

Regional Library Facility (RLF) collections project - WEST de-duplication

The removal of duplicately held print serials across the two RLFs is an important strategy to help UC libraries make the best use of our high-density print storage space. By focusing on serial titles that are duplicated at the RLFs and also held by many other libraries in print retention programs this proof-of-concept project will create space for the UC libraries with very low risk of losing the only copy.

Background

Since the mid-1980s, the University of California has built and expanded two remote library shelving facilities (RLF), one in Richmond and the other in Los Angeles, to provide a systemwide solution for print collection storage, preservation and access. Today these two facilities hold about 30% of the total UC Libraries print collection and continue to grow at the rate of 300,000 items per year. RLF spaces provide considerable value to campuses by storing collections at lower cost than is available on campus as well as providing climate and access controlled facilities for greater preservation and security.

The two RLFs combined have capacity for 14.6 million print volume equivalents. Current RLF holdings are about 13.8 million volumes, with remaining capacity of about 0.8 million volumes. At current deposit rates of approximately 300,000 items per year total, the RLFs are projected to fill in certain sizes before 2019. As the University Librarians advocate for new storage space it is clear that, even if that project gets funding, the UC libraries will need to consider interim strategies as new space is built.

A 2015 study identified reduction of duplication between the RLFs of widely held serial holdings as one key area in which RLFs could reclaim space without putting collections at risk. The report indicated that the cost to de-duplicate these volumes to open up shelving space was lower than alternatives and suggested running a pilot project on a low-risk collection (e.g. a collection in which there is duplication not only at the RLF but also regionally and nationally). One such collection are the serials held on behalf of the shared print program called the Western Regional Storage Trust (WEST). WEST is “a distributed retrospective print journal repository program serving research libraries, college and university libraries, and library consortia in the Western Region of the United States”¹. The Regional Library Facilities (NRLF and SRLF) are archive holders for WEST, meaning that they hold print collections on behalf of the WEST members and commit to retaining those print collections until at least 2035.

Project details

In order to be part of the WEST program a title must be widely held regionally, and the RLF directors believe that this project should validate the extensiveness of regional and national duplication before proceeding. In order to ensure that titles are not inadvertently put at risk, the RLF directors propose de-duplicating WEST Gold titles that also have at least 10 holdings nationally. These criteria ensure that not only will a complete copy be held by the UC system for the foreseeable future but also that other libraries around the country will continue to hold copies. We expect this work to yield space for approximately 10,000 items at each RLF and will help the RLFs better understand the real cost of de-duplication. A one time project to assess designated journal titles held in the WEST collection at each RLF was proposed. Each RLF would validate the completeness of specific titles and identify gaps that could be filled by the other RLF.

¹ <http://www.cdlib.org/services/west/>

After discussion and initial planning for this project was completed, the proposal was vetted and approved by the Shared Library Facility Board (SLFB) in the Summer of 2016. The RLF directors held an informational webinar co-sponsored by LAUC in June and are now working on a broader outreach effort as we finalize the review of metadata and prepare for material processing. Each UC library approved the project through the CoUL and SLFB structures.

Over the summer and early fall of 2016 the RLF directors and working team reviewed the titles and verified the criteria laid out in the proposal. This work included verifying that the titles to be included were part of WEST Gold with over 10 title level holdings across the US as well as verifying that there were no inadvertently included titles and no inadvertently omitted titles. In addition, the RLFs reviewed each title and holdings and made determinations about which holdings should be retained, which holdings should be shared (e.g. shifting items from one RLF to another to complete a WEST Gold archive) and which titles should be deselected. It was decided as part of this effort to not include any post 2005 content as part of this project as those items are not officially part of the WEST Gold archive.

Table 1: RLF holdings to be used in gap filling for WEST Gold and holdings to be withdrawn

RLF	Gap filling (RLF to RLF)	Withdraw/De-accession	Space reclaimed for new volumes
NRLF	2,560 items to SRLF	10,367	12,624
SRLF	303 items to NRLF	6,187	3930
Total	2,863	16,554	16,554

Project outcomes

The goals of this project are to 1) Assess the cost and potential impact of using a de-duplication process to create more capacity for RLF accession of new materials 2) Create a more complete WEST Gold archive through gap filling between the RLFs and 3) Create more space in the RLFs for storage.

As table 1 shows, the RLFs anticipate freeing up space to accession 16,554 new items into the facility. We will not know the per-item cost until the project is completed and are gathering cost data across the project (e.g. project management, metadata validation work, materials handling, metadata change/updating work) to ensure that we have a full understanding of the cost of de-duplication.

The work completed in this project will result in the accessioning of 2,863 additional items to the WEST archive. This is a significant improvement in the current gaps of the RLFs but more work could be undertaken to finalize gaps across the WEST archive. One potential next step would be to continue the practice of using RLF holdings to fill WEST Gold and silver commitments where possible.