



**EAST**

EASTERN ACADEMIC  
SCHOLARS' TRUST

# **The Eastern Academic Scholars' Trust (EAST) Program Assessment – Final Report Executive Summary**

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In late 2020, the Project Team and Executive Committee of the Eastern Academic Scholars' Trust ([EAST](#)) undertook the first formal assessment of the shared print program since its inception in 2015/16. The goal of the assessment was to better understand the value of EAST from the perspective of member libraries and solicit feedback to inform strategic directions and future planning.

Working first with the full Executive Committee (EC) and later with two representatives from the EC, the Project Team drafted a goal statement and developed a survey focusing on overall satisfaction with EAST and its work in support of the mission, feedback on EAST policies and procedures including ongoing member communication, input on approaches to growing the EAST collective collection as well as on EAST's future strategic direction. The survey was reviewed by an assessment expert and tested before being distributed to the EAST members. Survey Monkey® was used to develop and distribute the survey.

Fifty-three of the EAST members (68% of the then 78 voting members) responded to the survey. Of the respondents, 50 are Retention Partners committed to retaining monographs and/or serials and journals. The remaining three are Supporting Partners which support EAST financially but are not retention partners. EAST requested a single consolidated response from the library and the majority of those completing the survey were Deans/Directors, AUL's or department heads.

The major themes which ran through the responses were:

Growing importance of collaboration across the larger shared print community

Respondents fully endorsed EAST's work in protecting the scholarly record and ensuring ongoing access to it. Their responses also reinforced the importance of the role EAST plays in allowing libraries to reclaim and repurpose space. Equally important to this space reclamation from the perspective of the members is EAST's participation in shared print at the national and continental level. Specific initiatives across both the [Rosemont Shared Print Alliance](#) and the [Partnership for Shared Book Collections](#) were endorsed and members' comments indicated a growing understanding of the role shared print can play in the life cycle of collection management. EAST's work in supporting the development of best practices for shared print, its advocacy for a more robust and open infrastructure, and the focus on cooperation and collaboration across programs are seen as important and strategic initiatives.

Increased emphasis on access

In addition to acknowledging the importance of access as a component of the EAST mission, members stressed the need to expand shared print lending networks and emphasized the need for EAST to facilitate digitization of retained collections as a way to further access to shared print content. The impact of the pandemic in shuttering physical collections would have been top of mind as members encouraged EAST to work to further opportunities for shared print content to be more easily discoverable and accessible across the member libraries.

#### Concern over budgets and staffing

Not surprisingly, members raised concerns over the impact that reduced budgets and shrinking staff will have on their ability to contribute to or even participate in shared print. While the vast majority of EAST members acknowledge the value their participation in shared print has brought and will continue to bring them, it is clear that EAST must continue to provide value in ways that minimize the impact on local budgets and staffing.

#### Emphasis on growing the diversity of shared print

As has been seen in the program assessments of other shared print programs (see, for example, the [2019 WEST Program Assessment](#)), EAST members emphasized the need to expand the diversity and inclusiveness of the membership and to grow the collective collection through specialized and rare collections.

#### General appreciation of the quality of EAST overall

Overall, members rated EAST as effective and see shared print as playing an increasingly important role both operationally and strategically in the future of their libraries. The depth of expertise and professionalism of the Project Team and EAST's focus on its mission have allowed it to grow to become an established and sustained effort that reflects the commitment of its member libraries to protecting and preserving the print scholarly record.

As we move to a post-pandemic time, it will be important for EAST to evaluate its future directions in light of the above themes and to continue to evolve the value it provides to its member libraries.

As one member commented:

*“Shared print and initiatives like EAST figure prominently into strategic and operational planning, allowing strategy around collection building based on availability of print collections in local/national/international networks accessible via resource sharing.”*

To view the full final report on the EAST Program Assessment as well as links to the two Appendices, see <https://eastlibraries.org/news-events/east-2020-program-assessment>.