

# Meeting the Moment: A Call to Deploy LIS Expertise in the Service of Refugee Communities

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## ABSTRACT

Reporting on Records of Refuge (RoR), a refugee-led participatory action research study on the information and archival needs of refugees in the United States, this work-in-progress poster illuminates how displacement and resettlement are worsened by misinformation, disinformation, and missing information resources—leading to constant triage of crisis situations with little to no time for information sharing or creation of community best practices. As rising hostilities and anti-immigrant policies make these crises exponentially worse, immediate LIS interventions can help refugees access and utilize information resources they need to navigate escalating crisis conditions.

To meet this need, the RoR team is accelerating implementation of Our Refugee Stories Archive (ORSA; [orsarchive.org](http://orsarchive.org)) as a hub for information resources and curriculum for refugee personal archive and data management. While ORSA was originally envisioned as primarily a community-centered archival repository, a shift in focus was necessary to ensure that the project team's skills and knowledge are deployed to minimize harm and empower refugees facing increasingly damaging documentary and information burdens. As the LIS field navigates the shock of current policy decisions it is imperative for us to remain mindful of the ways in which refugees (among many other marginalized communities in the United States) are reckoning not with any particular *novelty* of marginalization, but rather an *escalation* of tactics that attempt to force them into deeper isolation. Through active pursuits of solidarity, we as LIS researchers, educators, and practitioners can be a bridge that invites refugees into our information spaces and offers safety to their histories.

# ALISE RESEARCH TAXONOMY TOPICS

Information needs; Specific populations; Community engagement; Information rights; Archives.

## AUTHOR KEYWORDS

Refugees; Personal archives; LIS services for immigrants; Harm minimization; Participatory action research.

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