

Wednesday, April 10, 2024

Dear CRL Global Collections Stakeholders -

Greetings from CRL and from Chicago!

The excitement here at CRL has been building this past week as we ramp up to the 2024 Council of Voting Members meeting! This meeting is a central part of CRL's governance, as the membership comes together to take stock of the organization and to align priorities for the year ahead. I look forward to seeing many of you at the event next week, and hope that the beautiful weather we are enjoying in Chicago this week continues for the event.

One of my priorities since my start has been to engage with and learn from the tremendous expertise represented on CRL's International Collections and Content Group (ICCG). I am continuing to meet with each ICCG member individually, and met this week with: Ksenya Kiebusinski (Slavic Resources Coordinator, and Head, Petro Jacyk Central and East European Resource, University of Toronto), Lidia Uziel (Associate University Librarian for Research Resources and Scholarly Communication, University of California, Santa Barbara Associate University Librarian for Research Resources and Scholarly Communication, University of California, Santa Barbara), and Esmerelda Kale (George and Mary LeCron Foster Curator, Melville J. Herskovits Library of African Studies, Northwestern University). These conversations crossed diverse topics, but one standing theme is a strong desire for CRL to leverage the collective and distributed professional expertise in reflected CRL's membership.

The Strengthening Global Collections Advisory Task Force met on Monday, and conversations focused on what CRL might look like going forward and how best to support our future success. The group continues to circle back to the importance of librarian expertise in making collection decisions within their areas and the need for clearly articulated governance and processes to support the work in front of us. The group is still in its early stages, and I am pleased with the progress we are making already in an iterative and inclusive process to draft documents supporting the CRL work of the area studies librarians.

Last week, I was also able to meet with many other stakeholders, too many to mention in this message, but here are a few highlights:

I was able to touch base with Deborah Jakubs, a Chair of the CRL Board of Directors, Past President of ARL, and University Librarian Emerita of Duke University. It was the second time I had been able to connect with Deborah. Her deep expertise in area studies, including the institutional framework of area studies above and beyond CRL, has been helpful as I settle into my role.

Deborah Schlein, current Chair of MEMP, coordinated an opportunity for me to check-in with members of the Middle East Materials Project (MEMP). I was particularly impressed with MEMP's success with electronic resources licensing and their strong desire for future participation in CRL collection decisions that would affect their work.

In addition, I met with Galadriel Chilton, Director of Collections Initiatives at IviesPlus Confederation (<https://ivpluslibraries.org/>). I worked with Galadriel at Yale, so I reached out to her to chat about her experiences facilitating and coordinated research library collaboration.

I appreciate the enthusiasm and optimism of the conversations as we come together to craft the next chapter of CRL. Our 2024 Council of Voting Members celebrates 75 years of CRL and with each member interaction, I'm increasingly confident that we are building a strong foundation for the 75 years of creative growth!

I hope you're all doing well, and I look forward to seeing many of you soon in person!

- Kevin