



**Interim Report to the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation  
For July, 2015 through June, 2016  
Grant: 21500712**

Note: The following is an excerpt from the Interim Report , excluding the financial analysis and Appendices

**September 19, 2016**

**I. Goals and Objectives**

In June of 2015, the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation (the Foundation) awarded a two year grant to the Boston Library Consortium (BLC) to support implementation of the Eastern Academic Scholars' Trust (EAST) project, a regional collaboration of academic and research libraries in the Northeast to define and manage retention agreements for scholarly print publications.

EAST was preceded by a planning process in 2012-2014, supported by the Foundation through an Officer's Grant to Five Colleges, Incorporated, during which academic libraries across New England, New York, and Pennsylvania participated in needs assessment and planning to recommend governance, policies and a business model for EAST.

As of June 30, 2016 EAST has completed three of the six major goals outlined in the proposal to the Foundation:

1. **Analyze** monograph holdings of EAST retention partners in the first cohort, identify overlaps, survey circulation activity within EAST, and develop comparisons to holdings elsewhere, in order to propose the commitments to be made by retention partners and establish the set of titles needing validation. Current Status: The Collection Analysis was completed in May with a final retention model for EAST approved by the Executive Committee on June 6<sup>th</sup>. See #3 below for how the model is being applied to the EAST collective collection. The set of titles needing validation was completed as part of the Validation Sample Study #1 described below.
2. Design, test, and analyze a sample-based **validation** study to determine the statistical likelihood that a retained title actually exists on the shelves of retention partners. Current Status: Validation Sample Study #1 was completed on April 22<sup>nd</sup> with formal results reviewed by the Executive Committee in May. The study results indicated that, on average, 97% of the sampled holdings could be accounted for in their local libraries and, of those on shelf, just under 90% were in average or better condition.
3. Secure **retention commitments** from retention partners, and develop the means to share information about those commitments among all members. Current Status: Working with the collection analysis vendor, OCLC Sustainable Collection Services®, EAST has confirmed retention commitments for over 6 million holdings across the 40 EAST Retention Partners. All of the Partners have been provided with access to their proposed commitments and are reviewing them through the end of July after which we will finalize the commitments. The

libraries are committed to retaining the titles through June 30, 2031 and, per the policies discussed below, will make them available to scholars, researchers, students and faculty at other EAST member libraries.

In addition, significant progress has been made on the fourth goal: Finalize and execute a **Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)** among EAST members that incorporates EAST policies and business model. Current Status: The major operating EAST policies have been finalized, signed off on by the Executive Committee and reviewed by the membership and we expect the EAST members to have executed the MOU by the end of the calendar year.

While much of the formal planning for expanding EAST with new members, including an additional collection analysis for this second cohort, is the focus of FY17 and beyond, the EAST team has begun conversations with SCS and others concerning planning for a second cohort for collection analysis as well development of an infrastructure for current EAST Retention Partners that will facilitate ongoing retention commitments.

Through our participation in the Print Archive Network (PAN) and particularly via discussions with HathiTrust concerning their evolving plans for print retention, EAST has also begun important conversations that we hope will lead to a more coordinated network of collaborative print initiatives at the national level.

As described in more detail below, EAST has completed the above on schedule and under budget.

## **II. Accomplishments**

For details of the EAST project plan for Year 1, please see the Appendices.

### **A. The Collection Analysis and Retention Model**

The EAST project was formally launched on June 22, 2015 at a meeting of the EAST membership at Brandeis University with a focus on the plans for the large-scale collection analysis that was core to the first year of EAST's implementation. OCLC Sustainable Collection Services® (SCS) had previously been selected by EAST to perform the analysis based on their expertise and experience in working with shared print initiatives. Details of the libraries participating in the collection analysis and the costs associated are provided in the Appendices.

The collection analysis included analyzing monograph holdings and circulation usage information for 41 EAST libraries: 36 provided new data or had existing SCS data that were recent enough to be re-used as part of EAST and 5 were libraries that had participated in older SCS analyses as part of the ConnectNY consortium. As of end October, SCS had extracts for all 41 (including the Five Colleges Repository and 40 individual EAST members) and began to normalize the data and load it into GreenGlass®, the online tool that EAST would use to perform the analysis and develop the retention model.

By March, 2016 the EAST collective collection was available to EAST libraries and the EAST Project Team to begin the formal analysis. Among the characteristics of the EAST collective collection are:

- 4,749,042 titles
- 16,573,071 holdings
- 50% of the titles were held by only one library in the group
- 20% of the titles had 10 or more aggregated uses
- 39% of the titles were represented in the HathiTrust database.

In setting up the database in GreenGlass, the EAST Project Team had worked with SCS to identify a number of comparator groups which would allow the EAST holdings to be compared to holdings from these groups (except for HathiTrust, all were based on holdings as represented in OCLC WorldCat®). These comparator groups were:

- U.S. holdings
- Regional large academic libraries not in EAST
- Regional college libraries not in EAST
- Maine Shared Collections
- ConnectNY shared collection
- BLC libraries
- HathiTrust.

From March through late May, the EAST Monographs Working Group (MWG) worked closely with the EAST Project Team and SCS to analyze the EAST group dataset, looking at it in comparison to the groups listed above, reviewing overlap, uniqueness, and scarcity within the EAST collection and examining usage by EAST libraries. Using the model builder capabilities in GreenGlass, the MWG developed a series of models for the retention of EAST titles. These models looked at ensuring that at least one copy of all EAST content (excluding ephemera and recently published material) was retained as well as well as additional copies of scarcely held and/or frequently used materials. After each of the model cycles, a survey was distributed to the full EAST membership seeking feedback on the model and suggestions for its improvement. By mid May, the MWG and the full EAST membership had endorsed the following retention model, which was approved by the EAST Executive Committee in early June. The model specified that EAST shall:

- retain all copies of titles scarcely held across the libraries: in order to protect unique and rare materials. Scarcity was defined in relation to holdings in EAST (5 or fewer), WorldCat (40 or fewer) as well as other comparator groups. This subjective definition was negotiated through the development of the retention model as a compromise among members.
- retain up to 5 copies of titles that have been frequently used across the libraries: in order to ensure access to adequate copies for future users. Frequent usage was defined as more than 30 aggregate uses across the EAST members. This subjective definition was also negotiated through the development of the retention model.
- retain one copy of all other titles that are defined as in scope: in order to protect the remainder of the collective collection.

Applying this model to the EAST dataset resulted in just over 6 million titles, or about 36% of the total EAST shared collection as candidates for retention. Following the model's approval, SCS completed the process of loading the retention proposals into GreenGlass and in late June each of the 40 EAST Retention Partners was able to produce a list of its commitments for review. The libraries were asked to provide feedback to SCS and the EAST Project Team by end July indicating any exceptions to the

commitments (typically titles that have been reported lost or were already discarded). As of this writing, SCS is updating GreenGlass with these exceptions, but we expect **EAST will be committing well over 6,000,000 holdings to be retained through June 30, 2031. This represents more than 4.3 million unique titles.**

This collection analysis work was funded by a grant from the Davis Educational Foundation as well as a combination of funding from The Foundation and EAST members' contributions. As a result of smaller monograph collection sizes than originally estimated, the total cost was less than originally budgeted as described further below in the **Financial Narrative**.

## **B. Validation Sample Study #1**

Due to its size, a full scale validation of EAST titles to determine the likelihood that they could be accounted for by the libraries and therefore made available for lending was not possible. However, EAST worked closely with its Statistical Consultant, Professor Grant Ritter of Brandeis University, to design a sample validation methodology that would provide a probabilistic estimate of the likely existence of any item across the 40 EAST Retention Partner libraries. (Note: this study excluded the Five Colleges Repository as it is a secured high density storage facility with tight inventory control.) In addition to basic verification of the item's existence, the study included a cursory review of the item's condition, both intended to increase the trust among the partner libraries that retained volumes will be available and usable.

In order to ensure a 99% likelihood of an estimate within 1%, the sample size was a random selection of 6,000 titles for each of the 40 libraries (drawn from the data extract provided to SCS) for a total sample of 240,000 titles. Using a data collection tool developed by the EAST Data Librarian, Sara Amato (and documented at <https://github.com/samato88/EastValidationTool>), each library was asked to check the items locally to determine an "availability metric" as well as to provide feedback on the condition of the item based on a 3-point scale. Each of the 40 libraries was provided a payment of \$5,130 for this work, funded through the grant, for a total of \$205,200. In addition, The Foundation supported the work of the Statistical Consultant in developing the methodology and providing follow-up analysis of the study's results.

Using the validation tool as well as documentation and training materials developed by the EAST Project Team, who worked closely with the Validation Working Group (VWG), Validation Sample Study #1 was completed by workers in the 40 libraries from late February through late April, 2016.

The results of the study, based on equal weights for all participating libraries, show a mean estimated rate of missing items at 3% (accurate to within 1% with a 99% likelihood) with 75% (30 libraries) with a missing rate of 4.2% or less and 50% (20 libraries) with a missing rate of 2.8% or less. All libraries had estimated missing rates of under 10%, confirming that there is a 99% likelihood that all estimates are accurate to within 1%. With 97% of the monographs in the sample set accounted for, the EAST libraries were provided with increased confidence in the likelihood that retained titles would be available for lending across the membership.

For items that were identified as on shelf, the validation study included a cursory review of the item's condition based on a 3-point scale: excellent, average, or poor. Based on equal weights, the mean poor condition rate among titles was 10.7%, the mean acceptable rate was 55.7% and the mean excellent condition rate was 33.6%.

The statistical consultant's report on Validation Sample Study #1 is included in the [Appendices](#).

Following the data collection and initial statistical analysis, the EAST Project Team requested that Dr. Ritter do further analyses of the 240,000 item sample focusing on other factors that may impact the likelihood of an item being missing or in poor condition. The sample was matched back against the full SCS data set to capture additional data elements such as aggregated circulation, publication date and class number. These factors are being analyzed in relation to the sample and, based on preliminary data, may well provide opportunities for additional study in Validation Sample Study #2, scheduled to be completed in the late fall of 2016.

### **C. Retention Commitments**

As indicated above, the final retention model for EAST resulted in just over 6 million holdings being allocated to the 40 Retention Partners. A purely equitable allocation across the libraries would have resulted in each member allocating 36% of its circulating monographs. However, since 3 of the EAST libraries were willing to make significantly larger allocation commitments - the University of Massachusetts Amherst, the Five Colleges Depository, and Yeshiva University, the final allocations were between 29.2% and 30.5% across the remaining libraries.

During the process of finalizing the retention model, the EAST Executive Committee determined that all Retention Partners should agree to retain at the 36% level. For a few EAST libraries this seemed excessive and while most were persuaded of the importance of equitable distribution, one library decided to withdraw as a Retention Partner and become a Supporting Partners. This principle of equitable allocation across the membership will be one we look to continue as EAST grows.

The final retention model resulted in total commitments of just over 6.2 million holdings. While the final review of the allocation lists by the members will eliminate some titles, we expect EAST will be committing well over 6,000,000 holdings to be retained by the member libraries for the agreed upon 15-year period, through June of 2031. This is quite an impressive accomplishment for the first year of EAST's operation and one the EAST team and member libraries point to with enormous pride.

### **D. Policy Work**

In parallel with finalizing the EAST retention commitments, a subgroup of the EAST Monographs Working Group worked with the EAST Project Team to finalize the EAST Major Operating Policies as well as agree to language for the formal Memorandum of Understanding. These policies were based on those agreed to during the EAST planning period and include the following topics:

- *Selection - what will the criteria for selection of titles to be retained?*
- *Ownership and Location - who will own the retained materials and where will they reside?*

- *Retention - how long will libraries be required to commit to retain the titles?*
- *Validation - is any form of validation required as a part of retention?*
- *Access & Fulfillment - what are the policies for providing titles to users at other EAST libraries?*
- *Delivery - how will retained titles be delivered to other EAST libraries?*
- *Operating Procedures - while not expected to be included in detail in the Memorandum of Understanding, EAST will develop high level operating procedures relating to issues such as replacement of lost or missing titles.*
- *Disclosure - what are individual libraries and EAST as a group expected to do to ensure retained titles are disclosed in local, regional and national catalogs?*
- *Discovery - how will library staff and end users discover retained titles?*

By late May, 2016 the Policy subgroup had completed review of these policies and the Executive Committee approved them in its June meeting. These Major Operating Policies as well as additional policy and procedural documents are available on the newly released EAST website at <http://www.eastlibraries.org/policies-mou>.

### **III. Staffing and Governance**

Recruitment of EAST staff began in earnest in July, 2016 and by mid-October the EAST Project Team was in place:

- Sara Amato, part-time Data Librarian (see the [Appendices](#) for Sara's CV and consultant agreement)
- Anna Perricci, Project Manager
- Lizanne Payne, Shared Print Consultant (note: on her departure to join HathiTrust in a full-time position in April, 2016, Matthew Revitt from the Maine Shared Collections System took over this role; see the [Appendices](#) for Matthew's CV and consultant agreement)
- Susan Stearns, Executive Director of the BLC and EAST Project Director.

From the onset, the Project Team was supported by the co-PI's: Laura Wood from Tufts University and John Unsworth from Brandeis University (John's departure to become University Librarian at the University of Virginia in the spring of 2016 resulted in Tara Lynn Fulton of the University of New Hampshire taking over as the second co-PI).

In the fall of 2016, the EAST membership elected an Executive Committee (EC). The EC represents the diversity of institutions across EAST with 6 elected members who serve a 2-3 year term and 3 ex officio members: the two co-PI's and the BLC Executive Director (non-voting except in the case of a tie). The EC provides the primary governance for EAST, approves EAST policies, determines membership fees and other shared membership costs, and provides oversight for the activities of the EAST Project Team.

Shortly after their election, the EC appointed two working groups to undertake the major work of EAST for year 1: the Monographs Working Group and the Validation Working Group. As these groups complete their work in FY2017, it is expected that additional working groups may

be established to further EAST's goals and that a standing Operations Committee will be established to oversee EAST policies and develop of any needed operating procedures.

#### **IV. Challenges**

The challenges faced by the EAST project are primarily attributable to its defining characteristics: the diversity of the membership and the complexity and scale of the project's scope and the rapid pace of the project plan.

Diversity created challenges across the major goals of EAST's first year of operation:

- On the collection analysis side, the decision to accommodate a variety of different "categories" increased the load on SCS and required ongoing communication and management of expectations by the EAST Project Team. These categories included those libraries with existing commitments as part of other retention programs (Maine and ConnectNY), those with recently completed or in progress analyses with SCS as well as libraries who would be undertaking a new analysis. However, EAST's decision to be flexible in this area (and the support SCS provided) ensured the largest number of libraries could participate and ultimately increased the retention commitments made.
- On the validation side, the variety of integrated library systems and catalog environments meant coordination of training materials across many platforms. Early formation of the EAST Working Groups ameliorated this issue by providing direct access to technical expertise at member libraries. This, and a commitment on the part of the EAST Project Team to develop supporting materials, ensured that validation sample study #1 could proceed on schedule with only minor issues.
- On the retention side, once the final retention model was approved, there were a few EAST Retention Partners who objected to the percentage of their collections that the model would require them to retain. While committed to the EAST mission overall, these libraries felt particular local pressure to weed and were concerned that they would be asked to retain materials for EAST that would not necessarily be of local interest. After further discussions, only one of these libraries continued in its objection and choose to become a Supporting Partner. Recognizing that the goals of EAST and the goals of the individual local library are not always aligned will be an important consideration as the project grows.

The complexity and scale of the EAST project also introduced challenges. Foremost among these was the need to manage many moving parts with tight schedules. Vigilant project management of time lines, anticipation and management of risks, and a willingness to address issues quickly and personally all contributed to minimizing impact.

The variety of stakeholders across the EAST membership with varying levels of familiarity with the background and history of the project and differing perspectives on retention also introduced challenges. EAST's commitment to its core goals and particularly the support of the Executive Committee in focusing on these goals has been instrumental in addressing the challenges that have resulted. EAST has been flexible in policy and decision making when such flexibility does not impact the retention goals of the project but unbending – particularly in policy issues – when it does. Regular communication to the EAST membership with quarterly update webinars and opportunities through surveys and membership votes have provided further opportunities to

reinforce policy and other decisions. Most recently the launch of a dedicated EAST website – [www.eastlibraries.org](http://www.eastlibraries.org) – with a growing suite of member resources provides ongoing opportunities to address the varying needs of the EAST community.

As we move into working with the libraries to ensure the EAST retention commitments are disclosed in appropriate national/international catalogs and discoverable therein, we are also faced with the fact that OCLC WorldCat, which is used by libraries as the most definitive national catalog, does not currently support disclosure and discovery. OCLC is working on adding tools to support this that would accommodate the scale of EAST, but are not currently expecting them to be complete until Q1, 2017. This delay on OCLC's part in providing a critical component to EAST has been a set-back and as a result the EAST Project Team has taken on additional work to provide documentation to the EAST member libraries so that we can ensure that the retention commitments are at least disclosed appropriately locally. We are also investigating possible short-term solutions that would facilitate discovery of EAST retention commitments until such time as the OCLC service is available.

Finally, staffing changes mid-year created some, but only minor, disequilibrium as Lizanne Payne left the project and was replaced by Matthew Revitt and John Unsworth departed as a co-PI to be replaced by Tara Fulton.

## **V. Presentations and Publications**

The EAST Project Team as well as individual EAST members have been involved in a number of important areas of outreach over the last year.

Project Team members have presented on the EAST project at the following conferences:

- New England Technical Services Librarians (NETSL) Annual Conference, 2015: Retaining and Preserving the Scholarly Record: An Update on the Eastern Academics Scholars' Trust [EAST] Project presented by Susan Stearns; <https://netsl.wordpress.com/2015/01/05/netsl-2015-conference/>
- Print Archive Network (PAN) Forum at ALA Midwinter January, 2016: Update on the Eastern Academic Scholars' Trust by Anna Perricci; [https://www.crl.edu/sites/default/files/event\\_materials/1\\_Perricci%20PAN-EAST\\_final.pdf](https://www.crl.edu/sites/default/files/event_materials/1_Perricci%20PAN-EAST_final.pdf)
- New England Technical Services Librarians (NETSL) Annual Conference, 2016: Building a Shared Print Network in New England and Beyond presented by Anna Perricci; <https://netsl.wordpress.com/2016con/>
- Association of College and Research Libraries New England Conference, May, 2016: Dismantling Silos to Build Robust Shared Print Projects presented by Anna Perricci; <http://www.eastlibraries.org/news-events/dismantling-silos-build-robust-shared-print-projects>
- Print Archive Network (PAN) Forum at ALA Annual June, 2016: Update on EAST presented by Susan Stearns and Matthew Revitt: <https://www.crl.edu/past-meetings>



The following article has highlighted the EAST project : “EAST by Northeast” Collaborative Librarianship, Volume 8, Issue 1 (2016); <http://digitalcommons.du.edu/collaborativelibrarianship/vol8/iss1/4/>

An article is undergoing final review for publication in Against the Grain (<http://www.against-the-grain.com/>) in the fall of 2016.

And EAST member libraries have begun to discuss the project on their campuses, both informally with administrators and faculty and through more formal outreach such as the article in “Tufts Now” by Taylor McNeil, explaining the project and the role of co-PI Laura Wood: “Libraries United” in “Tufts Now”; <http://now.tufts.edu/articles/libraries-united>

## **VI. Future Plans**

During Year 2 of the EAST project, the focus will be on completing the remaining major goals of EAST:

- Finalize and execute a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) across the EAST members that incorporate agreed upon policies
- Plan for future EAST membership, likely including a second cohort for collection analysis and ongoing validation sampling
- Begin to further explore collaborative and reciprocal arrangements with other regional and national shared print programs with the goal of creating a broader network.

We expect the Year 2 calendar of activities will closely mirror those presented in the proposal to the foundation and will include:

1. Validation study #2
  - Design a methodology for further research into validation sampling across the EAST member libraries and conduct any needed follow up sampling. Based on the results of VSS #1, this study may involve an in-depth analysis of the data set of 240,000 items collected as part of VSS #1. Further information on the specific approach and costs will be provided as the methodological approach is further refined. (Fall, 2016)
2. Retention agreements
  - Finalize monograph retention (In process with completion planned for August, 2016)
  - Document retention commitments as required by disclosure policy: (Final disclosure dependent on development of new services by OCLC and likely available in Spring, 2017. In the interim, disclosure will be done via local catalogs beginning in Fall, 2016)
3. Governance
  - Finalize EAST program MOU documents (based on review of recommended EAST policies) and EAST retention agreement document (to the extent separate from MOU, to be determined) (In process with expected completion of MOU and related policies by late Fall, 2016)

- Execute EAST program MOU and final retention agreements with members (Expected to be complete by end first quarter, 2017)
4. Future EAST membership
    - Develop sustainable business model for next phase of EAST (In process as budget analysis is completed)
    - Develop plan and schedule for addition of new EAST partners, including identify interested libraries (Will commence with EAST meeting in October, 2016 and continue through 2017)
  5. Collaboration with other regional shared print programs
    - Invite related shared print programs as potential collaboration partners (Late Fall, 2016))
    - Convene a web-based meeting to identify issues and options for formal reciprocal agreement(s) between EAST and other programs (February – April, 2017)
    - Prepare a report that describes the issues and lays out a plan for one or more agreements to affiliate EAST with other regional and national efforts (April – June, 2017)