

RLG's International Perspective

Serving an increasingly international membership, the Research Libraries Group (RLG) comprises research institutions dedicated to improving access to information needed by scholars. Although the majority of RLG's members are U.S. libraries, more than 20% of the association's members—including six national libraries—are in Australia, Europe, and Africa. International collaboration permeates all RLG actions.

RLG advances international library activities in the following ways:

- RLG promotes international resource sharing among members in Australia, the Consortium of University Research Libraries (CURL) in the United Kingdom and Ireland, the American University in Cairo, and North America. Members develop protocols to accommodate international traffic and expedite delivery. RLG is building an "ILL manager" that supports the complete ISO ILL and ISO 23950 (Z39.50) protocols and interoperates with Ariel document delivery software. With the ILL manager, members will be able to request and deliver documents across platforms while tracking all transactions with all partners.
- RLG provides access to holdings of major European libraries in the same format as bibliographic records stored in the RLIN union catalog. Some resources—such as the European Register of Microform Masters, the Swiss National Library's Helvetica Database, and the current catalog records from the national libraries of France, Italy, and Spain—are converted and loaded into the RLIN union catalog. Other resources—such as the CURL Union Catalogue, the Deutsche Bibliothek Database, and the National Library of Australia Catalogue—are accessed as needed through RLG's Z39.50 client gateway, with conversion done on the fly. In January 1999, RLG began providing free access to the Deutsche Bibliothek Databases for all AAU/ARL German Resources Project participants who did not have RLIN search accounts.
- RLG offers centralized access to dispersed archival collection guides, which can in turn link to digital materials. RLG's Archival Resources service, released in September 1998, indexes finding aids stored on servers worldwide.
- RLG is developing best practices for long-term retention of digital materials through a series of symposia and international working groups involving RLG members. Additionally, *RLG DigiNews*, a bimonthly web-based newsletter produced in cooperation with Cornell University, focuses on digital initiatives with a preservation component and on emerging practices in image conversion and digital archiving. *DigiNews* is available at <http://www.rlg.org/preserv/diginews/>.

For more information, see the RLG website at <http://www.rlg.org/>, or contact:

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