

Mary Jane Petrowski

# ACRL membership offers key benefits

Increase your effectiveness, value, and connection to the profession

**C**harting Our Future: ACRL Strategic Plan 2020,” challenges ACRL to position academic and research libraries and librarians as indispensable to advancing learning and scholarship. Over the past few years, we’ve interviewed and surveyed our members to learn more about the benefits of membership through their eyes. See the ACRL “Meet Our Members” page ([www.ala.org/ala/acrl/aboutacrl/acrlmembership/acrlmembers.htm](http://www.ala.org/ala/acrl/aboutacrl/acrlmembership/acrlmembers.htm)) to read more personal statements about ACRL membership value and benefits.

## Reasons to join

*Community:* ACRL is home and family for more than 13,600 academic and research librarians. It’s large enough to provide resources to help with any issue, but also small enough for members to get to know a core group of colleagues with similar interests and passions.

New librarians can connect with other librarians and the profession; rural, community college, and non-faculty librarians value the connection that ACRL provides to those in more isolated environments: “I developed several close friendships with other librarians who have continued to help me learn and explore as new technologies were introduced. We learn so much by sharing our experiences with each other and helping each other stay abreast of new developments in our rapidly changing environment.”

Members gain an “essential national connection” that fosters vital camaraderie between colleagues with similar responsibilities and issues. The sharing of experience

and expertise among members creates an inclusive, vital, and supportive channel that facilitates networking and collaboration. ACRL brings members into the wider community of academic librarianship through 17 sections, discussion lists, national conferences, and publications.

## Specialized resources

ACRL keeps members informed regarding the issues facing academic libraries and the profession through information sharing on discussion lists, ACRLLog, and formal publications, including the annual *Academic Library Trends & Statistics*. ACRL provides members with up-to-date information, guidelines, standards, research, and statistics to help academic and research librarians analyze trends and make informed decisions for managing information services.

ACRL helps members become better acquainted with effective practices throughout the profession. As one member noted, “ACRL offered those of us who were new to librarianship a wide variety of resources on which to lean as we made our way in this demanding profession.”

*Advancement:* Advancement involves research, publication, and presentation. Bottom line: the growth opportunities provided by ACRL can advance your career. ACRL publications, including *C&RL News*, *C&RL*, and *Choice*, allow members to keep up with (and influence) the field.

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**"I originally joined ACRL to network with others interested in academic librarianship but have since found the association to provide this and much more!"—Cecelia Brown, associate professor, School of Library and Information Studies, University of Oklahoma**

**"ACRL members offer answers to real-life questions such as how to implement technology in an academic library that has an assortment of tech-savvy librarians and IT professionals."—David A. Beronä, library director, Plymouth State University**

**"Quite honestly, I joined ACRL in order to connect to the professional academic library community. ACRL offers invaluable networking and development opportunities. Within a year of joining ACRL, I accepted a tenure-track faculty position as an academic librarian."—Frank J. Bove, electronic resources librarian, University of Akron**

**"I think association membership and activity is a cornerstone of one's professional life."—Julie Todaro, ACRL President**

**"ACRL allows me to work with others in pursuing my goal of empowering library users through the effective use of information."—Stanton Biddle, professor and administrative services librarian, Baruch College, City University of New York**

**"ACRL has been a leader in advocating for academic and research libraries on such important issues as copyright, intellectual property, information literacy, scholarly communication, assessments, users' privacy, etc."—Sha Li Zhang, assistant director for collections and technical services, University of North Carolina-Greensboro**

**"When I became an academic librarian I joined a profession. People in professions join associations to meet with kindred spirits and to further their common interests. ACRL is the professional association for academic and research librarians."—Pam Snelson, ACRL Past-President**

ACRL strives to help members achieve their greatest potential as academic librarians. Through professional development programs, conferences, publications, virtual workshops, discussion lists, and committee participation opportunities, ACRL provides a supportive infrastructure for each member to achieve a high level of personal continuous learning while building a network of supportive colleagues.

In the words of one member, "ACRL is my most valued tool for professional development."

*Institutional Enhancement:* The academic/research community benefits from the ongoing growth and development of our members and represents the ultimate return on your membership investment. ACRL is dedicated to developing members who are recognized as flexible, dynamic, and progressive leaders in their institutions and in scholarly communities. Members recognize that their self-development ultimately benefits their institution: "ACRL membership is not just for you but for your library."

*Professional Pride:* ACRL membership demonstrates solidarity and support for the profession as well as the work of ACRL in developing standards and guidelines for the profession. ACRL provides an opportunity for members to leverage their creativity, talent, and experience on behalf of higher education.

ACRL members take pride in shaping the future of the association and giving back to the profession. As a member, you support the voice of academic and research librarians in higher education as well as in the library community.

## Join today

ACRL can increase your effectiveness, value, and connection to the profession. Membership application forms are available online at [www.acrl.org](http://www.acrl.org). Become our newest member today and let ACRL help you connect, contribute, and stay current. *ZZ*