

## EDITORS' INTRODUCTION

---

With the world growing smaller, we inevitably wish to turn outward and engage more fully with others, extending the spirit of service that is a core element of librarianship. International librarianship has been framed as a trend that follows the early-twentieth-century rise of global non-governmental organizations pursuing advocacy in an era of transcultural, social, and political change (Witt, 2014). As such, librarians presently concern themselves with complex issues and corresponding responses that address global requisites for cost-effective information access, literacy support, patron empowerment, and international development.

This collection of essays originated from our impulse to share the successes and challenges of international librarianship. As Fulbright recipients, the editors have benefitted from participating as leaders and learners in our respective assignments around the world. As a group, we wanted to celebrate the legacy of service inherent in a Fulbright fellowship award by offering insights into substantial and provocative projects. Ultimately, we desire to inform other librarians about extraordinary opportunities for leadership, professional growth, and service learning in a global setting.

As a consequence, we aspired to solicit narratives of the disciplinary and cultural competencies and the emotional intelligence required to engage in international librarianship. We hoped to be informed of the impact—both personal and professional—of the use of best practices outside daily and local settings. Echoing concerns about global leadership within the profession (Asselin, 2011), we wanted to learn about the impact of international librarianship on information access and overall education in emerging and developing countries. Lastly, we wanted to understand how these unique and exceptional experiences are being creatively applied on return to the local service environment. How has our learning been repurposed and extended, informing new practices and influencing collaboration within and across the profession, the home institution, and our communities?

We're both gratified and inspired by the response and engagement of our colleagues. Please join us for an exciting international journey into

avenues of information need across library type and institution, brimming with unexpected challenges, unanticipated setbacks, discoveries, insights, and triumphs, all of which resulted in professional enrichment. These experiences highlight a range of collaborations that support educational partnerships, program initiatives, and professional development, and ultimately assist international citizens with their own agency and empowerment.

Yours in international librarianship,  
Constantia Constantinou  
Michael J. Miller  
Kenneth Schlesinger

#### REFERENCES

- Asselin, M. (2011). Internationalism as leadership in IASL research: Accomplishments and directions. *School Libraries Worldwide*, 17(2), 13–24.
- Witt, S. (2014). *Agents of change: The rise of international librarianship and the age of globalization*. Retrieved from doi:10.1353/lib.2014.0006.