

## Appendix B: ARL Profiles Invitation

<http://www.arl.org/bm~doc/appendix-c.pdf>

To: ARL Directors  
 From: Colleen Cook, Dean of University Libraries  
 Texas A&M University  
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For a decade the Association of Research Libraries has promoted innovative methods of describing and evaluating the value of research libraries through its New Measures Initiative. During this time a suite of services has been developed by the ARL Statistics and Measurement program including LibQUAL+®, MINES for Libraries®, and ClimateQUAL® that build upon the basic set of ARL descriptive statistics collected annually since 1907 for assessment and evaluation of North America's major research libraries. Taken together the historical ARL descriptive statistics and the new suite of services provide a robust set of methods and tools available to assess research libraries today delivered through a gateway known as StatsQUAL®.

However, when ARL directors were interviewed in 2005 and asked to describe a research library in the 21st century, there was general sentiment that even the ARL Statistics® and the toolkit of services offered through the ARL Statistics and Measurement capability were insufficient in answering the question. There was a need for greater flexibility in describing the research library today in qualitative terms. Textual narrative descriptions of collections, services, collaborative relations, and other programs, as well as physical spaces will be necessary if the essence of a research library today is to be described and evaluated.

During 2007 and 2008, members of the ARL Statistics and Assessment Committee in collaboration with other member leaders developed institutional reports and the end result is a small collection of model profiles which offer an alternative way of describing research libraries in addition to the ARL Statistics®. The next step is for all member institutions to write and submit their institutional profiles in 2009.

The profiles stand alone as descriptive information. The Statistics and Assessment Committee will also identify similarities and differences among libraries from the information provided. From the descriptions you provide we also plan to identify elements that we will measure for the purposes of an alternative index to the Expenditures-Focused Index, a services-based three-factor index as proposed in the ARL Board action agenda:[http://www.arl.org/bm~doc/implan\\_agenda.pdf](http://www.arl.org/bm~doc/implan_agenda.pdf)

### WHAT YOU NEED TO DO:

In constructing your library's profile please review the sample profiles provided on this page.

We recommend some of the following practices: (a) provide an introductory paragraph placing your institution within the parent organization if you are a university library; (b) in your closing section emphasize horizon issues and developments for the next three to five years; (c) as you describe collections, services, and collaborative relations, be specific in terms of products and services that are strategically important and identify assessment approaches you are currently using if applicable.

We look forward to seeing creative approaches with a focus on the most critical qualitative categories emphasizing aspects of (a) services, (b) collections, and (c) collaborative relations.

If you have questions, please contact Martha Kyrillidou ([martha@arl.org](mailto:martha@arl.org)).

Thank you very much in advance for your contributions to our collective efforts to describe our institutions in meaningful and rich ways in the midst of rapidly changing environments.