

# EAST Strategic Directions 2022 and Beyond

*Final document for member feedback*

*July 2022*

The Eastern Academic Scholars' Trust (EAST) is among the largest shared print programs in the United States, with over 80 member libraries across 13 states. As of April, 2022, member libraries have committed to retain over 10 million print monographs and over 29,000 print serials through June 30, 2031.

Over the last three years, EAST has:

- Grown the membership substantially, including the addition of our first consortial members
- Expanded participation in the two national federations for shared print: the Rosemont Shared Print Alliance and the Partnership for Shared Book Collections
- Integrated the Gold Rush Library Comparator Tool as a lower cost alternative for collection analysis work
- Finalized registration of the EAST collective collection in WorldCat and the PAPER database
- Completed the first [formal assessment](#) of the membership.

In early 2022 the EAST Executive Committee (EC) established a task force to develop an updated strategic plan for EAST that would provide a set of high-level directions for EAST's work over the coming two to three years. The task force includes four representatives from the EC:

- Andrew White, Wesleyan University
- Anna Gold, Worcester Polytechnic Institute
- Boaz Nadav-Manes, Lehigh University
- Matthew Sheehy, Brandeis University

Susan Stearns, EAST Project Director, and Matthew Revitt, the EAST Shared Print Consultant, completed the task force.

The task force began by undertaking an exercise to identify the current needs of the library and scholarly community related to shared print and collection management, to review ways in which EAST is distinctly positioned to meet those needs, and to evaluate EAST in the context of other library services..

Based on this work and further discussions with the task force as well as the full EAST Executive Committee, the following **major areas of focus for EAST** have been identified as priorities in the coming years. These priorities epitomize the importance of ensuring that EAST sustains the value it provides to individual member libraries and their users as well as the broader scholarly community. The mission of EAST remains focused on safeguarding the scholarly and cultural heritage through thoughtful and systematic preservation of print.

*(Note that the strategic directions below are not listed in any priority order and EAST anticipates undertaking initiatives that cross multiple focus areas.)*

**Support the collection building and management strategies of member libraries** - EAST has played an important role in advocating for and facilitating the development of tools and infrastructure to support the growth of shared print. In the coming years, EAST will actively work with vendors and service providers to further this work by embedding shared print in local collection management and resource

sharing. Expanding access to the EAST collective collection, including support for links to digital surrogates for EAST print resources, is already underway. And, as new resource sharing services are being introduced, EAST is exploring opportunities to expand the EAST lending network. While specific tactics for achieving the objectives may not be clear today, EAST will continue to work with its members to maximize access to the EAST collective collection and provide services that directly support reducing the burden and costs of shared print to individual member libraries.

**Ensure flexible and sustainable pathways to membership** - As it considers the future, EAST will look to reduce barriers to membership that are based on local finances, staff resources, or evolving perspectives on the value of shared print in support of diverse needs and communities. EAST is well positioned to grow the number and type of libraries engaged in protecting print through an active and explicit program of outreach to institutions serving underrepresented communities, either as part of the IMLS funded grant (with SCELIC) or through independent work, likely in concert with other shared print programs. This work will first focus on understanding the value proposition of shared print to such institutions and then consider ways in which the membership and business models of EAST may need to evolve to best provide such value.

**Secure EAST's organizational sustainability** - As EAST has transitioned from a grant-funded project to a sustained and growing self-funded program engaged in national partnerships and collaborations, now is an appropriate time to review the governance structure of EAST and its relationship with the current administrative and fiscal sponsor, the Boston Library Consortium. In addition to a more detailed definition of the role of the Executive Committee and other current standing and ad hoc groups, this is an opportunity to create organizational structures which support the goals of ensuring flexible pathways for membership and expanded opportunities for the growth and impact of EAST. Not only will this work strengthen the long term sustainability of EAST, it will provide opportunities for staff at EAST member libraries to become more involved in the governance and evolution of EAST and strengthen our sustained participation in and contributions to national work on collective collections.

**Expand opportunities for member libraries to contribute to the EAST collective collection** - The current model for growth of the retained titles held across the EAST membership is through a retrospective collection analysis, typically at the time a new member or group joins EAST. While this approach will continue to play an important role in the growth of shared print (and, in fact, EAST is anticipating updating its retention commitments in 2023 based on such an approach), new opportunities for both current and new members to make retention commitments outside of a formal analysis are beginning to evolve. This includes member libraries' actively committing to retention at the time of acquisition, making a commitment to retain materials in subject areas that align well with local collection priorities, and considering cooperative collection development across a group of EAST libraries. In support of this work, EAST is actively engaged in advocating for the use of open standards and interoperability in metadata sharing, which further facilitate the growth of shared print.