



Editors' Preface to the *Advances in Librarianship Series*

About This Series

Through a combination of economic changes, political forces, and technological changes, libraries now find themselves in a position of meeting ever-increasing community needs and filling roles that otherwise would go unmet in key areas of economic and workforce development, health and wellness, education, civic engagement, and fostering and supporting open governments, among much else. Despite often decreasing financial support, the growing political pressures to reduce support for public goods such as libraries, and the voices claiming that Google has made libraries obsolete, libraries of all types—public, school, academic, and special—have never been more innovative, more community-focused, and more in demand than they are now.

Libraries play significant roles in digital literacy and digital inclusion, online education, provision of social services, employment skills, and even emergency response. They are creating partnerships with local government agencies and non-profits to address local needs. They adopt and innovate with new technologies and expand their services and materials through new channels provided by emerging technologies, from online reference to the curation and management of digital resources. At the same time, libraries serve as primary support structures for social justice and human rights, fostering and promoting inclusion, access, and equity for individuals, for their communities, and for society as a whole.

The *Advances in Librarianship* book series offers an exceptional avenue through which these major issues can be discussed. By devoting each volume—often in the range of 100,000 words—to a single topic of librarianship, the series provides its readers with a full and detailed consideration of key aspects of librarianship within a single concentrated venue. By including contributors who are library professionals, administrators, researchers, and educators from many different places, the series volumes bring an unparalleled range of voices to these topics of librarianship.

And by exploring these topics as broad issues with a wide range of societal impacts, these volumes not only inform those within the library profession, they inform community members, policy makers, educators, employers, health information professionals, and others who are interested in the impacts of libraries.

The ability to address current and future issues from both practice and research perspectives at great depth makes this series uniquely positioned to disseminate new ideas in libraries and to advocate for their essential roles in communities. To ensure the most current and future utility, each volume includes contributions in three areas: (1) the current best practices and innovative ideas; (2) the future issues and ways in which they might be prepared for and addressed; and (3) the large-scale societal implications and the way in which the focus of the volume impacts the libraries as a social institution.

About This Volume

This volume focuses on a population that libraries began to serve equally and treat humanely long before most other social institutions. The interrelationships between people with disabilities and libraries is a long and distinguished one, though this history and the current efforts—from accessible maker spaces in public libraries to inclusive online resources created by academic libraries to the special services and programs of special libraries for people with disabilities—are not as widely discussed in librarianship as they should be. This topic is a peerless example of the ways in which libraries seamlessly bridge service to their patrons with working toward larger goals of promoting social inclusion for members of their communities.

About the Series Trajectory

Ultimately, these volumes share innovative ideas and practices to improve overall library service and to help libraries better articulate their vital and myriad contributions to their communities. The range of library impacts can be seen in the forthcoming volumes in the series, which will explore such important topics as libraries as institutions of human rights and social justice, libraries as providers of access to and education about government information and services, and the roles of libraries at historically black colleges and universities (HBCUs). As fewer venues publish materials related to library practice, education, and research and many of the journals

formerly devoted to library research have shifted their focus more to information issues, the *Advances in Librarianship* book series is an unwavering venue devoted to documenting, examining, exchanging, and advancing library practice, education, and research.

Paul T. Jaeger and John Carlo Bertot, *Series Editors*
Karen Kettnich, *Managing Editor*
University of Maryland