Guidelines for Interlibrary Loan Operations Management

Prepared by the Task Force for Qualifications for Interlibrary Loan Operations Management which was convened by the RUSA STARS Executive Committee, 2006. Revised by the Codes, Guidelines and Technical Standards Committee, Sharing and Transforming Access to Resources Section (STARS), Reference and User Services Association (RUSA), 2009.

Submitted to the RUSA Standards and Guidelines Committee on June 14, 2010 with revisions after feedback from interested parties (primarily via the STARS-L listserv) and with approval of the STARS Executive Committee. Revised by the Codes, Guidelines and Technical Standards Committee, Sharing and Transforming Access to Resources Section (STARS), Reference and User Services Association (RUSA), 2010.

These guidelines were approved by the STARS Executive Committee on Feb 14, 2011 and by the RUSA Board on January 23, 2012.

Introduction

These Guidelines are a result of research conducted by the Task Force for Qualifications for Interlibrary Loan Operations Management which was convened by the RUSA STARS Executive Committee in 2006. The charge of the Task Force was to:

> 1) Study and make recommendations regarding the qualifications needed for managers of interlibrary loan and document delivery services;
> 2) Recommend guidelines for hiring, training, and maintaining the skills of interlibrary loan managers;
> 3) Provide supporting documentation for libraries exploring and/or questioning the need for library professionals in interlibrary loan operations.

Interlibrary Loan and Document Delivery services are expanding into a larger resource sharing role. Increasingly, staff managing these operations are responsible for performing functions related to collection development, instruction, reference, and becoming an initial patron point of contact.[1] With these additional roles, libraries are encouraged to support the "Rethinking Resource Sharing

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[1] Buchanan, Sherry, "Interlibrary Loan is the New Reference: Reducing Barriers, Providing Access and Refining Services," *Interlending & Document Supply* 37, no. 4 (2009): 168-170.

Pitcher, K., T. Bowersox, C. Oberlander and M. Sullivan, "Point of Need Collection Development: The Getting It System Toolkit (GIST) and a New System for Acquisitions and Interlibrary Loan Integrated Workflow and Collection Development," *Collection Management* 35, no. 3 (2010): 222-236.

Su, Mila, "Beyond Circulation: The Evolution of Access Services and Its Relationship to Reference Librarianship," *The Reference Librarian* 49, no. 1 (2008): 77-86.

Manifesto" (http://rethinkingresourcesharing.org/) that outlines a set of principles advocating the improvement of delivery systems.

The purpose of providing RUSA guidelines for interlibrary loan (ILL) and document delivery (Doc Del) services management is to ensure that those involved in the management of these areas have the appropriate professional and personnel skills. ILL and Doc Del operations management personnel need to have core supervisory and project management experience both of which are crucial for this area. The various skills and experience recommended in these guidelines may be held by more than one person, and some daily job duties may be performed by paraprofessionals rather than librarians but those in the operation should ultimately report to a librarian.

Skill sets recommended come predominately from previous management experience but some of the daily job responsibilities could be learned on the job. Additionally, management should be committed to tracking and influencing issues and trends in the field of resource sharing on local, regional, and national levels.

These guidelines focus only on the management of interlibrary loan and document delivery operations, and are designed for all types and sizes of libraries.

1.0 Definitions

1.1 The purpose of interlibrary loan as defined by the American Libraries Association Interlibrary Loan Code and Explanatory Supplement (revised 2008) is the process by which a library requests material from, or supplies materials to, another library. The ILL Code and Supplement documents may be found at the ALA RUSA website.

1.2 Document Delivery includes any service, locally or at a distance, that involves sharing a library's own collection with its own patrons, without requiring patrons to visit the library, such as scanning or photocopying articles, or mailing books directly to patrons' homes.

2.0 Basic and technical qualifications for ILL/Doc Del Personnel

2.1 Training and experience in bibliographic searching.
    2.1.1 Knowledge of tools for citation verification.
    2.1.2 Knowledge of standard aids for locating requested materials.

2.2 Skill in promoting and contributing to a community of sharing and reciprocity, both between libraries and within a single unit.

2.3 Knowledge of ILL and Doc Del technology for maintaining and improving workflow, upgrading hardware/software, and enhancing current services to patrons.

2.4   Thorough understanding of the essential components of consortial agreements, including but not limited to turn-around time, prioritization, and other commitments typically made by the home institution and its partners in these agreements.

3.0 Supervisory skills needed for effective management of ILL/Doc Del operation

The manager must:

3.1 Possess knowledge of trends and technology at the professional level in the ILL and Doc Del field, including request-management databases, software upgrades, copyright issues, consortia, and resource-sharing developments. Staying current with ILL and Doc Del trends is fundamental to providing efficient service.

3.2 Have the ability to effectively coordinate ILL and Doc Del services and to develop workflow for the provision of fast, cost-effective, and seamless services.

3.3 Have the ability to provide leadership in staffing issues and daily operations.

3.4 Understand the institutional priorities and the service environment in which the department operates.

3.5 Have knowledge of consortial agreements sufficient for evaluating them and recommending participation for the enhancement of patron services.

3.6 Advocate for new technologies that support institutional priorities.

4.0 Qualifications for strategic management

The manager must:

4.1 Have the ability to work collegially with other groups within and outside the library on issues that directly impact interlibrary loan and document delivery services.

4.2 Be responsible for the fiscal management of the interlibrary loan/document delivery budget which includes but is not limited to shipping, copyright, borrowing/lending invoices, ILL fee management (IFM), capital equipment, and software costs.

4.3 Have statistical training sufficient to analyze statistical trends within interlibrary loan, document delivery, and shipping to improve overall patron services.

4.4 Possess the ability to evaluate and recommend consortia and commercial agreements.

5.0 Education and continuing education for ILL/Doc Del Management

5.1 Oversight of ILL and Doc Del operations should be assigned to personnel holding a Master of Library Science. This credential is desirable for the understanding of the research processes, workflow efficiencies, project management, and fiscal operations.

5.2 The manager should participate in professional organizations to stay current with trends in resource sharing activities and to form personal networks.

5.3 The manager should participate in continuing education opportunities, such as resource-sharing-specific conferences, courses offered by vendors, or continuing education courses focused on management skills.

5.4 The manager should advocate that library schools offer courses in resource sharing to better prepare graduates who enter this field.