

## Staffing for the Future

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One of the joys of being the series editor for [Advances in Library Administration and Organization](#) is the forward-looking focus of the material I solicit and read. In a world where budgets and time place so many demands upon us, it can be hard to turn outward. Sometimes we seem mired in our everyday situations, so I enjoy the opportunity to look to the future of librarianship and imagine how our workplaces will look not too far from now. I find that scholarly and professional reading in librarianship does an admirable job of helping us work beyond the immediate situation.

The latest volume of [Advances in Library Administration and Organization](#), "Library Staffing for the Future," focuses on the crucial issues of how libraries are staffed, how staff are trained and continue to develop, and how we maintain staffing at all levels. The day-to-day concerns of technology, funding, and the changing role of libraries that can subsume our present-day situations can lead us to reconsider how we do what we do, and the essays in this book provide us with timely ideas and analysis.

In the volume, 19 authors present us with 14 chapters that can guide us as we consider the future of library staffing. Several big picture topics emerge: succession planning, mentoring, building interpersonal skills and emotional intelligence, dynamic staffing, leading change, and saving time. These are all concepts that are intrinsic to library management and are vital to consider for the future. Specific roles and tasks that are addressed include telework, student workers, branch libraries, Linked Data, and the library landscape in Canada as well as Nigeria. The authors are all practitioners in the field and tie theory to practice both within their individual situations but extending outward to librarianship in general.

The authors analyze the future of library staffing from a number of perspectives. The book begins with a look at the concept of positive organizational behavior and how it can improve working environments for all library staff, flows into discussions on emotional intelligence in mentoring and the importance of interpersonal and intrapersonal skills in our staff, and then turns to a look at adult learning and followership theory to understand and lead change efforts. Two chapters examining the

perspective of branch librarianship discuss both the importance of the concept and how to manage the drastic changes that these libraries face in our changing library landscape. Two other chapters examine expanding capacity in the face of increasing digital demands, one from the perspective of digital collections and the other from a metadata angle. Student staffing of libraries underlies two more chapters and provides valuable discussion on varying training and uses of student workers to save staff time and provide more nimble services. The chapters focusing on library staffing in Canada and also Nigeria examine changing demographics and how to sustain the upcoming labor force of library workers. The volume concludes with an in-depth and thought-provoking critique of succession planning as it is carried out currently in many libraries.

It is my hope that this volume, like all the volumes of [Advances in Library Administration and Organization](#), makes the reader think a little differently about how and why he or she is practicing librarianship. We all play a role in library staffing, whether by being a member of a library's staff or by serving in library administration, and like all things in the library world, that role is changing. These considered pieces help illuminate some of the changes and give us ideas of how we can change too.