Overview

This users manual provides a guide and reference materials for the Academic Libraries Survey (ALS), administered by the U.S. Department of Education’s National Center for Education Statistics (NCES). This manual provides a general description of major activities associated with the various components of the ALS.

The manual contains the following components:

1. **Overview**
   This section describes the contents of the manual.

2. **Calendar of Events**
   This section describes the calendar of events for the 2012 ALS collection cycle.

3. **Pre-collection notifications**
   Different media, including e-mail, customized letters, and advertisements in journals were used to inform the academic library community of the upcoming web based collection and reporting requirements. These included:
   a. Letter from American Library Association to Library Representatives
   b. An “alert” message from American Library Association was emailed to Library Representatives, published in C&RL News and posted to various Web pages.
   c. Letter sent to Chief Academic Officer of institutions (copy to Library Directors).

4. **Registration packet sent to the Library Director including:**
   **The letter sent to the Library Director**
   This is the initial notification of the collection to the Library Director requesting the designation of a “keyholder” who is responsible for the submission of ALS data.
   **The letter sent to the designated “keyholder”**
   This letter describes the responsibilities of the person designated to submit the data.
   **Web Registration Guide**
   This provides general information to the “keyholder” about the registration process.
   **Key Holder Certificate**
   This form specifies the USERID and PASSWORD for the “keyholder.” These items are used for registration and survey reporting.
5. Web Important Information and Survey Changes
   Web Important Information (General Instructions)
   This section describes the functions of the Web system.
   Changes to the FY 2012 survey
   This section provides a description of the changes to the survey components from the 2010 collection.

6. Web screen images of:
   Registration Form
   This section requests personal data, such as: name, title, email, address, and phone and fax numbers.

   Survey Eligibility Form
   Completion of the Survey Eligibility form determines if the reporting unit satisfies definitional requirements of a library. If defined criteria are satisfied, the respondent will then complete the ALS survey. This section also is used to determine if a reporting unit is responsible for the reporting for other institutions.

   ALS Web Collection Instrument & Instructions
   This section displays various data entry screens for the ALS survey along with instructions and definitions for the variables that are collected.

7. Edits that will be applied to reported data
   This section describes all of the various edits that will be applied to reported data, including edit messages and tolerances.

8. Sample Status and Survey Summary Reports and Broadcast Email
   This section describes the reports generated by the system with a guide on how to access and read the various reports and how to send broadcast email.

9. Library Representative List
   This section includes the current roster of Library Representatives including address, telephone, fax and e-mail.

10. Government Contacts and Helpful URLs
    This section includes important contacts at Census and NCES with address, telephone and e-mail information. It also includes useful URLs.

11. Brief Summary of Compare Academic Libraries Web Tool
    This section provides a brief summary of the Compare Academic Libraries Web Tool. This tool will enable users to compare information about their library to others based on selected characteristics.
This manual was prepared as a cooperative effort between NCES, the Census Bureau, and the American Library Association.
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