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SCHOLARS' TRUST

Benefits of Membership in the Eastern Academic Scholars' Trust

The Eastern Academic Scholars' Trust (EAST) is a collaborative shared print initiative across more than 60 academic and research libraries in the Eastern United States focused on protecting the print scholarly record. By collaborating to analyze their collective collections and by agreeing to retain specified materials in their local collections for a minimum of 15 years as well as make those retained materials available through inter-library loan to their partners, EAST members are playing an important role in supporting the transformation of library collections. Not only are today's academic libraries unable to purchase all of the print content they wish, they are often unable to continue to curate existing collections as the pressure to re-purpose space increases. Participation in EAST assures libraries that unique, scarcely held, and frequently used print books and journals will continue to be retained and made accessible to their users even as they may need to downsize local collections.

But EAST is much more than an archive of printed materials; it is a vibrant and growing community that shares policies, best practices, expertise and advocacy on issues of shared print and beyond. And, while the initial organization and implementation of EAST was subsidized with generous grant funding from the Andrew W. Mellon and Davis Educational Foundations, today EAST is a self-supporting, sustainable and stable organization with experienced staff, mature governance, and dynamic Working Groups engaged in furthering collaborative efforts. EAST is one of a growing number of large-scale shared print initiatives truly moving shared print to the national level and has become a model for other programs.

Print Books, Print Journals and a Community

Participation in EAST gives libraries and their users access to the teaching and research collections of 60+ libraries across the Northeast and beyond. EAST has truly become a collective collection that provides its Retention and Supporting Partners increased flexibility to reimagine the local print collection as part of a much larger whole. With over 9.2 million print books and over 5,000 journal titles (and growing fast!) committed to retention, EAST is among the largest shared print programs in North America. And, with its membership of 60+ diverse libraries – public, private, large, medium and small collections, research and teaching in focus – EAST represents a unique community whose variety is part of its strength.

Collection Analytics

All EAST Monograph Retention Partners gain further benefits from the collection analysis work that EAST has undertaken (and significantly subsidized) with OCLC's Sustainable Collection Services (SCS). The SCS GreenGlass™ data visualization and decision support tool can be used by local libraries to better understand their local collections as well as compare and contrast that collection to their EAST partners, OCLC WorldCat™, HathiTrust, and other comparator groups. Whether a library is considering moving science monographs to offsite storage or reviewing usage information on particular LC classes, the analytic capabilities of GreenGlass can often provide libraries with insight into their collections unavailable elsewhere. In addition, the EAST Retentions Database at <https://east-retention-db.appspot.com/> provides access to all of the EAST retention commitments, across both monographs and serials.

While the same robust collection analytics do not yet exist on the serials and journals side, EAST has worked closely with the Center for Research Libraries to create its own data visualization tool using the Tableau software. In both cases, these analytic and data visualization tools provide further proof of the value of participation in shared print. Libraries not only contribute directly to creation of the collective collection, but are able to learn more about their local collections than was previously possible.

Participation in a National Collaboration

From its inception EAST envisioned itself part of a national collaboration of shared print programs. On the serials and journals side that has become a reality with EAST's joining the Rosemont Shared Print Alliance. This federation of shared print programs allows EAST member libraries to have access to materials held by four other regional shared print programs and helps accelerate the growth of the collective collection. As a national collaboration, Rosemont advocates for effective metadata standards for shared print and has been influential in pushing for a more robust means of disclosing and discovering shared print materials as well as in the development of collection comparison tools for journals and serials.

On the monograph side, EAST has taken a clear leadership role by sponsoring a Summit of shared print programs in April of 2018 and is working closely with representatives of other programs to develop a strong and committed federation committed to collaboration and coordination. This collective work continues as EAST and its sister programs work together to expand the scope and reach of shared print.

Member Support and Engagement

As with any loose federation of members, EAST's success is dependent on the ongoing support of and regular engagement with the member libraries. Librarians at EAST member libraries have been critical to the success of every aspect of the work of EAST. From participation on early Working Groups involved in collection analysis and retention modeling, to working with the EAST Project Team to develop best practices for inter-library loan, and to establishing guidelines for the reallocation and transfer of retention commitments, the EAST member community has supported the work of EAST and each other.

Regular member update webinars, an annual member meeting and a growing suite of Member Resources and Documentation on the EAST website – www.eastlibraries.org - provide further opportunities for members to share expertise and experience and learn from their colleagues. And, the Project Team is on hand to provide further support and guidance. All EAST members are encouraged to participate in the governance of the community as well as in developing policies and practices.

Leadership in Shared Print

Through its involvement in the Rosemont Shared Print Alliance and by hosting the Shared Print Monograph Summit, EAST has established itself as a leader in shared print. EAST has been a tireless voice in advocating for more robust tools for registering retention commitments and is a regular contributor to sharing best practices and new models at the Print Archive Network (PAN) forums sponsored by the Center for Research Libraries. The tools and methodology developed by EAST for the sample validation studies, which are being adopted by other libraries and programs, provide further evidence of creative leadership.

As libraries continue to experience pressure to allocate physical space to services rather than print collections and find opportunities to withdraw print content as digital alternatives become available, the core mission of EAST to protect this print scholarly content becomes increasingly important.