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**Book Review**

## **Review of *Rethinking Institutional Repositories: Innovations in Management, Collections, and Inclusion***

Amy B. Parsons, *Columbus State University*

### **ABSTRACT**

A review of Cromwell, J., ed., *Rethinking institutional repositories: Innovations in management, collections, and inclusion*. Chicago, Illinois: Association of College and Research Libraries, 2023.

### **KEYWORDS**

Institutional repositories

### **SUGGESTED CITATION**

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Originating in the early 2000's, institutional repositories (IR) are now middle aged. They have become a popular digital archive tool in university libraries. In the early years, administrators of IRs worked hard to teach faculty about the purpose of the IR and attempted to broaden participation. Faculty and librarians also needed to get more familiar with copyright regulations. Institutional repositories were a new way to think about storing a collection not as a website or a database but as a digital archive. The authors of this book reimagine IRs by broadening the ways to manage them and offer fresh ideas for curating collections. The book is written by librarians, archivists, and other information professionals, with a variety of backgrounds and experiences, which gives the reader an up-to-date view of management, collections, access, and inclusion in institutional repositories.

There is a lot of content in middle-aged IRs, and it can be a constant challenge to organize it for accessibility. Library collections are never stagnant, and digital content evolves even faster than physical content. Librarians are constantly reassessing collections and looking for ways to improve collections. The work of teaching faculty about the benefits of including their scholarship in the repository (establishing buy-in) along with copyright knowledge continues. Budget tightening, which has been with us for decades, is now worse than ever. Librarians are faced with finding evidence to prove that paying the bill for an IR is still critical. They may also be tasked with finding a less expensive repository and figuring out how to migrate the data from one to another without losing data integrity, interoperability, and useability. This book shares examples of modernizing the administrative duties, reorganizing the structures of IRs, creating new projects, connecting IRs with non-traditional works and marginalized communities, and looking critically at the IR with a lens of diversity, accessibility, and inclusion.

The editor of this book, Josh Cromwell, is the Scholarly Communications Manager at the University of Southern Mississippi (USM). He has worked with USM's IR since its creation in 2012. The groups of authors of the chapters in this book come from all over the United States and have varying roles in scholarly communication and libraries. The "About the Authors" section includes brief biographical information on the 42 authors that wrote the chapters.

The book is divided into three major sections: Section 1 includes seven chapters on IR administration and management. The first chapter explores the midlife assessment of an IR. IR challenges organizations face include aging software, changes in the publishing landscape, accommodating large data sets and foreign languages, and of course budget constraints. This chapter also explores managing an IR on a consortial level and dealing with individual customization in that environment. There are chapters on migrating data, careful planning of data structures, engaging with an IR remotely, and legacy IRs. Chapter 6 examines an auditing process to align a legacy IR's content with an institution's current goals and policies. The audit disclosed copyright protection issues that had to be addressed. The task of getting buy-in from faculty is never-ending and the last chapter discusses faculty's motivation to use or not to use a

university's IR. An appendix in the last chapter of this section shares useful stakeholder feedback questions.

Section 2 focuses on IR projects. Chapter 8 includes a case study on integrating Archives and Records Management (ARM) with IR digital curation best practices. Chapter 9 discusses preserving podcasts as institutional records, and the challenges dealt with when dynamic applications such as Apple iTunes amend their platform. Chapter 10 discusses archiving non-traditional (hidden collections) grey literature. The idea of the IR functioning as a publishing platform for diverse works (bibliodiversity) is introduced. One story explores a partnership between a university library and two textile societies as an example of a successful collection of grey literature. The authors share that scholarship taking place at conferences, workshops and other untraditional places open the door for curating more than published works. This chapter also discusses the challenges grey literature has always presented for libraries with respect to cataloging, preserving, and storing it. Other topics in this section include student scholarship (Chapter 11). There is a discussion on the differences between student scholarship and faculty scholarship and whether student works are rigorous enough to be published. This chapter also highlights the importance of making student works public via the IR and accessible to the world as a scholarly record. Chapter 12 discusses North American university presses and humanities and social sciences and preserving born-digital scholarship. Another community partnership is discussed in Chapter 13. Rural Western North Carolina historical institutions are partnering with Gardner-Webb University to preserve unique collections. Detailed workflow challenges are described. Chapter 14 shares Ohio Northern University's Archives goals and successes increasing their hidden collections' visibility with their IR.

Section 3 contains eight chapters that focus on accessibility for all. Chapter 15 deals with assessing content with DEI (Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion) principles in the Carolina Digital Repository (CDR), including the work of Black Faculty, Faculty of Color, and Indigenous Faculty. The authors also explore gender inequities and the challenges of identifying gender for non-Western names. Chapter 16 discusses automated and manual accessibility audits. Manual audits take longer than automated, but any is better than none. A grant-funded project shared in Chapter 17 describes finding a sustainable captioning workflow. Chapter 18 shares a story about a white paper collection on the topic of Covid-19 and minority health disparities archived in the Rockefeller College IR. More descriptions of grey literature are included, as well as a call for librarians to seek out collections of grey literature and use these collections in the IR to connect research and policies. The 2020 Pandemic influenced the project in Chapter 19. Accessibility remediation work on electronic theses and dissertations (ETD) helped keep students employed. When things started to return to normal this project helped create new guidelines for ETD submissions that included formatting for accessibility. Open Pedagogy projects are highlighted in Chapter 20. More examples of curating non-traditional works are highlighted in Chapter 21. The authors share an example of an author's reception at Kennesaw State University in Georgia

as a successful outreach initiative. Lastly, Chapter 22 discusses supporting student success with some ideas on how to encourage faculty to create course projects using the IR.

The narratives in this book highlight challenges overcome and creative ideas to pursue when managing IRs. The book includes detailed notes and bibliographies at the end of each chapter. Some chapters include color graphics and illustrations and helpful appendices. What makes this book valuable are the real –world examples, stories from all over the United States, from many types of organizations, which explore the ways that IRs have been designed and used since their inception in the early 2000’s.

There are numerous examples of innovative ways that IRs are used and evaluated within these chapters. This reviewer appreciates the success stories and evaluating and improving legacy IRs. It would have been useful to learn about more struggles, mistakes made, failures and lessons learned. The disclosure of struggles and failures allows us to learn from each other and create nimble IR systems, workflows, and processes.

Over the past 20+ years Institutional Repositories have become a crucial tool for collecting and sharing digital scholarship among colleges and universities. Organizations that have middle-aged IRs looking for new ways to improve accessibility and inclusion will find this book helpful. The stories of collaboration and forging relationships with new stakeholders and collecting non-traditional works are valuable. This book would be beneficial for librarians and information professionals who are looking for inspiration to restructure and reimagine non-traditional connections with other communities. The stories contained in this book emphasize the value of this important digital archive.