

The Academic & Research Library Job Market as Seen through the ARL Career Resources Online Service

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In 1996, the Association of Research Libraries established the [Career Resources Online Service](#) to provide job seekers with an easy-to-use resource for finding positions in ARL libraries and to assist ARL member institutions in attracting a qualified, talented, and diverse applicant pool. In 1997, the Service began accepting position announcements from nonmember libraries, from whom a fee is collected to help sustain the Service. The Service is provided at no charge to job seekers and ARL members. The information presented in [Table 1](#) provides a snapshot of the status of the Career Resources Online Service database at the end of 1999 and shows the types of positions ARL member libraries and nonmember libraries are seeking to fill.

Overall, at the time of this snapshot analysis of the database, the greatest number of postings were for positions in public services, area studies/subject specialty, and technical services; the least prevalent postings were for jobs in development, human resources, and library schools. Seventeen percent of all the postings were designated as entry-level, and jobs designated as both entry-level and public services were the most numerous entry-level positions advertised. The most popular categories in which non-ARL libraries posted jobs in this database are special/public/government, information technology, library schools, administration, and instruction. There are six position types that were posted only by ARL libraries: law, special collections, medical, preservation, human resources, and development.

[Table 2](#) shows the regional distribution of the North American positions advertised in the Career Resources database. By controlling for the geographic distribution of ARL libraries, an approximation of regional differences in library job availability emerges: the southern U.S. and northeastern U.S. were over-represented in the database, the western U.S. had the same percentage of jobs as it has ARL members, and the north central U.S. and Canada were under-represented.

These observations are based on the state of the ARL Career Resources Online Service database on one day only--27 December 1999--but the position announcements advertised therein may be used to draw a general view of the current job market for academic and research librarians in North America.

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