%
Arts Section	2%
Library Marketing and Outreach Interest Group	1%
Literatures in English Section (LES)	1%
African-American Studies Librarians Interest Group	1%
Asian, African, and Middle Eastern Studies Interest Group	0%
Digital Scholarship Centers Interest Group	0%
History Librarians Interest Group	0%
Librarianship in For-Profit Educational Institutions Interest Group	0%
Library and Information Science (LIS) Education Interest Group	0%
Academic Library Services to Graduate Students Interest Group	0%
Research Assessment and Metrics Interest Group	0%
Academic Library Services to International Students Interest Group	0%
Universal Accessibility Interest Group	0%
Institutional Research Interest Group	0%*
Residency Interest Group	0%*
Systematic Reviews and Related Methods Interest Group	0%*
Image Resources Interest Group	0%*
Digital Badges Interest Group	0%*
Virtual Worlds Interest Group	0%*
None of the above	8%
<i>n</i> = 2239	

*fewer than 5 respondents

Directors/deans/chief officers/administrators are significantly more likely than others to select College Libraries or University Libraries as their primary section, while libraries/archives/museums professionals who do not supervise are significantly more likely to select the Instruction or Science & Technology section.

All Respondents

Question 37: Do you have any additional comments or feedback that you would like to provide about ACRL or its programs and offerings?

Top Themes:

- ACRL is a great organization that serves its members well.
- ACRL should strive to be more inclusive and reach underserved audiences.
- ACRL should continue to work to improve the quality, variety and relevance of its offerings.
- Keep the cost of membership and offerings affordable.

n = 582

Sample Verbatim Responses:

"I would like to see ACRL provide programs on data visualization/management. In addition, programs and offerings on critical pedagogy or universal design using the Framework would help librarians develop instruction sessions."

"I would like to see more outreach to students and new professionals. I feel that I have had to do all of the work as a student and new librarian. A little help goes a long way."

"ACRL conference is VERY expensive even with the virtual offering. It would be nice if it was not so expensive to obtain the recordings of the program."

"ACRL is doing a very good job. Although I have not attended recently, I enjoy the ACRL Conference and hope I can attend another before I retire."

"I feel like the difference/discount needs to be MUCH greater between an ACRL member and a non-member to encourage membership, but to also provide greater value to those that are members."

"I really believe there needs to be more a focus on Indigenous Librarianship. A section or interest group would be beneficial as a community of practice."

"I would like more opportunities to participate in sections and interest groups."

"Keep up the great work! I learn something from ACRL members every week, and it is an extremely important part of my ongoing professional development toolkit."

"Lower membership dues. This would help new and early career professionals gain access to the opportunities. More online and in-person professional development opportunities."

"More opportunities to present at conferences and publish would be welcome for tenure track professionals."