



2015-16 Professional Status Task Force  
Report on Professional Status

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## 1. Introduction

The 2015 Visual Resources Association (VRA) Survey on Professional Status marks the third investigation of the visual resources profession. In 1996, an ad hoc committee was charged to survey the VRA membership to determine levels of education, years in the profession, institutional rank, salaries, and detailed information on the collections members managed. A second survey was conducted in 2007. The 2007 Professional Status Task Force developed a survey based on the 1999 VRA-ARLIS/NA Professional Status Survey and the 2004 ARLIS/NA Compensation Survey. The concept was to provide VRA with information on professional trends and shifts by comparing the visual resources profession to related disciplines.

In the fall of 2014, the VRA Executive Board appointed a new Professional Status Task Force to undertake a third survey of the profession. The specific charge and more detailed information about the survey methodology will be found in the following sections: 2. Charge and 3. Methodology.

Preliminary results of the survey were presented by the 2015 VRA Professional Status Task Force members Macie Hall and Greg Reser on March 10, 2016 at the annual meeting of the Visual Resources Association in Seattle, Washington.

This report summarizes the data from all of the survey questions. The responses to all of the questions can be found in de-identified form in a PDF of the Qualtrics Report generated from the survey instrument. The Qualtrics Report may be posted on the VRA MemberClicks and on the VRA website along with this final report, as the VRA Executive Board deems appropriate. In addition, the Task Force has asked the VRA Executive Board to archive the Basecamp space used for collaborative work. Documents to be retained include minutes of all meetings and conference calls, reports to the VRA Board, a complete list of survey questions, this report, the Qualtrics report, the PowerPoint presentation to the membership on March 10, 2016, and relevant documents received from the 2007 Professional Status Task Force. The Task Force will also send a print copy of this report to the VRA Archives.

The 2015 VRA Professional Status Survey Task Force would like to acknowledge and thank Thomas A. Lindsay, Coordinator of Research Support Services, Liberal Arts Technologies and Innovation Services (LATIS), College of Liberal Arts at the University of Minnesota, for the support and assistance of his office, as well as all of the respondents to the survey.

The 2015 VRA Professional Status Task Force:

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## 2. Charge

VRA Professional Status Task Force Charge

October 16, 2014

Charge: The VRA Professional Status Task Force is charged with investigating current professional status issues within the field of image and media management. The task force will administer a comprehensive survey of current Visual Resources Association members to investigate employment factors such as job duties; types of units to which positions report; levels of education; years in the profession; institutional rank; salaries; and other factors of the task force's choosing. This survey will also gather information on members' digital and analog image and media collections, including but not limited to content; usage statistics and analytics; staffing levels; administrative policies; patron groups; collection development; and changes in facilities' physical space. Additionally, through a broader survey instrument the task force will investigate employment factors of professionals it identifies in the field of image and media management but who are not members of the Association. The task force will analyze these survey data, together with recent VRA membership data; the report from the previous Professional Status Survey Task Force; the findings of the ARLIS/NA-VRA Joint Task Force on Professional Standards Criteria; and any additional information it finds relevant. It will present its findings, along with its analysis of the implications for the Association, in a final report to the Executive Board.

The VRA Professional Status Task Force will gather and analyze information that will assist VRA in understanding recent shifts in the profession, improving membership benefits to serve current members and attract new ones, and advocating for the profession. As such, it will provide critical information to which the Association can respond in its next strategic plan.

In its investigations the task force will consider the diverse demographics of VRA membership and others in image and media management, including their work in academic environments, museums, government agencies, the commercial sector, non-profit agencies, or as students; their focus on imaging, cataloging and metadata, instruction, reference, outreach, digital asset management, digital scholarship, rights management, and/or other areas of work or study; and other factors such as their gender, age, and ethnicity.

The task force will be provided with recent membership data from the Membership Service Coordinator, including VRA members' self-reported memberships in other organizations, as well as a copy of the report from the previous Professional Status Survey Task Force. The task force should communicate directly with the ARLIS/NA-VRA Joint Task Force on Professional Standards Criteria to acquire information about that task force's charge and findings thus far and avoid duplication of efforts. The task force may utilize the Association's Survey Monkey account, coordinating its use with the VRA Vice President for Conference Program.

The task force will submit its final report by October 15, 2015.

**Note:** The deadline was extended to June 30, 2016.

### 3. Methodology/Survey Structure and Dissemination

The 2015 VRA Professional Status Survey is a departure from the 1999 and the 2007 survey of the same name. After Task Force members thoroughly reviewed past surveys, the decision was made to both reduce the number of questions asked of survey participants and to create a new structure for the survey. It is hoped that this structure, based on the following six categories: *Who Are You? Where Do You Work? What Do You Do? What Does Your Unit Do? How Do You Work With Collections? What Are Your Needs for Professional Development?* captures the professional status of colleagues in traditional visual resources positions, as well as those whose work with visual resources is still central, but who have migrated into other environments.

The 2015 VRA Professional Status Task Force was charged in October 2014. During April through June of 2015, Task Force members developed the six category structure of the survey, selected still relevant questions from past surveys, and developed new questions. During June through August, Task Force members worked with University of Minnesota College of Liberal Arts LATIS Research Survey Services to design the survey in their Qualtrics survey instrument. The survey was tested by a selected group of respondents in September 2015, and final edits were made in response to their feedback. The survey was launched on October 7, 2015 and closed on October 30, 2015.

In addition to the VRA membership, the following organizations were contacted and asked to disseminate the link to the survey to their members: American Alliance of Museums; American Institute for Conservation of Historic and Artistic Works; American Society of Picture Professionals; Art Libraries Society Norden; Art Libraries Society of Australia and New Zealand; Art Libraries Society of North America; Art Libraries Society of UK & Ireland; Association of Academic Museums & Galleries; Association of Architecture School Librarians; Association of College and Research Libraries; Association of Curators of Art and Design Images; Association of Moving Image Archivists; Association of Registrars and Collections Specialists; Association of Research Libraries; College Art Association; Computers and the History of Art; Conservation Center for Art and Historic Artifacts; Digital Libraries Federation; Humanities, Arts, Science, and Technology Advanced Collaboratory; JISC Digital Media; Museum Computer Network; Museums and the Web, Online Audiovisual Catalogers; Picture Licensing Universal System; Society for Imaging Science and Technology; Society of American Archivists; Society of Architectural Historians; Southeastern College Art Conference; and Special Libraries Association.

The Task Force received responses from 446 unique respondents who completed some part of the survey. Due to the structure of the survey not all respondents answered every question; others may have opted to skip questions or submit before completing the survey. 52% of respondents who answered the question on membership affiliation identified as VRA members.

Data analysis for the 2015 VRA Professional Status Survey was performed from November 2015 through April of 2016 by members of the Task Force using the open source tool, Open Refine, as well as Excel and shared Google Docs spreadsheets. Word clouds were created using WordItOut.com. The map of the United States was created with the United States Data Map template in Google Drawings. Original graphics were produced by Rebecca Moss. Creation and editing of this report was performed using

Microsoft Word Online. In the report that follows, some of the data from the previous surveys were reconfigured to match the current survey in order to better compare results (e.g., age ranges).

#### 4. Who Are You?

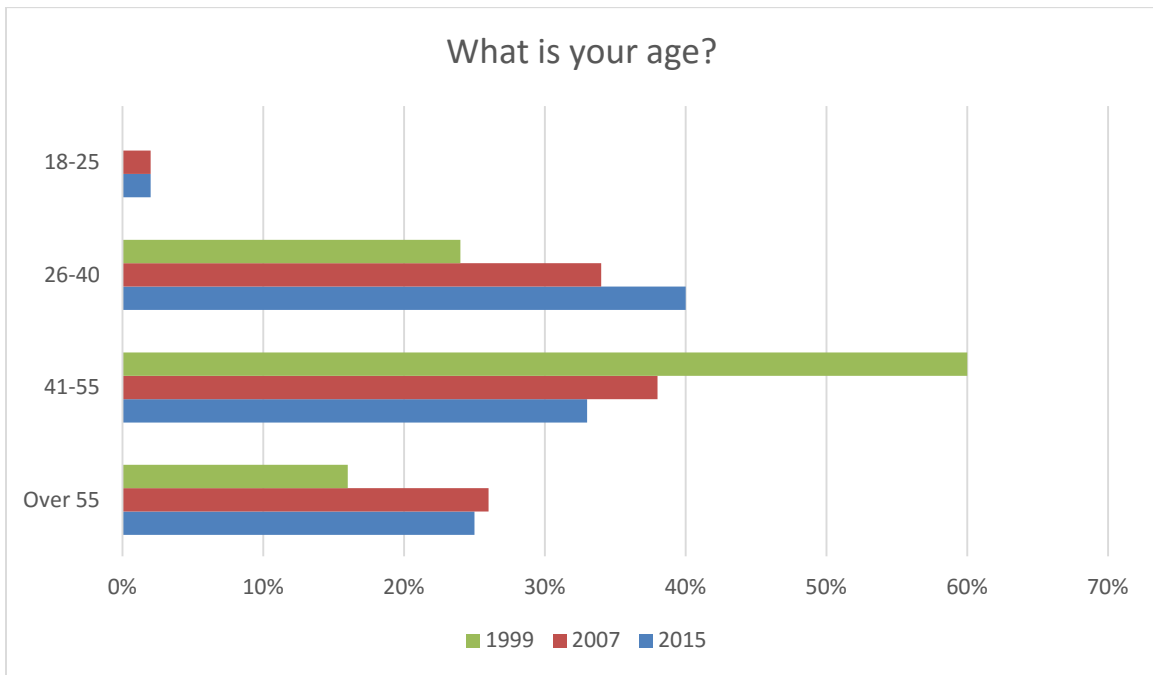
This section marks the beginning of the analysis of the survey questions. The first section covers demographic information, as well as education and years of experience.

##### Q1. What is your gender? (Optional)

In 2015, 84% of respondents identified as female and 16% as male. For the first time in the survey’s history, “Other” was provided as an option and was selected by two respondents. Overall, these numbers remain quite stable. In 1999, 83% of respondents identified as female and 17% as male. In 2007, 80% of respondents identified as female and 20% male.

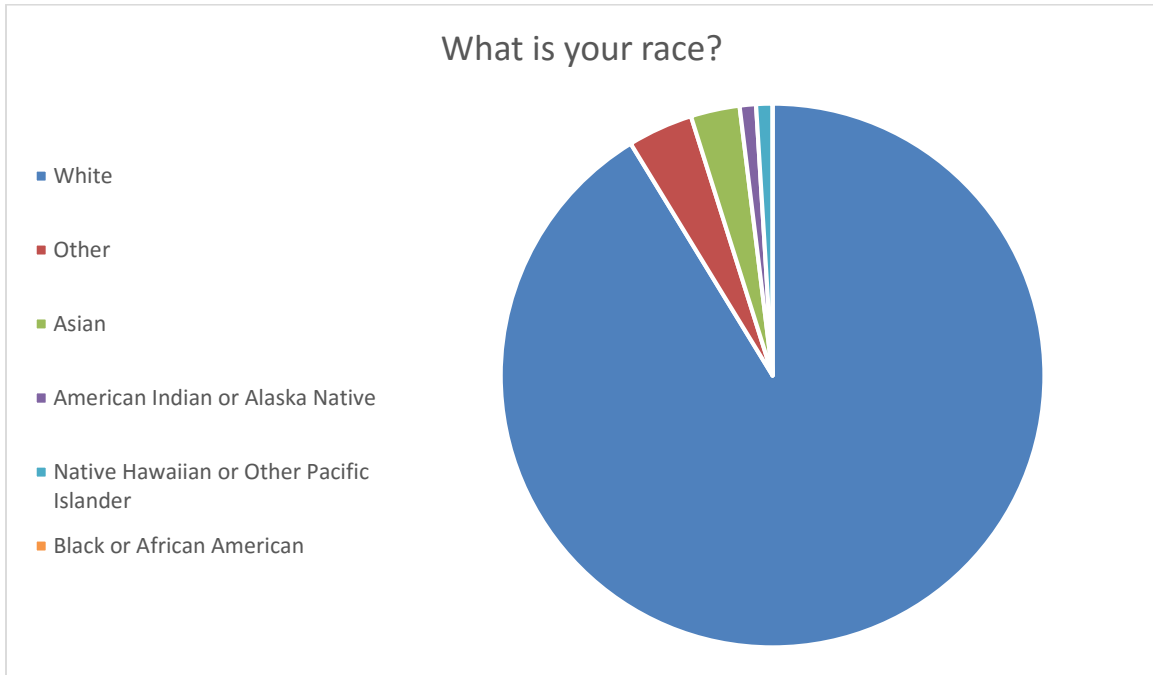
##### Q2. What is your age? (Optional)

The profession is experiencing a surge of young people, perhaps reflective of the lure of digital technology and its exciting challenges and opportunities, including shared metadata, digital humanities, and open access. In 2015, 40% of respondents were between the ages of 26-40 and 33% were between the ages of 41-55. This is in stark contrast to the data from 1999 when 24% of respondents were between the ages of 26-40 and 60% were between the ages of 41-55. Perhaps in correlation with the increasing adoption of digital technologies, the numbers began to shift in 2007.



**Q3. What is your ethnicity? (Optional) and Q4. What is your race? (Optional)**

For the first time in the survey, optional ethnicity and race questions were posed. 95% of respondents are “Not Hispanic or Latino or Spanish Origin” and 5% are “Hispanic or Latino or Spanish Origin.” 94% are White, 4% are “Other,” 3% are “Asian,” 1% are “American Indian or Alaska Native,” 1% are “Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander,” and 0% are “Black or African American.” The profession lacks racial and ethnic diversity, an issue for consideration by VRA leadership.



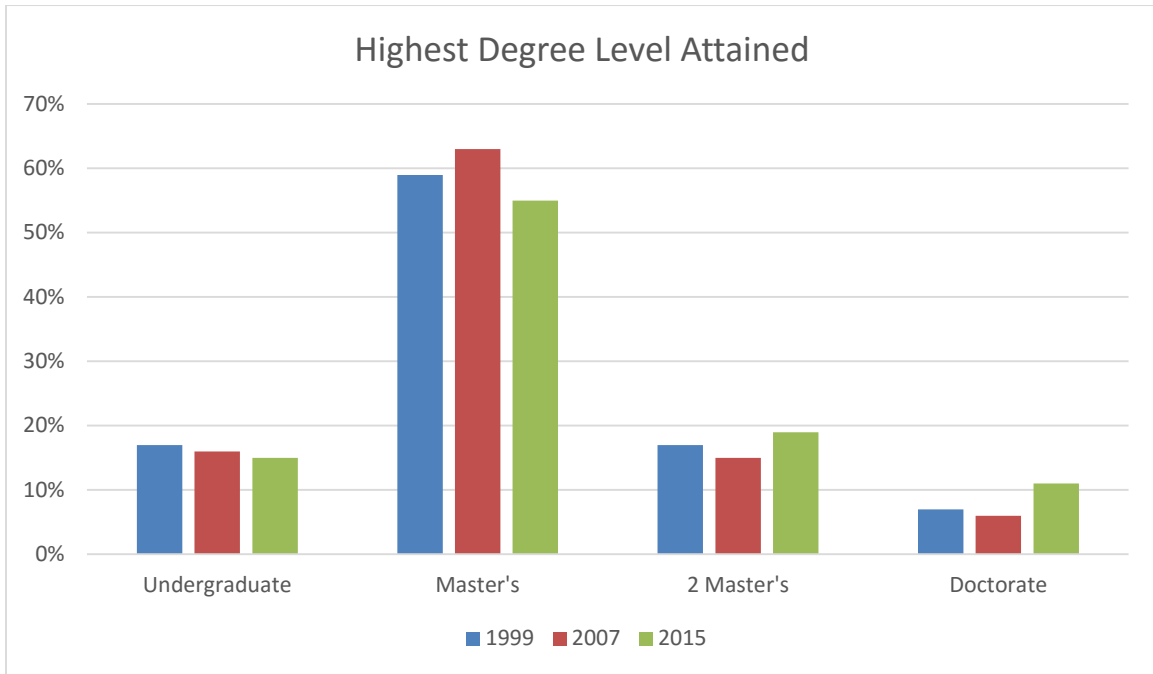
**Q5. Other than English, what languages do you have reading knowledge of?**

Many visual resources and related positions with an emphasis on cataloging, require reading knowledge of one or more languages in addition to English. This has often served to elevate the status of the visual resources professional in the eyes of human resources personnel and employers. Current respondents are most proficient in French (34%), Spanish (19%), German (17%), Italian (13%), and Latin (4%). 96% of respondents have reading knowledge of one or more languages in addition to English.

**Q6. [Degree Type] What degrees have you attained? Q9. [Other Degrees] If you have earned more than four degrees, please list others below. If you selected "other" for your degree type on any item, please describe what type of degree you received below.**

Across all three of the surveys, the greatest number of respondents have attained one Master’s degree: 59% in 1999, 63% in 2007, and 55% in 2015. The 8% decrease between 2007 and 2015 appears to be related to a 4% increase in respondents obtaining two Master’s degrees [2007 (15%) and 2015 (19%)] and a 5% increase in respondents obtaining Doctorate degrees [2007 (6%) and 2015 (11%)]. The number of respondents obtaining only an undergraduate degree is gradually declining [1999 (17%), 2007 (16%), and 2015 (15%)].

Does having a second graduate degree equal a larger paycheck? Sometimes. 74% of respondents with one graduate degree earned \$45,000 or more, while 88% of respondents with two or more graduate degrees earned \$45,000 or more.



**Q7. [Program Details]**

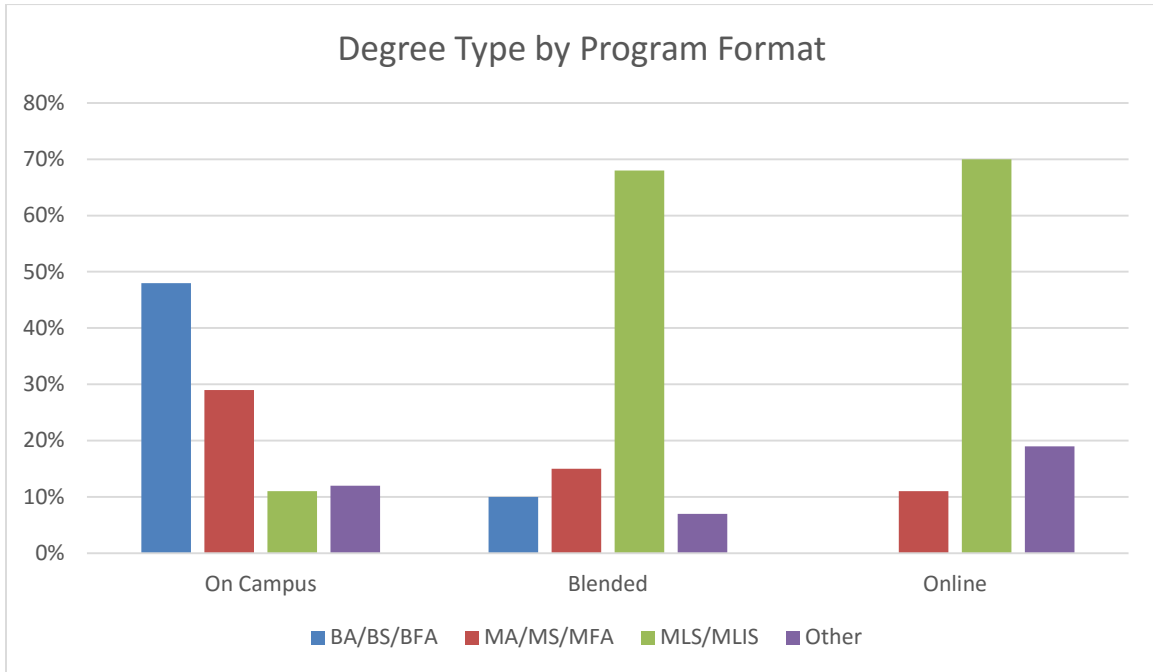
Art History, Library and Information Science, and Fine Arts/Studio Art dominate the fields of study. For Bachelor’s degrees, the most popular fields of study are Art History (29%), Fine Arts/Studio Art (23%), and History (8%). For Master’s degrees other than the MLS/MLIS, the most popular fields of study are Art History (38%), Museum Studies (13%), and Fine Arts/Studio Art (10%). For the MLS/MLIS, the most popular fields of study are Library and Information Science (69%), Archival Science (12%), and Information Science (7%). For Doctoral degrees, the most popular fields of study are Art History (55%), Information Science (8%), and American Studies (5%).

**Q8. [Program Format]**

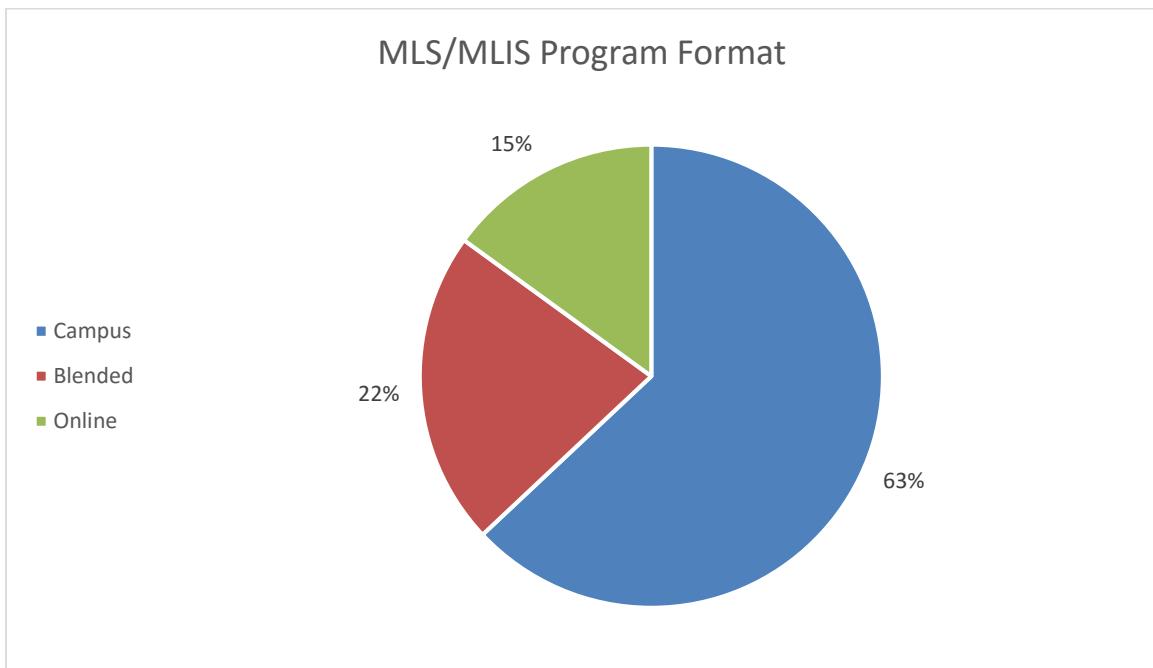
The landscape of higher education is changing and for the first time the survey asked if degree programs were on campus, blended, or online. On campus, respondents most frequently earned BA/BS/BFA degrees (48%), MA/MS/MFA degrees (29%), and MLS/MLIS degrees (11%); the most popular fields of study are Art History (28%), Fine Arts/Studio Art (10%), and Library and Information Science (6%). For blended programs, respondents most frequently earned MLS/MLIS degrees (68%), MA/MS/MFA degrees (15%), and BA/BS/BFA degrees (10%); the most popular fields of study are Library and Information Science (49%), Museum Studies (10%), and Archival Science (7%). Online, respondents most frequently earned MLS/MLIS degrees (70%), MA/MS/MFA degrees (11%), and other Master’s or professional degrees (11%); the most popular field of study is overwhelmingly Library and Information Science (74%). The following fields of study were pursued online by one respondent each: Art History,



Computer Programming, Education, Educational Technology, Information Science, Library Administration, and Museum Studies.



Although the graph above demonstrates a growing and significant trend of blended and online programs, the results are tempered when one reviews the program format (shown in the chart below) of all MLS/MLIS degrees earned by survey respondents. 63% of degrees were earned on campus, 22% of degrees were blended format, and 15% of degrees were earned online.

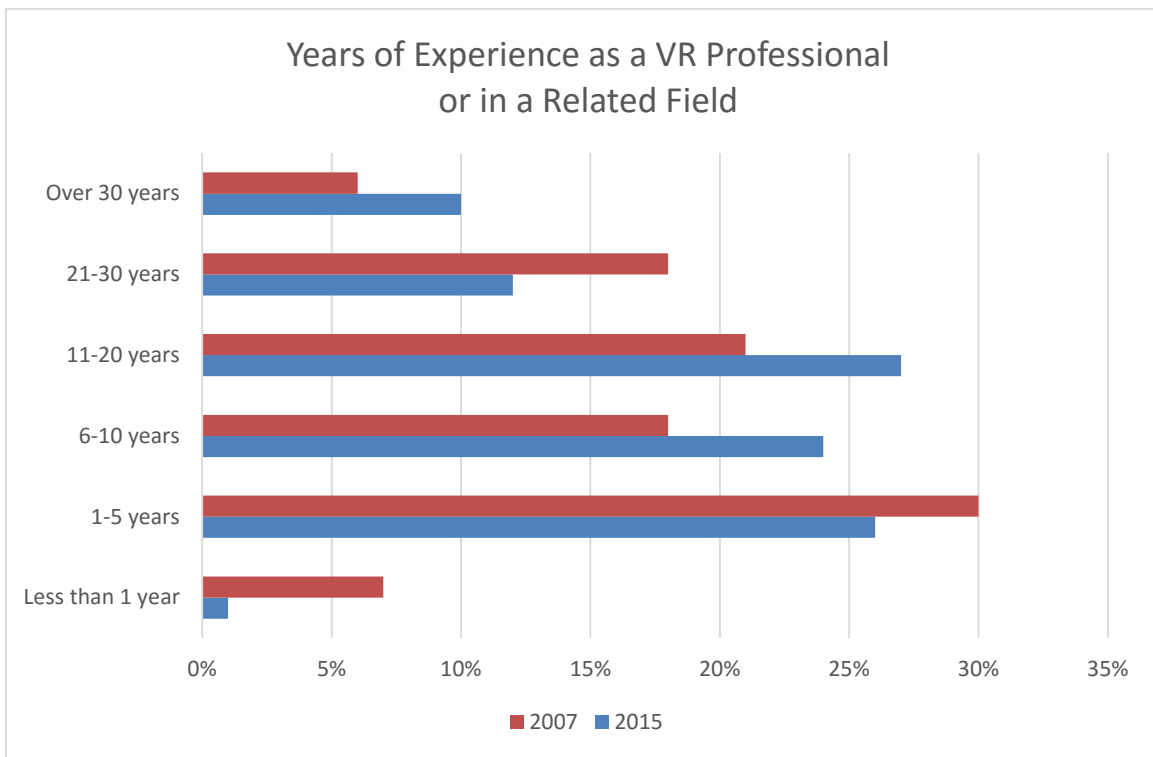


**Q10. How do you professionally self-identify? If you were in an elevator and someone asked you, "What you do?" how would you respond?**

For purposes of comparison, these results have been combined with Q20. **What is your "working" position title?** See results at Q20 below.

**Q11. How many years have/did you work(ed) as a visual resources professional or in a related field?**

Years of experience in the field are fairly evenly distributed, suggesting long-term career sustainability. 1% of respondents have less than one year of experience, 26% have 1-5 years of experience, 24% have 6-10 years of experience, 27% have 11-20 years of experience, 12% have 21-30 years of experience, and 10% have over 30 years of experience.



**Q12. How many years have/did you work(ed) as a student assistant in the visual resources field or a related field? Q13. How many internships have you completed in the visual resources field or a related field?**

Out of 354 respondents, 66% first entered the field as student assistants. This is possibly a reflection of the visual resources profession, and other related professions, presence in institutions of higher education, including departmental visual resources collections, libraries, or campus museums. Approximately 46% of 349 respondents held internships.

**Q14. Are you currently a full-time student, unemployed or retired?**

If respondents answered “Yes” to this question, they were directed to questions based on their status. See Q73-87 below.

**5. Where Do You Work?**

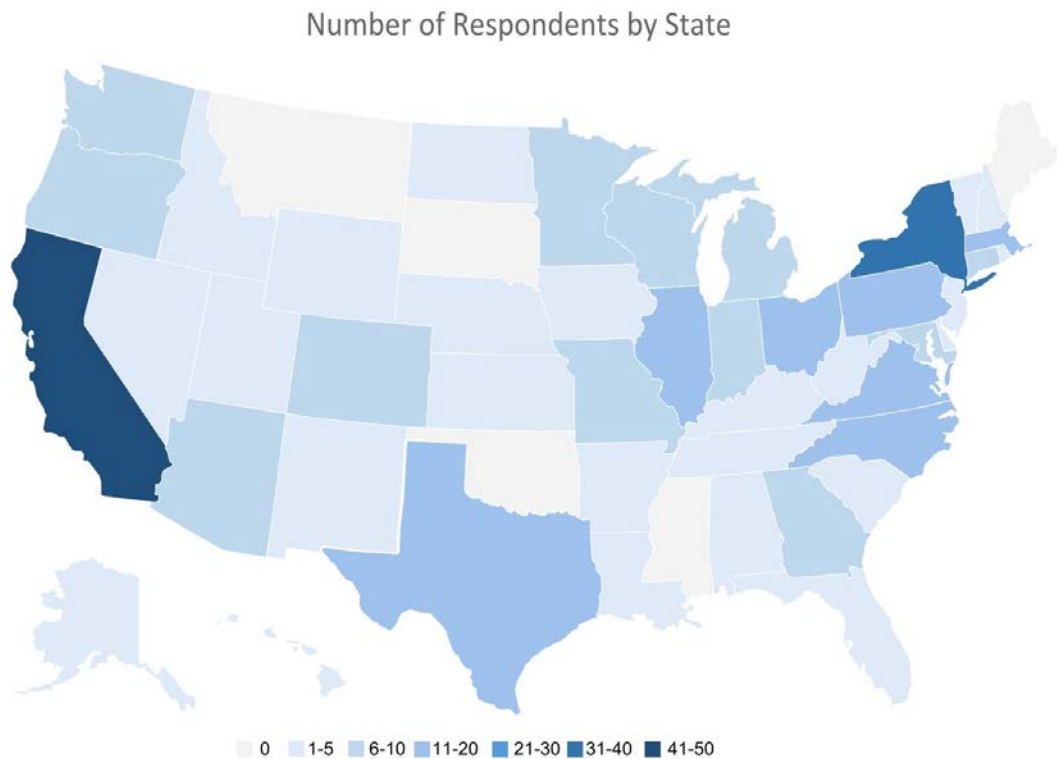
This sections covers geographic location, type of workplace, location within the workplace, and benefits received.

**Q15. What country is your institution/organization/business located in?**

The overwhelming majority of respondents to the survey reside in North America, with 93% in the United States and 3% in Canada. Two percent of respondents are in the United Kingdom; other countries represented include: Australia, New Zealand and the Netherlands.

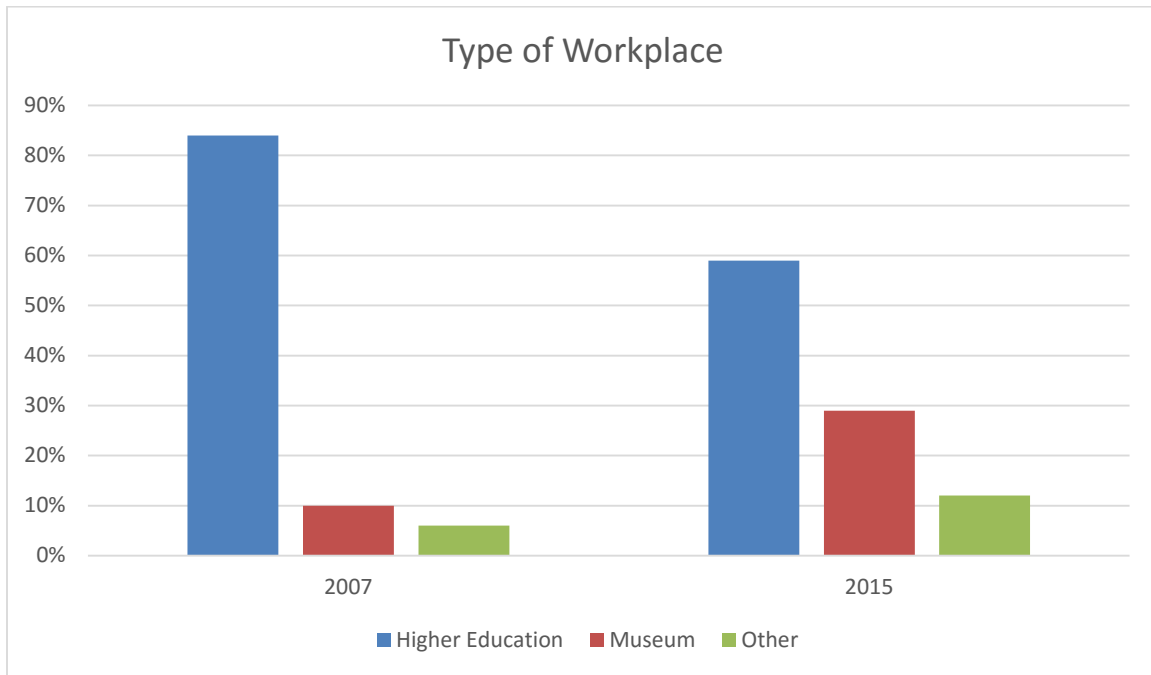
**Q16. If it is located in the United States or Canada, please list state or province.**

The greatest number of respondents are located on the east and west coasts of the United States with 42 respondents from California, 33 from New York State, and 19 from Massachusetts; the "third coast," Texas, had 15 respondents. Canada is also represented by the provinces of Ontario (4), British Columbia (3), Manitoba (1), and Quebec (1). Please see the Appendix A: Respondents by State for an alphabetical listing of the number of respondents in each state.



**Q17. Select the term which best describes the type of institution/organization/business where you work.**

59% of respondents selected "Higher Education" as the term that most accurately describes their workplace; 29% of respondents selected "Museum." The remaining percentage of respondents work for a variety of for-profit and nonprofit environments including architectural firms, arts organizations, botanical gardens and national parks. Although the 2007 VRA Professional Status Survey question regarding institutional affiliation does not map precisely to the institutional question for the 2015 Survey, it is perhaps useful to note an increase of respondents in the 2015 Survey who are affiliated with museums.



**Q18. At your workplace, where are you located?**

Within higher education, 100 respondents (29%) are located in an academic department, and 89 (26%) are located in libraries. The remaining respondents indicate that they are located in environments outside of higher education, the majority of which are museums. The next largest number of respondents, 27 (8%), are located in museum archives, and 22 (6%) are in museum collections/exhibitions departments.

**Q19. What benefits does your workplace offer its employees?**

On the whole, respondents enjoy excellent benefits, with 96% indicating they received health insurance, 93% received dental insurance, 94% had the opportunity to participate in retirement plans, 67% were eligible for tuition assistance, and 71% had paid maternity and family leave available at their place of work.

## 6. What Do You Do?

This section addresses questions about what an individual does in their professional position.

**Q20. What is your "working" position title?**

This question was intended to be compared to **Q10: How do you professionally identify?** investigating whether there were differences between how respondents self-identified versus how their institutions classified their positions. However, most of the respondents identified as their title might suggest.

For Q20 a word cloud was generated that categorized visual resources librarians and curators separately from those with other library/curator titles, and did the same for those whose titles specified digital collections, digital resources, digital initiatives, digital media, and metadata. The word cloud demonstrates that most of the 337 respondents have in their titles librarian/library (49), curator (27), archivist (14), registrar, faculty (16), collection/s manager (18), visual resources director, curator or specialist (53), visual resources librarian (18), or metadata librarian or specialist (11). The outliers were of interest, including a living plant documentation director, a software developer, and a park ranger respond to the survey. Looking at these respondents might assist the VRA Membership Committee in their outreach to other professions that may benefit from the information and resources VRA provides for its members.

This question was asked in the 2007 Survey, however, the respondents selected from a list, whereas in 2015, the question was an open answer format. This makes comparison difficult, especially as 44% of the respondents in 2007 answered an unspecified "Other." Moreover, the 2015 Survey was more broadly distributed, drawing many respondents outside of VRA.



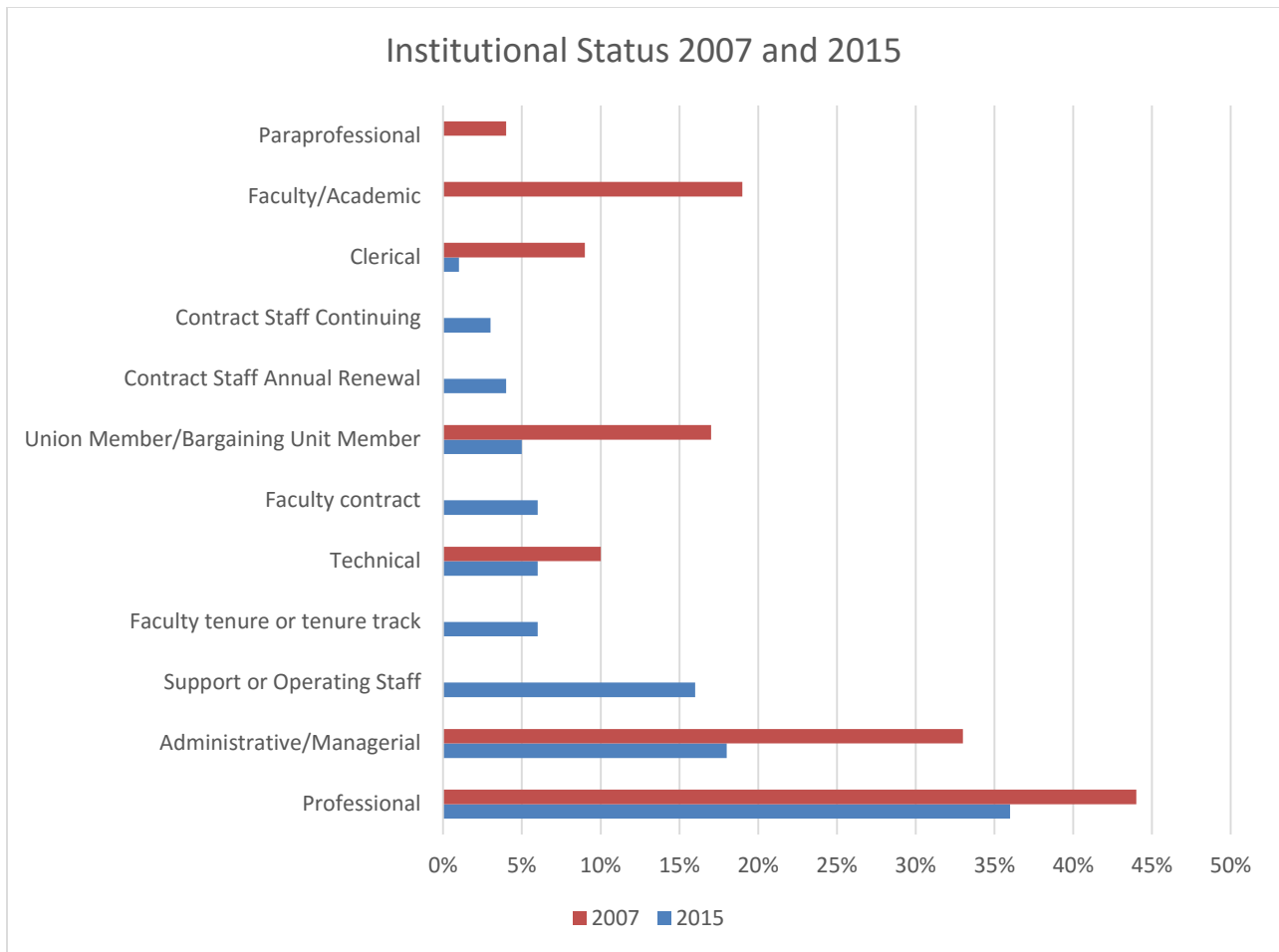
**Q21. What is your status within your institution? Q22. What are the terms of your appointment?**

**Q23. How many months per year is your appointment?**

For 2015, more respondents (183 or 36%) identified as "Professional" than any other category. A direct comparison cannot be made in every case to the responses in the 2007 survey as the categories in the

2015 survey were expanded to reflect changes within institutions in classifying positions, and to bring nuance to broad categories such as “Faculty” and “Paraprofessional.” In 2007, 52 or 19% of respondents identified as “Faculty” or “Academic.” In the 2015 survey, “Faculty” was further specified as those who are hired by contract (28 or 6%) and those who are tenured or tenure track (32 or 6%). As more institutions are hiring adjunct faculty, this may be an important baseline to establish now for future surveys.

Most respondents are salaried (77%), with just 14% hired on an hourly basis. The great majority (92%) are employed in 12 month positions, with most of the remainder reporting 9 month (3%) and 10 month (3%) appointments.



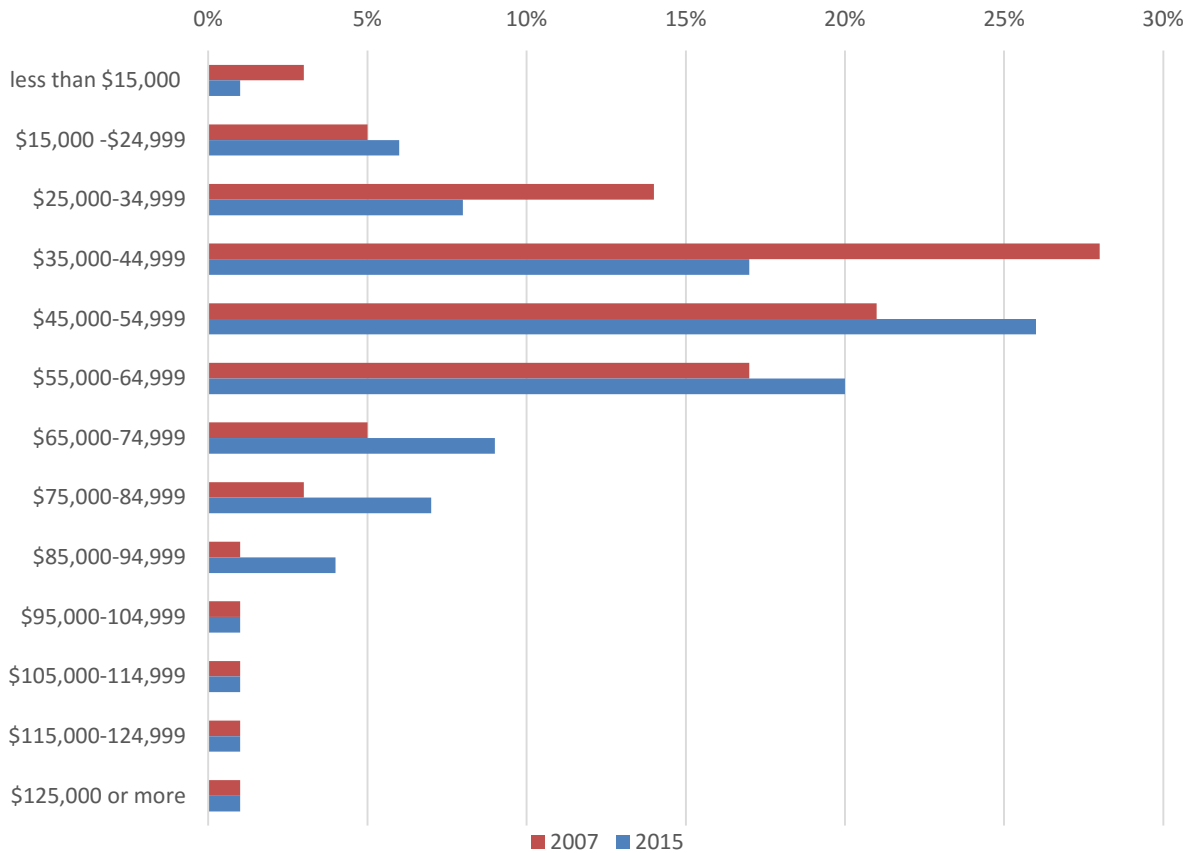
**Q24. What is the range of your current salary in U.S. dollars?**

Although not adjusted for inflation, the results indicate that salaries are higher in 2015 than in 2007. While the numbers are about the same from both surveys for salaries in excess of \$95,000, in 2015 considerably more respondents are making salaries in the ranges of \$45,000 to \$94,000 than in 2007. In 2015 the median salary level increased in comparison to 2007.

### Median Salary Level

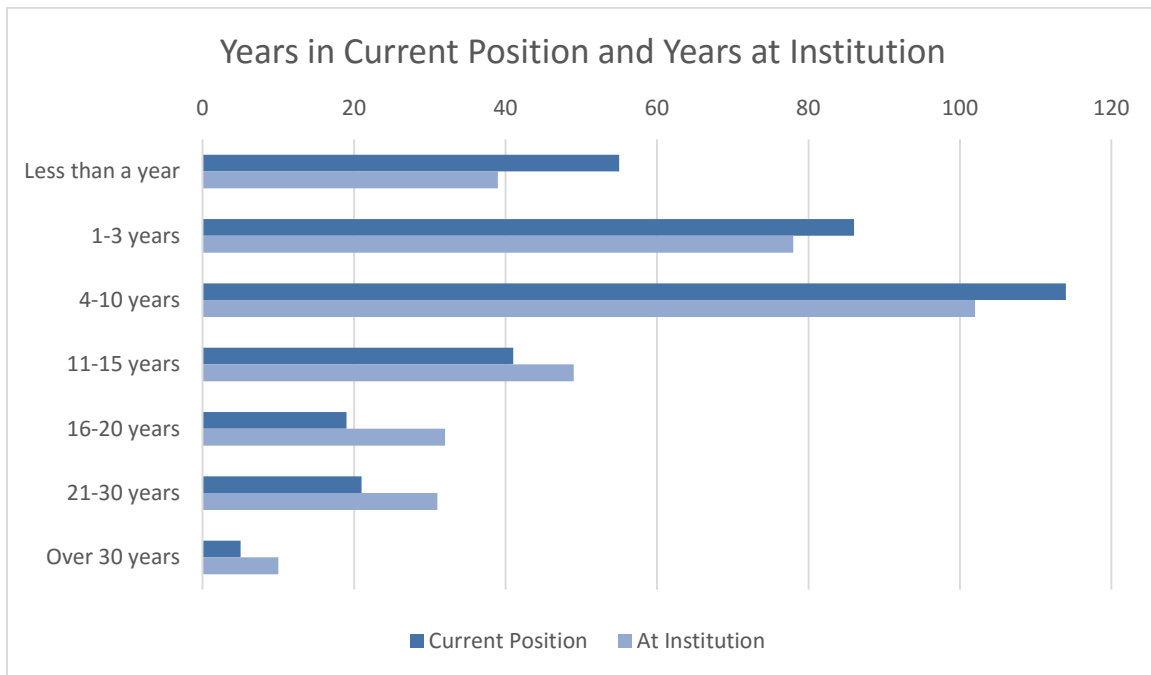


### Salary Ranges 2007 and 2015 Surveys



**Q25. How long have you been in your current position? Q26. How long have you worked at your institution?**

Out of 340 respondents, 259 have been in their current position the entire time they have been at their institution. 81 have been at their institution longer than they have been in their current position. The graph below shows that past the 10-year mark, respondents have been longer at their institution than in their current position. The results from 0 to 10 years could be interpreted to mean that in some cases respondents have held the same position at different institutions.



**Q27. To whom do you directly report?**

The word cloud below underscores that the majority of respondents work in academic, library, and museum settings. 25% report to a Department Chair, 15% to a Library Director or Assistant Director, and 14% to a Museum Director or Assistant Director. The supervisory descriptions shown below have been normalized and include all responses. The raw results of the 2007 Survey indicate that 35% reported to a Department Chair, 18% to a Library Director or Assistant Director, and only 2% to a Museum Director or Assistant Director. For both surveys, 7% of the respondents report to a Head of Visual Resources Unit. There was a small increase in the numbers reporting to a Corporate Administrative Officer—1% in 2007 and 4% in 2015.



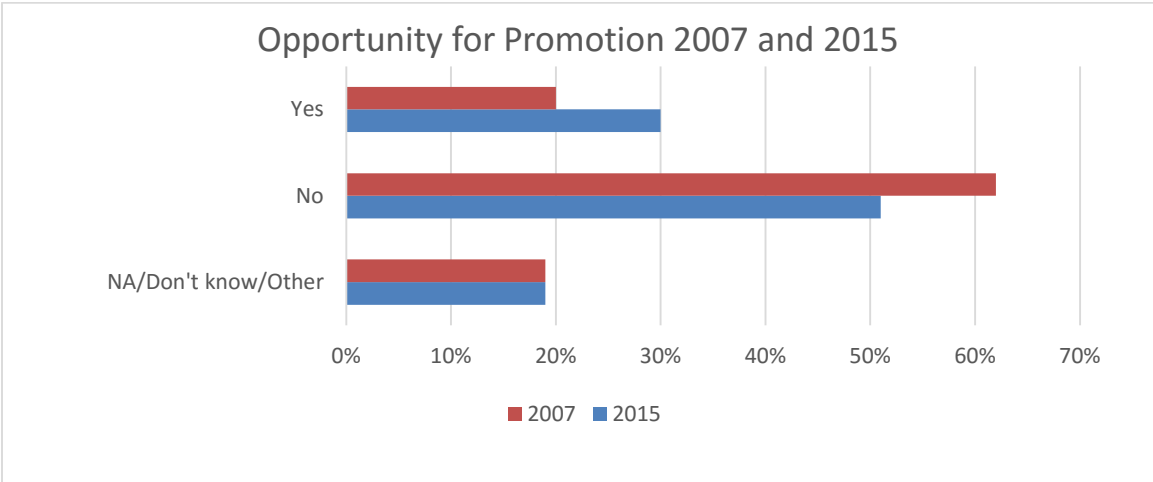
Department or Unit Director/Manager/Head  
 Corporate Administrative Officer  
 Academic Dean/Associate Dean/Assistant Dean  
 Head of Visual Resources Unit  
 Branch Librarian/Library Department or Unit Head  
 Board of Directors Head of Collections  
 Director of School Curator Registrar  
 Director of IT  
 Dean for Administration/Administrative Director  
 Museum Director/Assistant Director  
 Library Director/Assistant Director  
 Department Chair

**Q28. How often are you evaluated by your supervisor?**

The majority of respondents are evaluated annually, although 12% reported that they have no regular evaluation, and 3% replied that this was not applicable to their position.

**Q29. Do you have opportunity for promotion in your current position?**

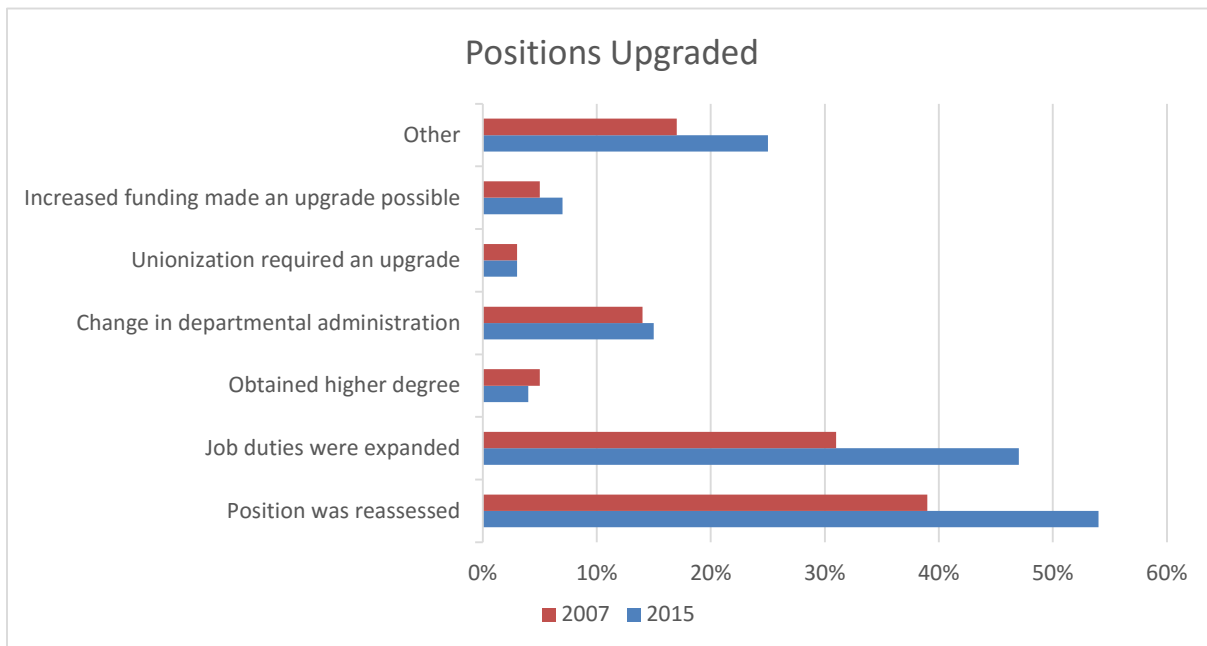
More respondents (30% compared to 25%) have an opportunity for promotion in their current positions in 2015 than in 2007.



**Q30. Has your position been upgraded (changed in title, rank, grade, pay scale, etc.) within the last five years? Q31. If yes, why?**

40% (135) of respondents said that their positions had been upgraded in the past five years. This compares to 42% (114) in the 2007 Survey. Some of the comments from 2015 worth noting: *I came in with a higher degree than the previous curator; I lobbied for a promotion based on job duties and merit.* However, under “Other”: *Positions similar to mine in the art school are being slowly and quietly*

*downgraded one labor grade (resulting in a lower salary) as people leave and are replaced. This is chilling considering my job has become more complex and demanding over time.*



**Q32. Has your position changed within the last five years without a change in title, rank, grade, pay scale, etc.?**

In 2015, 30% of respondents had a position changed without a corresponding change in title, rank, grade or pay, as compared to 33% in 2007. Comments on this question from 2015 included: *Title and responsibilities changed; pay did not.* And: *Position has changed, still in the same pay scale, “working” title has changed, but official payroll title has not.*

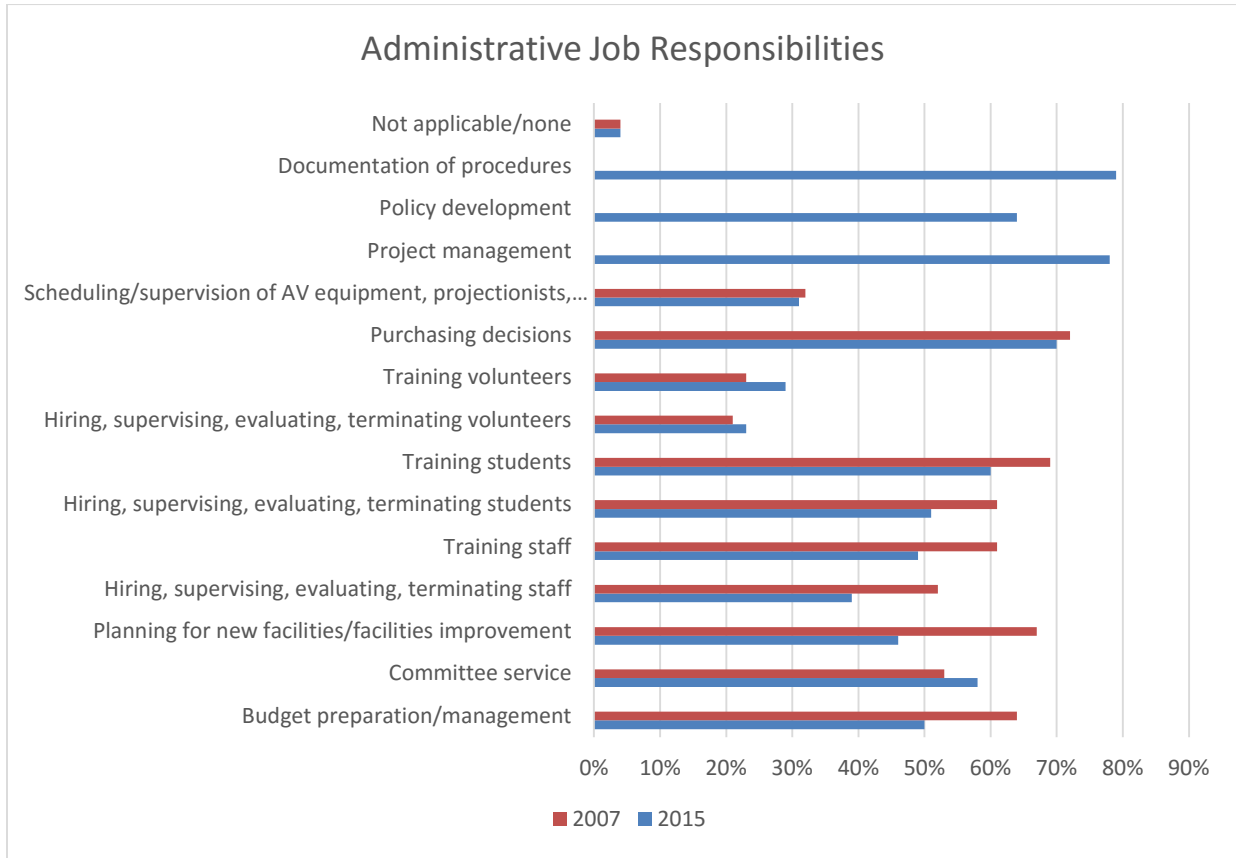
**Q33. Has your position been downgraded in the last five years? Q34. If yes, why?**

In 2015 only 9 respondents (3%) had experienced a downgrade in their position, as compared to 4% of respondents in 2007. The comments indicate that some respondents are feeling concern about the future of their positions: *I fear the art school is in the process of downgrading all the positions that were once the same grade as mine. They are doing this as people leave. The replacement positions are advertised one grade lower. I expect if I leave they will do the same with my position, assuming they choose to refill the job.* And, *my position was eliminated in the past 7 years and brought back at part-time status instead of full-time status.*

**Q35. What administrative job responsibilities are you responsible for in your current position?**

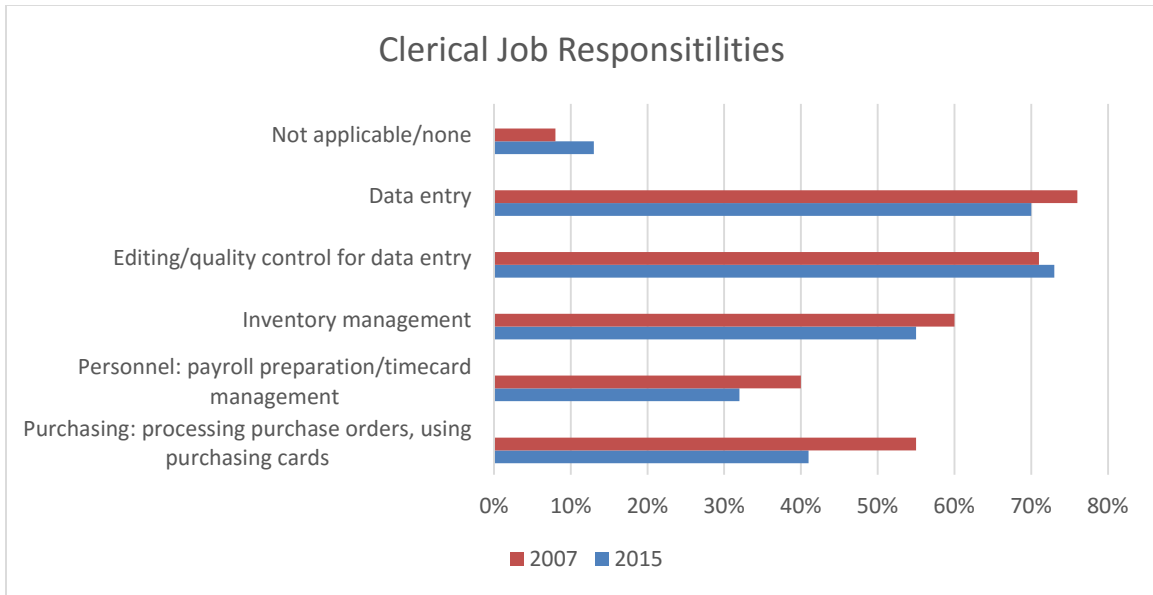
The majority of respondents (96%) have some administrative job responsibilities, and those percentages overall are unchanged from 2007. Three categories were added to the 2007 list: documentation of procedures (79%), project management (78%), and policy development (64%). Additional administrative job responsibilities beyond the list provided that were noted in 2015: *digital humanities support and training; collaborating on projects with other departments, the library, and/or the academic technology*

group; rights management for publications and exhibitions, accreditation process support; public relations; online journal production management; and developing assessment strategies.



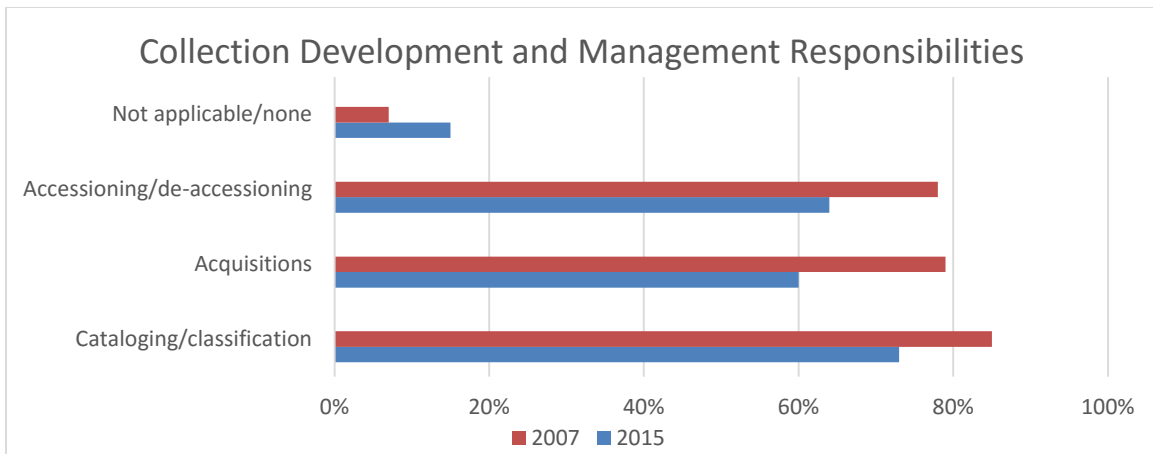
**Q36. What clerical job responsibilities are you responsible for in your current position?**

A small increase was noted in the percentage of respondents who do not have clerical responsibilities as part of their positions: 8% in 2007 and 13% in 2015. Other clerical duties listed included *front office coverage; receptionist; shipping; publicity, academic scheduling, event planning and facilitator, art history area coordinator; editing and licensing; and major gift acknowledgement.*



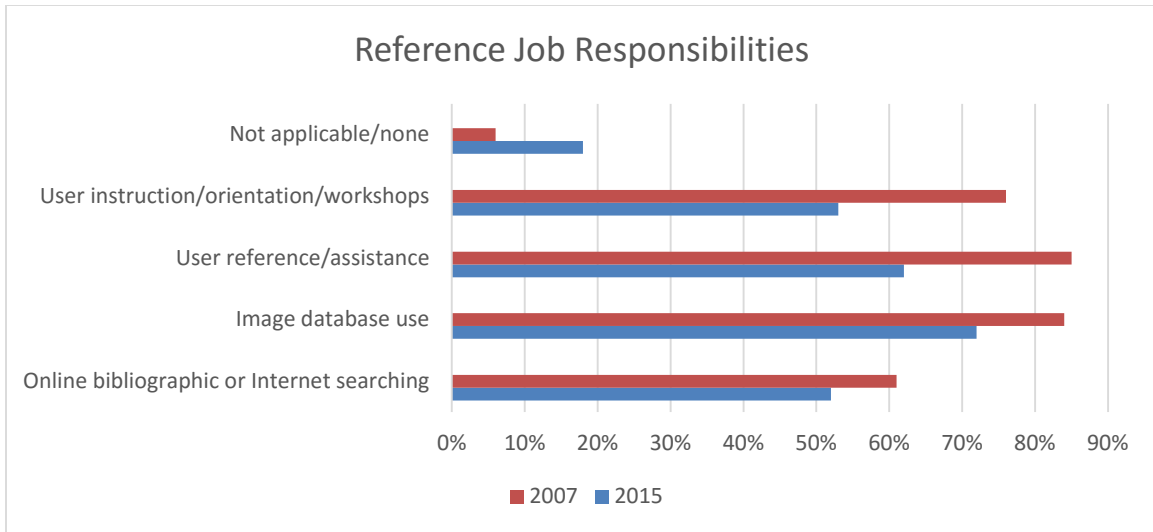
**Q37. What collection development and management responsibilities are you responsible for in your current position?**

Section 8. How Do You Work with Collections? provides more detail on those respondents who work with collections. This question provides a broad view of individual responsibilities. The comments give an insight into the varied nature of the collections respondents manage and the roles they play: *developing tutorials; generation of other digital resources; imaging of collection; rights for collection objects; catalog maintenance, preservation; major gifts, part of team choosing what to digitize/put online; loans, exhibitions; overseeing collection imaging/ingesting images into CMS; managing rights clearances; Inventory, record reconciliation, preparation of objects for exhibition; conservation; special collection development; and preservation/environmental management.*



**Q38. What reference job responsibilities are you responsible for in your current position?**

Several respondents noted job responsibilities that included virtual, chat, and email reference duties, certainly a sign of the times when face to face interactions are not the only way to make contact.

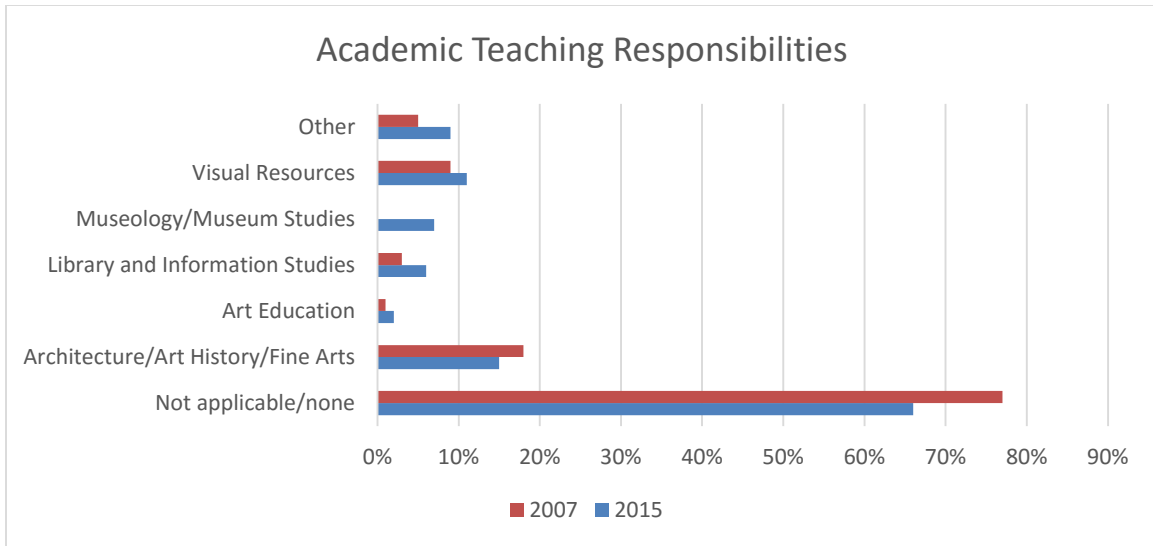


**Q39. How many hours do you devote to patron instruction/orientation per week?**

Fewer respondents were responsible for patron instruction and orientation in 2015 than in 2007. In 2015, 44% reported that this question was not applicable, while only 14% answered “None” in 2007. In neither survey did anyone report duties amounting to more than 20 hours per week, and in the category 15 to 20 hours per week, the number was the same for both years at 2%. In 2015, 10% listed patron-related duties as taking 5 to 10 hours per week as compared to 20% in 2007. In 2015, 43% of respondents reported working at these duties between 1 and 5 hours per week, compared to 63% in 2007.

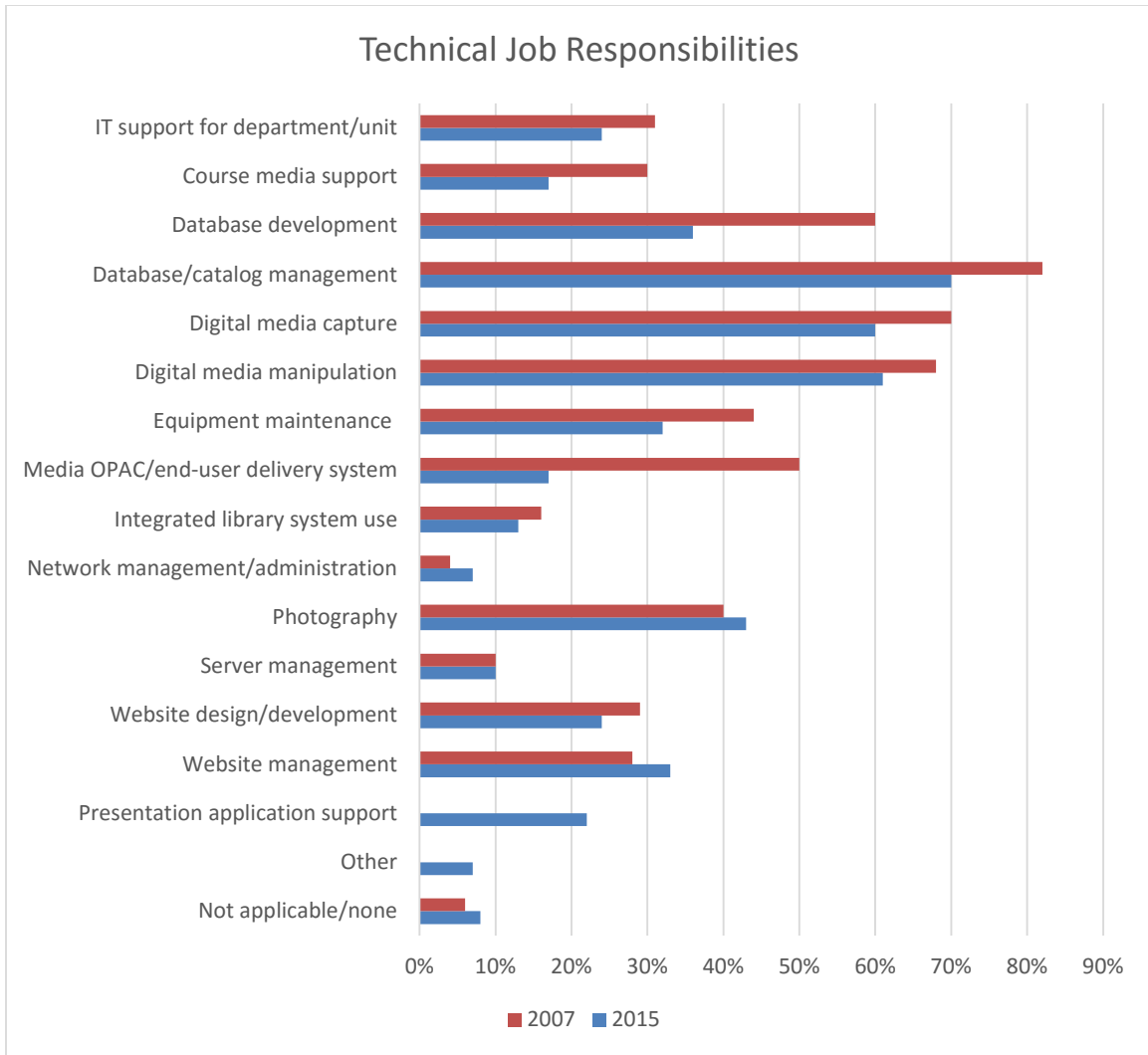
**Q40. What academic teaching responsibilities are you-responsible for in your current position?**

More respondents reported having academic teaching responsibilities in 2015 than in 2007. For the current survey the disciplines of Art, Design, and Photography are considered Fine Arts, along with Architecture and Art History. These were all listed separately in the 2007 survey. Respondents also noted academic teaching in Humanities, Philosophy, Religion, History, Classics, English, Theater, Music, and Dance.



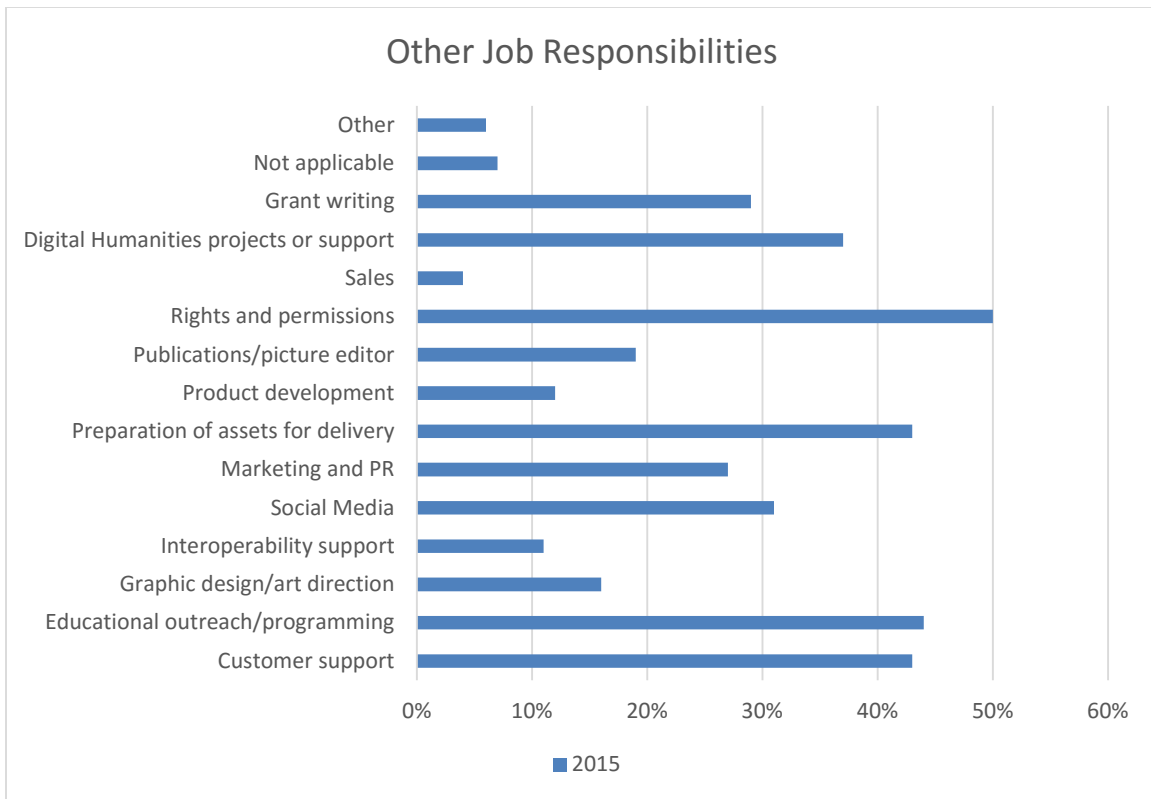
**Q41. What technical job responsibilities are you responsible for in your current position?**

Many respondents have technical job responsibilities; only 8% said that this was not applicable to their position. Beyond the duties listed, respondents specified: *digital forensics, systems administrator, technology department management and strategy, bug reporting and testing of new features, software and infrastructure development and support, identification, and testing of new software, and writing workflow scripts and normalizing data.*



**Q42. Which other job responsibilities are you responsible for in your current position?**

In 2007 this question was handled as an open response and the results were not included in the final report, thus a comparison cannot be made. The responses from 2015 inform trends towards new job responsibilities, some not imagined in 2007, such as social media, interoperability support, and digital humanities projects or support. In the open comments the following were listed: *recommending digital strategies and policies to senior management, institutional repository, digital herbarium projects, development of scholarly relationships, engagement with digital learning or digital studies activities on campus, planning exhibitions, evaluating and developing digital project workflows, collections housing, storage, and inventory management, and fundraising and library donor relations.*



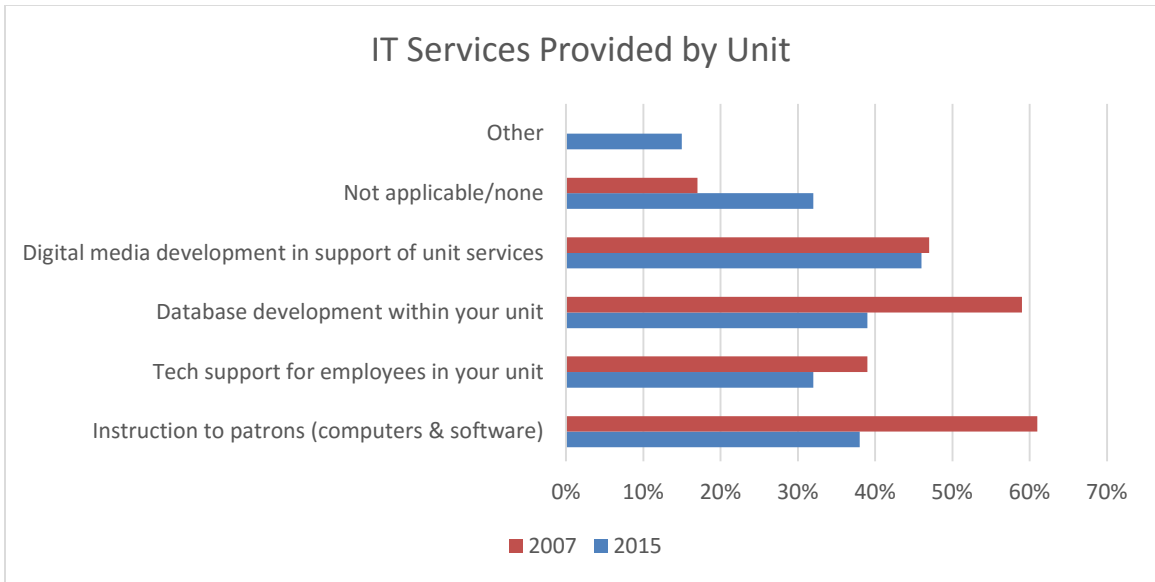
## 7. What Does Your Unit Do?

The following questions pertain to the unit in which respondents work. Questions were asked about IT, audiovisual, photographic, photographic/imaging, and collection services provided, as well as user spaces the unit makes available. Respondents are providing a variety of IT/audiovisual/photographing and imaging services to internal and public patrons; although a third of respondents' units are not responsible for IT services, and 54% of all respondents reported that they do not provide audiovisual services, suggesting that demand for these services has shifted from departments since the 2007 survey. Providing original photography and imaging services to those within an institution is a more common practice than providing those services to the public. Reported user spaces consist mainly of scanning equipment, computers for general use, and collaborative work/study spaces.

### Q43. What IT services are provided by your unit?

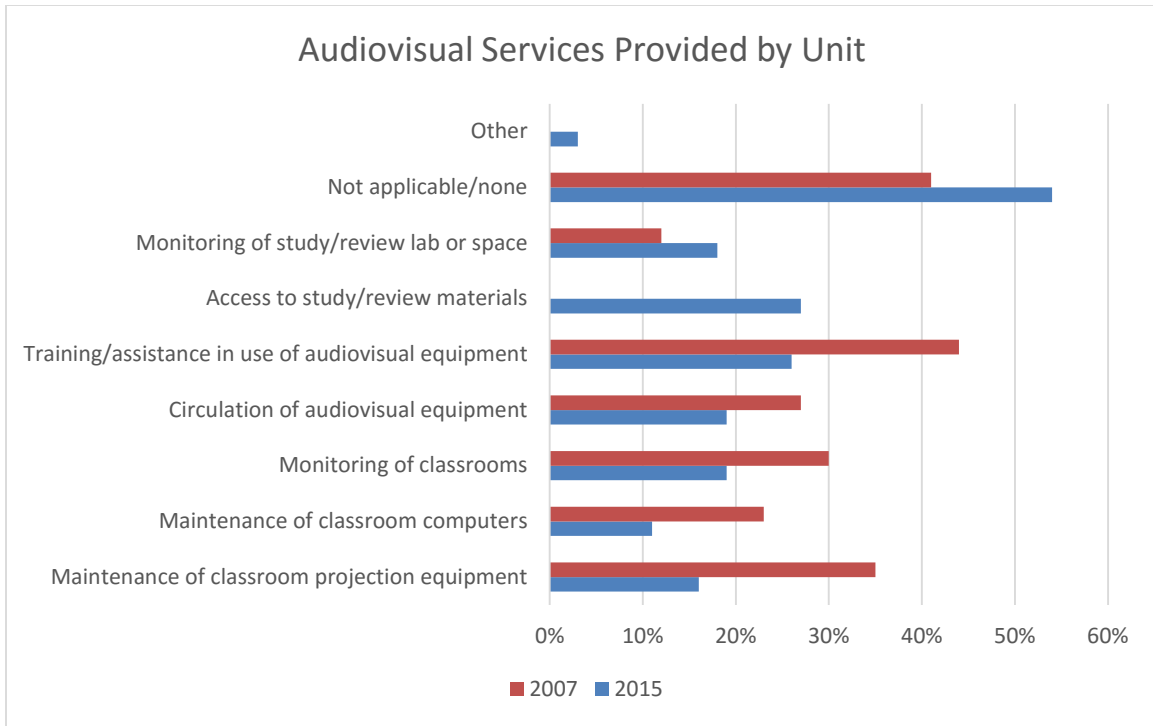
Overall, fewer respondents are providing IT-related services through their units than in 2007. 32% of 2015 respondents answered "Not applicable" to the question. The service most frequently provided is digital media development in support of unit services, whereas there has been a decrease in database development within the unit since 2007, perhaps an indication that databases are already established. Those providing services listed tech support for students, including printing services and computer lab support, software development, systems administration, and circulation of computers, iPads, and cameras in the "Other" category.





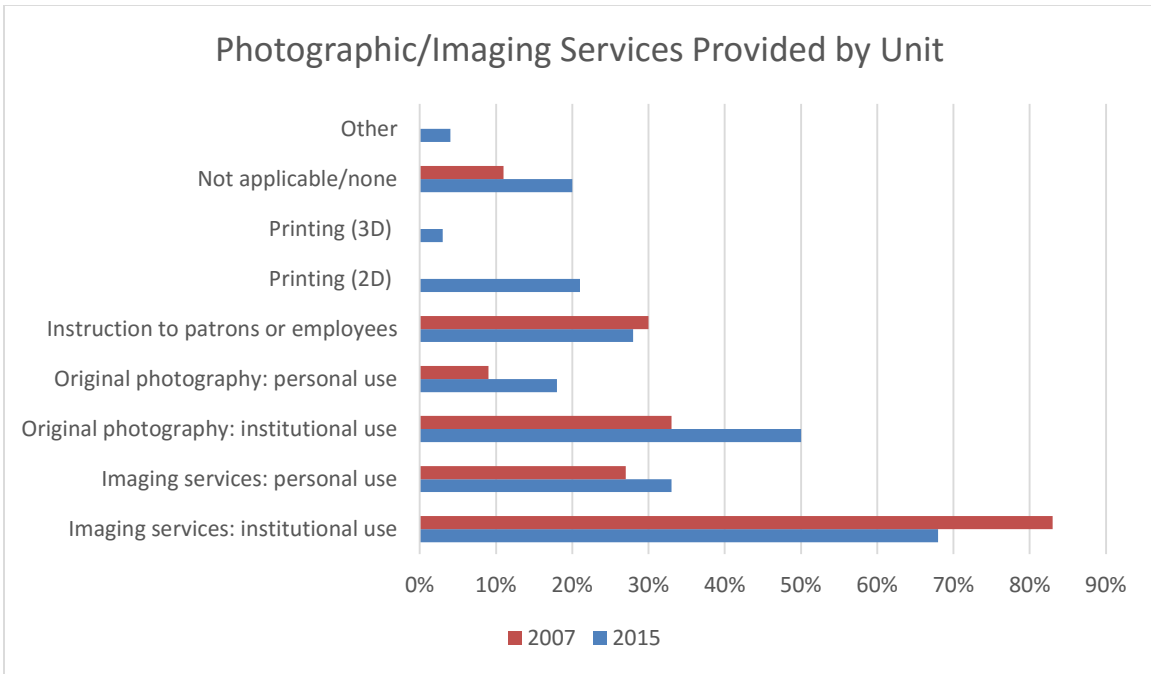
**Q44. What audiovisual services are provided by your unit?**

Fewer units are providing some type of audiovisual services in 2015 than in 2007, and several categories from 2007 (maintenance of analog classroom projection equipment, circulation of analog classroom projection equipment as distinct from circulation of digital classroom projection equipment, and monitoring a study posting space) are no longer applicable. Fewer respondents are responsible for maintenance of classroom projection equipment and classroom computers. Fewer units are providing some type of audiovisual services in 2015 than in 2007, and several categories from 2007 (maintenance of analog classroom projection equipment, circulation of analog classroom projection equipment as distinct from circulation of digital classroom projection equipment, and monitoring a study posting space) are no longer applicable. Fewer respondents are responsible for maintenance of classroom projection equipment and classroom computers.



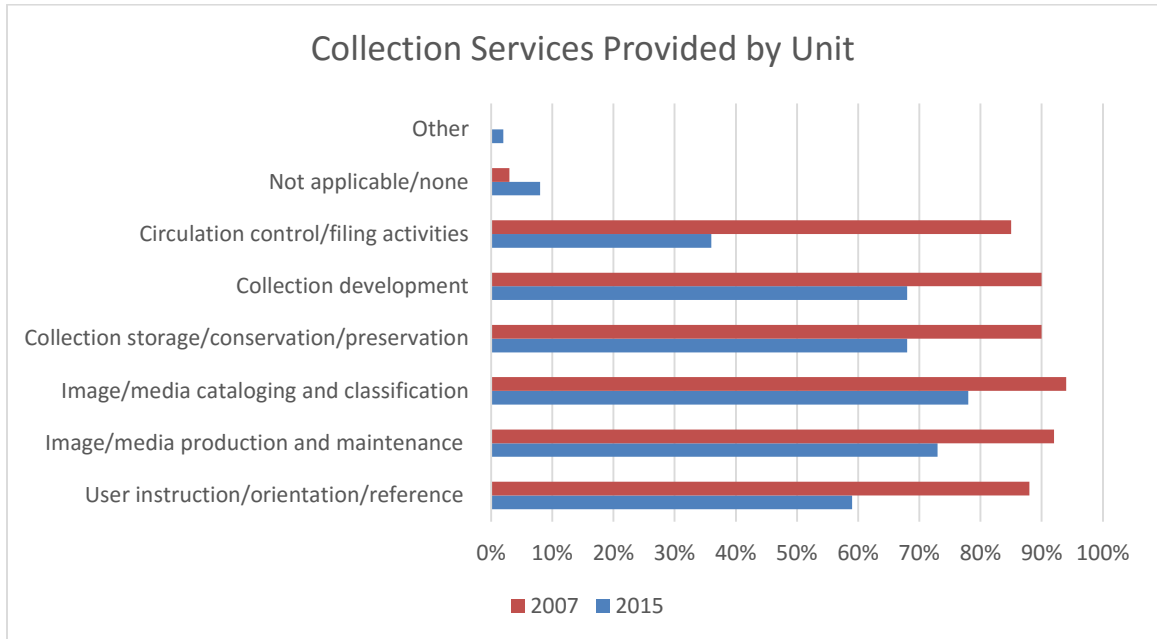
**Q45. What photographic/imaging services are provided by your unit?**

Fewer respondents reported that they provide photographic or imaging services in 2015 than in 2007. Only 2% are providing any kind of darkroom services in 2015. In 2007, 5% provided darkroom services for institutional use and 2% for personal use. Some of the response selections for the 2015 survey were changed. The 2007 option to select copy-photography was omitted; in 2015 imaging services covers this category. Printing services, both 2D and 3D, were not covered in the 2007 survey. Additional services listed under the “Other” category included: *imaging services for outside clients, 3D scanning/ virtual spaces, and pre-press work for publications.*



**Q46. What collection services are provided by your unit?**

Section 8. *How Do You Work with Collections?* provides more detail on those respondents who work with collections. This question provides a broad view of unit responsibilities. Many fewer respondents reported being engaged in the kinds of services such as circulation control and filing activities that suggest objects (i.e., slides and photographs) than in 2007, a drop from 85% to 36%. Other collection services continue to be provided.



**Q47. What user spaces are provided by your unit?**

This question was not asked on the 2007 survey. In 2015, 78% of reported units are providing a space with computers (including desktops, laptops, tablets) for general use, 83% have scanning equipment, 61% offer collaborative work/study spaces, 10% have video production space, and 8% have followed the currently hot trend of providing maker spaces. Other spaces listed were photo studio spaces, reading rooms, and exhibitions spaces.

**Q48. Have you added new staff positions to your unit in the past 5 years? Q49. If Yes, please list the title, position responsibilities, and percentage Full Time Equivalent (FTE) for each position.**

Within the last five years, 82 out of 278 respondents have added new staff positions. Some of the responses did not include the FTE for the positions added. Of the 76 respondents who specified FTE for new positions, 118 individual new staff positions were added: 95 full time (1 FTE) and 23 part-time (less than 1 FTE). Given the wide range of titles provided, a keyword count based on the titles might be the most useful means of thinking about the data.

- Digital = 23
- Assistant = 21
- Archivist = 19
- Librarian = 17
- Manager = 16
- Technician = 9
- Metadata = 8
- Curator = 6

**Q50. How many Full Time Equivalent (FTE) employees are allocated in your unit for each category below? (Round to nearest .25 FTE and count each employee only once. Please include student employee positions as FTE even if that is not the practice in your institution.)**

It is difficult to make meaningful comparisons when looking, for example, at a head of a library, with several hundred staff members, and someone in a solo operation. That said, for this question, out of 273 respondents, 9% are solo operations (1 or less total FTE). The respondent with the most employees in their unit reported 369 total FTE. The FTE is listed by category to show the types of staff respondents report as part of their units.

Units	
1 or less FTE	11%
>1.00 – 5.00 FTE	48%
>5.00 – 10.00 FTE	21%
>10.00 – 20.00 FTE	10%
>20.00 - 50.00 FTE	7%
>50.00 FTE	3%

Total FTE by Category	
Volunteers	731
Professional	422
Undergraduate Student Assistants	394
Faculty/Academic	272
Paraprofessional	201
Graduate Student Assistants	192
Administrative/Managerial	182
Interns	141
Faculty Librarian	104
Photographer/Imaging	78
Technical Staff	74
Clerical	38

**Q51. How do you rate your job satisfaction? Q52. Please indicate reasons you are highly satisfied. Please indicate reasons you are highly dissatisfied.**

Levels of job satisfaction dropped between 2007 and 2015. In 2015, 75% of respondents reported being highly satisfied or satisfied as compared to 90% in 2007. Flexibility and autonomy were key elements listed by many in the comments on job satisfaction. Dissatisfaction remained the same at about 10% for both surveys. Low pay, understaffing, and unrealistic demands were cited as reasons for dissatisfaction. The following are some of the reasons that those who were highly satisfied listed:

- *I am supported by Department with a lot of flexibility and little supervision.*
- *Balance of creative work, teaching and administrative fair; stable well-funded institution*
- *Working on images all day is a dream job to me. I have very few interruptions and no clerical work. Best job I've ever had.*
- *Strong support from supervisors, collegial environment, rewarding work*
- *Opportunity for promotion, input into decision making, supportive supervisor, growth in my area of work*
- *Flexible work hours, vacation and sick time, retirement and benefits, staff development opportunities.*

These comments came from some who reported being highly unsatisfied:

- *underpaid, under-challenged, do work that requires a graduate degree but not officially recognized as such*
- *Poor administration/management, unrealistic workload, low pay*
- *I work 60 to 70 hours a week and I get paid a ridiculously low salary. I am considering leaving academia because of this fact. I am literally going into debt while holding a full-time tenure-track faculty position.*
- *We are understaffed, and underfunded, which means we work long hours for low pay.*

**Q53. Do you work with collections? Collections are defined as items your unit directly manages.**

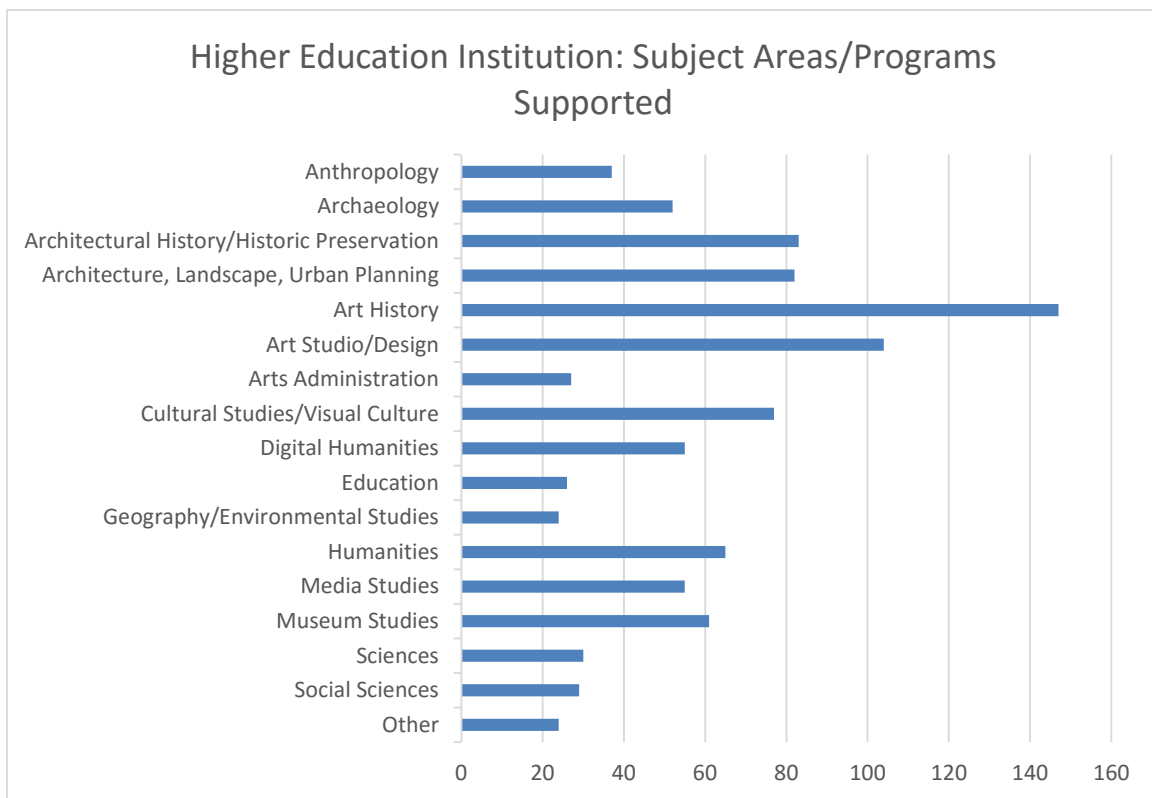
88% of respondents work with collections and were directed to the following set of questions pertaining to their work. Respondents who answered “No” to the question were directed to the section What Are Your Needs for Professional Development?

## 8. How Do You Work with Collections?

In order to collect information on how digital objects have changed how respondents work with collections, the following section was substantially modified from the 2007 survey. For this reason, comparisons cannot be made between the two surveys. Rather, this will show how analog and digital objects are used by respondents at this point in time.

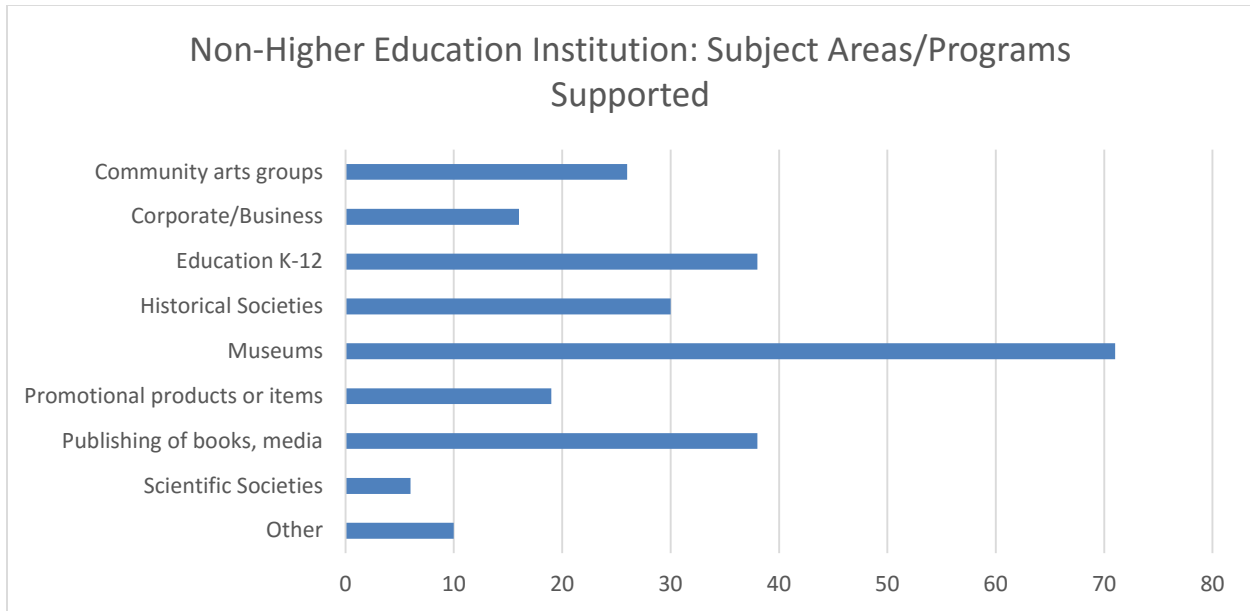
**Q54. If your collection is in a college or university, which main subject areas and/or programs are supported by or included within your unit?**

Most respondents who work for a college or university support arts-related programs, although support for non-arts and sciences disciplines is increasing. Under “Other” respondents listed real estate, music, fashion and costume, theater, and folk life.



**Q55. If your collection is not in a college or university, which types of programs does it support?**

Those respondents outside a college or university mostly support museums, K-12 education, publishing, and historical societies, while a significant number work in the corporate environment. Under “Other” respondents listed television/film, public library, general public, and government.



**Q56. Have the areas of focus that your collection supports changed in the last five years?**

Only 5% of respondents have seen a decrease in the focus of their collections. Many have changed or broadened their focus in ways such as moving beyond support for art and art history (42%). While still a small number, some respondents (7%) have decreased support for teaching resources and others are now supporting the sciences.

**Q57. What types of analog objects are in your collection? Are they still in use for instruction or research? Q 58. Are they being digitized? Q 59. Not applicable (by category).**

Nearly half (45%) of respondents have analog objects, such as photos, slides, negatives, film, and audio tape in their collections. Video, photographic prints, 35mm slides, negatives, and lantern slides are the most popularly used objects for teaching and research. Many of these (61%) are being digitized, with 35mm slides, lantern slides, photo prints, transparencies and negatives taking priority.

**Q60. What types of digital objects are in your local collection?**

While images are the most widely held digital object type, many collections include multiple types. Within 256 collections, the following types were included:

- Images: 245
- Moving image/video: 146
- Text: 121
- Audio: 113
- Datasets: 55
- Quick Time Virtual Reality Objects: 2
- 3D files (.stl): 1
- Citation databases: 1

**Q61. Where do your digital objects come from?**

While many respondents (209 out of 238) still create digital objects, they also acquire objects from these sources:

- Purchased from vendors: 124
- Created by users within my organization: 113
- Created by users outside my organization: 95
- Created by another department within my organization: 82
- Created by another unit within my department: 48

**Q62. Other than those purchased from vendors, how are these digital objects created?**

Aside from those acquired from vendors, digital objects are created by three main methods: digitizing analog collections, direct digital capture, and copy work. Some respondents add images from open access museum collections or Creative Commons licensed content from the web.

238 respondents indicated the following sources for their digital objects:

- Scans of items in analog collection: 200
- Direct digital capture of objects: 184
- Copy work from scanner or copy stand: 174
- Open access museum images or Creative Commons images from the web: 71
- Born digital graphics: 3
- Scans of analog items not in collection: 2
- Donations: 2
- Streaming video: 1
- Digitized analog audio: 1

**Q63. Which licensed image subscription services (e.g., Bridgeman Art Library, Artstor) are available at your organization?**

195 respondents use 37 different subscription services. Artstor is the most popular by far along with the other top six listed below:

- Artstor: 148
- Bridgeman Art Library: 24
- Archivision: 13
- AP Images: 11
- CAMIO (Catalog of Museum Images Online): 10
- Saskia: 5
- Oxford Art Online: 5

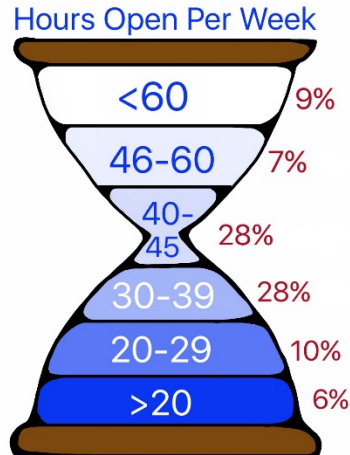
**Q64. Do you have a facility that provides users access to physical and/or digital collections?**

78% of respondents do and 22% do not provide users access to physical and/or digital collections.

**Q65. How many hours per week are your collections open and staffed?**

Most respondents are open 30 to 45 hours per week.





**Q67. To whom do you allow access to your physical/on-site collections?**

196 collections limit on-site access by these user types:

- Staff: 157
- Faculty: 150
- Students: 144
- Public: 110
- Members: 35
- Subscribers: 7
- Alumni: 3

**Q66. How do users access your digital/online collections?**

Access to digital collections varies from full remote access without a login to on-site access with an appointment.

- Only three respondents do not provide remote access; two send files directly to users upon request.
- 126 limit remote access by login.
- 63 provide open access.
- 80 require a login for on-site access; 113 provide on-site access without a login.
- 22 provide open access to all members within an institution; 34 limit access to a specific class or event.
- Where allowed, 52 require a login for downloads, only 30 restrict download file size, and 26 have no download restrictions.

**Q68. Does your unit contribute content to consortia or shared resources such as Digital Public Library of America, Artstor, Shared Shelf Commons, or California Digital Library?**

34% of respondents are contributing to organizations such as Digital Public Library of America, Artstor, Shared Shelf Commons, or California Digital Library.

**Q69. What discovery platform(s) do you use?**

Of 162 responses, 44 services were identified. The most popular are listed below.

- Artstor = 24%
- CONTENTdm = 13%
- Locally-built platform = 8%
- MDID = 8%
- Luna = 7%
- EBSCO = 5%
- Omeka = 3%

**Q70. What is your role in providing/maintaining/using the discovery platform(s)?**

Respondents reported multiple roles in providing, maintaining, and using discovery platforms. 151 respondents said they have these roles:

- Collection development-contributing image content: 129
- Collection development-contributing metadata content: 127
- Instructing & training users: 96
- Reference & searching assistance to patrons: 93
- Technical assistance to users: 74
- Departmental liaison for your institution: 68
- Primary contact for your institution: 67
- Assisting patrons in coordinating presentation software: 46
- Technical maintenance of the discovery tool: 35

**Q71. What software do you use for cataloging?**

211 respondents use 59 varieties of cataloging software with no single program dominating. These 13 programs are the most frequently used:

- Shared Shelf = 13%
- Microsoft Excel = 9%
- Past Perfect = 9%
- FileMaker Pro = 8%
- CONTENTdm = 5%
- EmbARK = 5%
- TMS = 5%
- Locally-built Platform = 4%
- Adobe Bridge = 4%
- IRIS (FileMakerPro) = 3%
- Luna = 3%
- Microsoft Access = 3%
- VCat (FileMakerPro) = 2%

## **Q72. Are your cataloging application(s) and user discovery platform(s) integrated?**

For half of respondents, cataloging application(s) and user discovery platform(s) are integrated, meaning they have one system to create metadata and deliver it to users.

## **9. Students, Unemployed, Retired Respondents**

The following section covers Q73-Q87. Those respondents who identified as students, unemployed, or retired in answering **Q14. Are you currently a full-time student, unemployed or retired?** were directed here.

**Undergraduate Students** were asked: **Q73. Do your career aspirations include work in the visual resources field? Q74. What degree are you currently pursuing? Please include degree type (e.g., BA, BS) and field of study or major. Q75. Do you plan on obtaining an advanced degree? Q76. Are you considering other kinds of training in addition to or instead of a degree program?**

**Graduate Students** were asked: **Q77. Do your career aspirations include work in the visual resources field? Q78. What degree are you currently pursuing? Please include degree type (e.g., MA, MS, PhD) and field of study. Q79. Do you plan on obtaining an additional advanced degree? Q80. Are you considering pursuing other professional development training in addition to your degree?**

**Unemployed Respondents** were asked: **Q81. Was your previous position eliminated? Q82. Are you currently seeking employment? Q83. Are you considering pursuing professional development training or a degree program?**

**Retired Respondents** were asked: **Q84. Was your retirement voluntary? Q85. Now that you have retired, is your former position (choose from list). Q86. Do you plan to stay active in the Visual Resources Association? Q87. What role(s) would you be interested in taking on?**

Students, retirees, and unemployed professionals added to the diversity of voices represented in the survey results. Only one undergraduate student responded and stated that s/he did not intend to work in the visual resources field. Of the 20 graduate student respondents, 18 indicated that they intended to work in the field of visual resources with their desired professions listed as archivist, art librarian, curator, and metadata specialist. The fields of study among the graduate students were primarily divided between Art History and Library and Information Science. In addition to obtaining their degree, nearly half of the students indicated that they would consider pursuing professional development training in the future, including certification in digital archives, workshops given by VRA, and the Summer Educational Institute (SEI).

Of the three responses for unemployed professionals, two individuals indicated that their positions had been eliminated. One individual intends to pursue continued work in the visual resources field while two are pursuing work in two related areas—digital photography and archives. Among the 15 retired respondents, five of their positions were known to have been eliminated at their institutions, post retirement. Nearly half of the retired respondents expressed an interest in staying active within the Visual Resources Association with an even split of interest between participation in committees or task forces and publications.

## 10. What Are Your Needs for Professional Development?

The questions in this section were asked in response to the Task Force's charge to gather information for the VRA Education and Membership Committees. The numbers, percentages, and totals for each of question have been provided below. As an overview, the results of questions asked on the format of professional development opportunities indicate that respondents prefer conferences (92%), workshops (88%), and webinars (87%). Data gathered on the Summer Educational Institute for Image Management (SEI) reveals that 23% of respondents have attended, 7% are likely to attend in the future, and 45% are undecided.

### **Q88. Have you attended the Summer Educational Institute for Image Management, a joint program of the Art Libraries Society of North America and the Visual Resources Association Foundation?**

- Yes = 75: 23%
- No = 246: 77%

### **Q89. If no, do you plan to attend in the future?**

- Yes = 18: 7%
- No = 116: 48%
- Undecided = 109: 45%

**Q90-105** asked about opportunities, formats, and platforms for professional development activities, whether respondents had taken advantage of these in the past, and whether they would be likely to do so in the future. The results are shown in the table below.

Types of Professional Development (Q90-105)								
Have you done this in the past?				How likely are you to in the future?				
	Yes	No	Total	Highly Likely	Somewhat Likely	Somewhat Unlikely	Highly Unlikely	Total
<b>Courses towards or obtained an advanced degree</b>	235 75%	80 25%	315	41 14%	68 22%	85 27%	120 38%	314
<b>Courses for professional certification or continuing education credits</b>	124 39%	190 61%	314	66 21%	106 34%	77 24%	67 21%	316
<b>Face-to-face non-credit courses for professional development</b>	180 58%	133 42%	313	94 30%	114 36%	58 18%	49 16%	315
<b>Online non-credit courses for professional development (including Massively Open Online Courses or MOOCs)</b>	119 38%	196 62%	315	70 22%	121 38%	66 21%	60 19%	317
<b>Workshops for professional development</b>	287 90%	32 10%	319	181 57%	98 31%	26 6%	13 4%	318
<b>Webinars for professional development</b>	264 83%	53 17%	317	191 60%	87 27%	23 7%	17 5%	318
<b>Conferences to foster your professional development</b>	299 94%	18 6%	317	226 72%	63 20%	21 7%	6 2%	318
<b>Benefited from mentoring for professional development</b>	183 58%	135 42%	318	62 20%	97 31%	80 25%	77 24%	316

**Q106. Do you regularly (every two or three years) attend professional conferences?**

- Yes, I attend regional conferences = 208: 65%
- Yes, I attend national conferences = 218: 68%
- Yes, I attend international conferences = 42: 13%
- No 51: 16%

**Q107 Do you regularly (every two or three years) receive travel funding for professional conferences?**

- Yes, I receive funding for regional conferences = 137: 43%
- Yes, I receive funding for national conferences = 186: 59%
- Yes, I receive funding for international conferences = 35: 11%
- No 107: 34%

**Q108. Check all positions you have held in a professional organization.**

Committee or task force member	198	66%
Regional or local organization officer	108	36%
Committee or task force officer	100	33%
Executive board member	69	23%
Board appointed position	59	20%
Advisory board member	56	19%
Webmaster or web editor	42	14%
Discussion list moderator or manager	30	10%
Editorial board member	19	6%
Other	13	4%
None	69	23%

Answers in the “Other” category included host for regional meetings, funder of new art historical organization, professional journal peer reviewer, special interest group chair, session organizer, journal editor, and state representative.

**Q109. In what ways are you professionally active? Indicate activities within the past 3 years.**

Presenting papers at professional conferences	143	46%
Using social media for professional purposes	136	44%
Mentoring in your profession	118	38%
Hosted or facilitated an internship	103	33%
Publishing in scholarly or professional journals, books, or other media (print or online)	98	32%
Organizing sessions at professional conferences	96	31%
Moderating sessions at professional conferences	86	28%
Organizing, facilitating, presenting in a professional workshop	85	27%
Blogging for professional purposes	59	19%
Teaching a for-credit course in a degree program	42	14%
Organizing, facilitating, presenting in a professional webinar	23	7%
Teaching a non-credit professional development course	15	5%

Teaching a course for professional certification	9	3%
Other	28	9%
None	43	14%

Answers in the “Other” category included teaching and guest lecturing, grant writing, organizing/hosting conferences, symposia, or professional meetings, reviewing scholarly papers and books, facilitating an independent study, participating in art exhibitions, presenting posters at professional conferences or meetings, and consulting.

**Q110. Are you currently a member of the Visual Resources Association (VRA)?**

- Yes = 167: 52%
- No, but I have been a member in the past = 27: 8%
- No, but I am considering becoming a member = 30: 9%
- No, and I have never been a member = 96: 30%

**The survey was promoted outside of the VRA membership and as a result almost 48% of those who took the survey were not VRA members. The answers to the following questions will provide the VRA Membership Committee with some information for recruiting new members to the organization.**

**Q111. If you are not a member of VRA, what would lead you to become a member?**

Reasons listed fell into several categories that will be of interest to the VRA Membership Committee. One repeated reason was wanting more information about the organization. This speaks to the potential value of outreach to other professional groups and associations. Responses indicated that the person had not previously known about VRA, but would like to know more about it, or would like to understand what VRA is and how it would benefit them, their department, and their institution. A second group of reasons why people would consider joining had to do with opportunities for professional development and continuing education. Cost was another issue. For a number of respondents, a lack of institutional support is a reason for electing not to purchase membership in professional organizations.

**All 93 of the responses are listed in Appendix B: For the Membership Committee.**

**Q112. In which of the following organizations do you take advantage of an individual or institutional membership?**

The most frequently cited organizations are listed here. All responses can be found in **Appendix B: For the Membership Committee.**

American Alliance of Museums	85	30%
Art Libraries Society of North America	73	25%
American Library Association	50	17%
College Art Association	50	17%
Museum Computer Network	33	11%
Society of American Archivists	31	11%
Southeast College Art Conference	21	7%
Educause	13	5%
Society of Architectural Historians	13	5%
Digital Library Federation	11	4%

Council on Libraries and Information Resources	4	1%
Special Libraries Association	4	1%
Other	91	32%
None	40	14%

**Q113. Do you belong to regional chapters of one or more of the following professional organizations?**

- VRA = 136: 44%
- ARLIS/NA = 54: 18%
- Other = 26: 8%
- None = 137: 45%

**Q114. Does your institution pay for any organizational memberships on your behalf?**

- Yes = 146: 49%
- No = 153: 51%

**Q115. For the following communication tools, which do you use in your professional capacity to provide content to others?**

Respondents use the following digital tools and social media sites for professional communication: Online discussion groups/boards/lists (e.g., VRA-L) (54%), Websites (40%), Facebook (35%), LinkedIn (27%), Blogs (22%), Twitter (20%), None (14%), SlideShare (11%), Wikis (9%), and Other (7%).





**Q116. In what ways could the Visual Resources Association support your professional development?  
(Write in)**

The survey received many write in responses to this question; the responses were sorted into three broad categories: learning opportunities, networking/sharing, and funding.

**Learning Opportunities**

A prevalent theme expressed throughout the survey responses is a desire to have access to more workshops, either offered through regional chapters or online. Suggestions focused on workshops or learning opportunities that produced concrete "how to" outcomes such as production workflows for digital projects and/or collections and DAMS software assessments. There was also interest in digital humanities topics, as well as having more museum-focused sessions at the annual VRA conference. SEI is considered a valuable learning opportunity with several respondents requesting an SEI 2.0 option. Lastly, respondents suggested that VRA offer certification in knowledge areas relevant to the visual resources profession. Following are two quotes from survey respondents in regard to learning opportunities:

*"VRA has already been a wonderful support of my professional development through SEI, conference workshops, and professional engagement opportunities. I think how VRA could improve professional development offerings is to make them more affordable for those whose institutions don't pay for them-- by making SEI content and other content available through webinars and smaller regional workshops."*

*"Identify experts in certain areas and create content that others can access, be it a webinar, regional workshop, or advanced track in SEI. Also, start keeping a record of the paths VRA leaders have taken and the stories they have to tell, so new or interested members could see similarities in their own path and continue to develop themselves into leaders."*

**Networking/Sharing**

Respondents to the survey indicated that the VRA Listserv continues to be a valuable way to share information and to communicate with colleagues; according to the survey, 54% of respondents use the Listserv as the primary method for communicating with colleagues. Other types of networking suggestions are the development of regional mini meetings that could include workshops and tours; an interest group for retired professionals, and the development of a method for the sharing of images and metadata among visual resources professionals.

**Funding**

A consistent theme among respondents is the lack of funding available to visual resources professionals for professional development. An increase in both travel funding (to the annual conference) as well as more funding for cataloging and digitization projects was requested. What follows are two quotes from survey respondents in regard to funding:

*"As a new professional, it can be tricky getting to events and conferences. I'd love to participate, but I don't think I'm eligible for funding and my entry-level positions won't support this kind of career development. Additionally, travel expenses are difficult."*

*"A joint membership (especially for students) for ARLIS/NA and VRA would be wonderful. I would love to take advantage of the mentor program and other opportunities offered by VRA, but I hadn't really considered joining until I saw the membership offer that comes with non-member student registration for the joint conference. If this relationship between the two orgs is meant to continue, I think cross-promotion by offering that membership type would be very beneficial for members and the orgs."*

## 11. Summary/Conclusion

The 2015 VRA Professional Status Survey reflects a profession that has successfully weathered the digital transition and embraced new technologies to deepen, broaden, and enhance the collective job description. The profession continues to redefine itself and identify commonalities with a broad range of related fields. The Task Force itself was comprised of VRA members working in a variety of settings including instructional technology, digital scholarship, special collections, archives, museums, libraries, and departmental collections. The volume of responses received from non-VRA members is extremely encouraging and illustrates the continuing resonance of the term *visual resources* to its body of practitioners. The Visual Resources Association clearly serves a vital purpose in providing professional development opportunities, resources and support for the community, and should continue to strive to reflect the growth and widening scope of the profession.

Thank you to all of the respondents without whom this survey could not have yielded such fascinating results.

## 12. Appendices

### Appendix A: Respondents by State

<b>State Name</b>	<b>Number of Respondents</b>
Alabama	1
Alaska	1
Arizona	8
Arkansas	1
California	42
Colorado	10
Connecticut	7
Delaware	1
Florida	4
Georgia	8
Hawaii	2
Idaho	1
Illinois	12
Indiana	7
Iowa	2
Kansas	1
Kentucky	1
Louisiana	1
Maine	0
Maryland	6
Massachusetts	19
Michigan	10
Minnesota	7
Mississippi	0
Missouri	8
Montana	0
Nebraska	1
Nevada	2
New Hampshire	4
New Jersey	4
New Mexico	3
New York	33
North Carolina	13
North Dakota	1
Ohio	14
Oklahoma	0
Oregon	9
Pennsylvania	12
Rhode Island	5
South Carolina	2

South Dakota	0
Tennessee	3
Texas	15
Utah	1
Vermont	3
Virginia	12
Washington	7
West Virginia	1
Wisconsin	6
Wyoming	1

## Appendix B: For the VRA Membership Committee

The Task Force felt that it would be useful to the VRA Membership Committee to see all of the responses to two questions pertaining to VRA membership and membership in other organizations and associations.

### Q 111. If you are not a member of VRA, what would lead you to become a member?

Total Responses = 93

1. *Financial support from employer*
2. *Figuring out how it's relevant to me, if it is cost effective, and what the resources are. I need resources about managing and collections care for architectural archives.*
3. *More defined knowledge of the VRA's activities, resources, membership, and benefits*
4. *If my position involved mostly involved working/managing visual resources. As it is, it is one of many responsibilities and I have limit the number of associations I can join, particularly since I don't get institutional support for memberships.*
5. *too busy at the present*
6. *Obtaining more information about the association*
7. *I don't envision myself becoming a member.*
8. *Knowing more about it.*
9. *if it's free*
10. *I would like more information on requirements, benefits, etc.*
11. *not sure*
12. *Broader focus - seemed focus was toward academic/university*
13. *More digital focus, but that is not why VRA exists so would not expect that to happen.*
14. *Yes*
15. *Understand what the organization does and how it would benefit me, my department and/or the organization.*
16. *nothing*
17. *More relevant to my current job responsibilities*
18. *If it enhances the care and use of our actual collections.*
19. *I wouldn't*
20. *Relevance to my job*
21. *Planning to attend a conference or workshop that year (registration discount)*
22. *Institutional financial support*
23. *If I was working in a relevant position*
24. *More professional development and VRA keeping up with how the profession is changing. I left because there weren't really a lot of benefits for a young librarian who doesn't manage a slide collection.*
25. *I am not a personal member of VRA, & as I know longer have a position that has a direct relationship with visual materials, it is most unlikely I will become a member at this stage of my career.*
26. *At this point, nothing.*
27. *I love the VRA committee but it would have to be directly beneficial to my work at Smarthistory*
28. *Not sure. I am member of numerous archives organizations. Would have to have tangible benefit.*
29. *Nothing*
30. *learning, collaborating, networking*

31. *Not sure.*
32. *If there are enough benefits to joining and if it becomes more helpful for my career in museums.*
33. *I'm planning to join again.*
34. *Planning on becoming a member at the end of the calendar year.*
35. *Nothing they could do--just not a high priority in terms of other committee obligations. Only enough membership \$\$ to go around!*
36. *Unlikely for now.*
37. *Professional development*
38. *I don't know*
39. *I have not previously known about this organization, but would like to know more in future!*
40. *Relevant workshops*
41. *A joint membership with ARLIS/NA*
42. *When I work at an institution that will cover the cost.*
43. *A little more time working professionally with visual resources (more so than the audio/video I'm primarily working with today) would likely result in becoming a VRA member. Nothing on your end!*
44. *If we were doing more comprehensive digital imaging than we are doing now.*
45. *A better understanding of what it offers.*
46. *If our museum expanded its visual resources systems and support.*
47. *More hours in the day and more money for professional memberships.*
48. *Unclear*
49. *Visual resources are not the focus of my position and I have other memberships I am maintaining.*
50. *Expansion of the VRA scope. I work with materials of all formats, not just images. SAA and DLF cover those areas.*
51. *more resources to improve my work*
52. *I'm getting involved with a few VRA specific things, so may join for the next couple of years. Mostly for the list-serv.*
53. *funding from my organization*
54. *I hope to attend the 2016 conference and will most likely join then.*
55. *Would need to learn more about VRA*
56. *Support from my institution.*
57. *If someone paid for it*
58. *If there is a will to fund the digitization of the slide collection or to otherwise develop the institutional collections of visual resources, then I will look to VRA as a resource to develop best practices, workflows, etc., but there is not time or interest in that type of project for now.*
59. *better conferences*
60. *Figuring out what the VRA is, exactly*
61. *more information on benefits*
62. *If I thought I would be continuing with a career in media collections.*
63. *I need to know what the perks of membership are.*
64. *I work for a government agency which does not pay for professional memberships and the costs for VRA and other professional organizations is too high in relationship to my salary.*
65. *Affordability, if it appears beneficial to my profession.*
66. *Increased racial and ethnic diversity of membership.*
67. *Time and access*
68. *Nothing (retired)*
69. *Buy-in from my manager*

70. *maybe*
71. *More information about program--fees, benefits, etc.*
72. *Nothing that I can think of.*
73. *I think it would depend on the full-time job I end up getting. While I would love a job in metadata creation for a digital collection, I may end up in an entirely different field of librarianship, and membership in the VRA may not be helpful in that case.*
74. *Perhaps*
75. *If my job duties went more into the realm of visual resources, I would consider it.*
76. *Being retired, I can't think of a reason now.*
77. *Not sure*
78. *Information*
79. *unsure*
80. *I'm not familiar with this organization.*
81. *Resources, continuing education, affordable fees (affordable for those in small institutions and nonprofits).*
82. *If I were not so close to retirement.*
83. *knowing more about it*
84. *entry level support, most seems too technical for me*
85. *To keep current on professional practices*
86. *A pay raise*
87. *Need to know more about the organization and what benefits it would have for me. Cost unfortunately is also a factor.*
88. *I would need to learn more about the organization, its purpose, and the membership fees.*
89. *More information about the organization and possible application to my research*
90. *No*
91. *Possibly*
92. *lower membership cost and/or getting a job that pays decently*
93. *Plan to become a member at the beginning of 2016*

**Q 112. In which of the following organizations do you take advantage of an individual or institutional membership?**

We have provided all of the responses to this question and broken out the data from non-VRA members. This may provide some insight into the types of organizations in which non-VRA member respondents have membership.

Organization Name	All	Non-VRA Members
Alliance of Artist Communities (AAC)	1	1
American Alliance of Museums (AAM)	85	74
American Alliance of Museums: Curators Committee (CurCom)	1	1
American Alliance of Museums: Emerging Museum Professionals (EMP)	1	1
American Anthropological Association (AAA)	1	1
American Association for State and Local History (AASLH)	9	8
American Association of School Librarians (AASL)	4	2
American Institute for the Conservation of Historic and Artistic Works (AIC)	1	1
American Institute of Architects (AIA)	1	0

American Library Association (ALA)	51	28
American Public Gardens Association (APGA)	1	1
American Society of Picture Professionals (ASPP)	3	2
Americans for the Arts (AFTA)	1	1
Archaeological Institute of America (AIA)	1	0
Archives and Records Association of New Zealand (ARANZ)	1	1
Archivists Round Table of Metropolitan New York (A.R.T)	1	1
Art Association of Australia and New Zealand (AAANZ)	1	1
Art Libraries Society of Australia and NZ (ARLIS/ANZ)	5	4
Art Libraries Society of North America (ARLIS/NA)	73	17
Association for Information Science and Technology (ASIS&T)	3	2
Association for Living History, Farm and Agricultural Museums (ALHFAM)	2	1
Association of Academic Museums and Galleries (AAMG)	3	3
Association of Architecture School Librarians (AASL)	8	3
Association of Art Museum Curators (AAMC)	1	0
Association of Canadian Archivists (ACA)	1	1
Association of Caribbean University and Research Libraries (ACURIL)	1	0
Association of College & Research Libraries (ACRL)	3	1
Association of Moving Image Archivists (AMIA)	4	3
Association of National Park Rangers (ANPR)	1	1
Association of Registrars and Collections Specialists (ARCS)	8	8
Association for Library and Information Science Education (ALISE)	1	1
Australian Library and Information Association (ALIA)	3	2
Botanic Gardens Conservation International (BGCI)	1	1
California Association of Museums (CAM)	2	2
Chicago Area Archivists (CAA)	1	1
Chicago Museum Exhibitors Group (CMEG)	1	1
Coalition for Networked Information (CNI)	1	1
College Art Association (CAA)	50	21
Council on Libraries and Information Resources (CLIR)	4	3
Cultural Studies Association (CSA)	1	1
Digital Library Federation (DLF)	11	5
Docomomo	1	0
Dublin Core Metadata Initiative (DCMI )	1	0
Educause	13	1
Hawaii Museums Association (HMA)	1	1
Illinois Association of Museums (IAM)	1	1
Imagemuse	1	1
Innovative Users Group (IUG)	1	0
International Center of Medieval Art (ICMA)	1	0
International Confederation of Architectural Museums (ICAM)	1	1
International Council of Museums (ICOM)	3	3
Library and Information Association of New Zealand Aotearoa (LIANZA)	1	1
local associations for archivists and librarians	1	0
Metro	1	0
Mid-Atlantic Regional Archives Conference (MARAC)	1	0



Midwest Archives Conference (MAC)	2	2
Modernist Studies Association (MSA)	1	1
Museum Computer Group - UK (MCG)	1	0
Museum Computer Network (MCN)	33	22
MuseumIP	1	1
National Association for Interpretation (NAI)	1	1
National Association for Multicultural Education (NAME)	1	1
National Council on Public History (NCPH)	1	1
New England Archivists (NEA)	1	0
New England Museum Association (NEMA)	4	4
New Media Consortium (NMC)	2	0
Oracle	1	0
Organization of American Historians (OAH)	1	1
Print Council of America	1	1
Registrars Committee of the American Alliance of Museums (RCAMM)	4	4
Registrar's Committee Western Region (RCWR)	5	5
Res Artis	1	1
Scholarly Publishing and Academic Resources Coalition (SPARC)	1	0
Society for Photographic Education (SPE)	2	0
Society for Rocky Mountain Archivists (SRMA)	1	1
Society for the Preservation of Natural History Collections (SPNHC)	4	4
Society of Architectural Historians (SAH)	13	2
Society of California Archivists (SCA)	1	0
Society of Historians of Eastern European, Eurasian and Russian Art and Architecture (SHERA)	1	1
South Carolina Library Association (SCLA)	1	1
Southeast College Art Conference (SECAC)	21	12
Southeastern Museums Council (SEMC)	1	1
Southeastern Registrars Association (SERA)	1	1
Special Libraries Association (SLA)	4	1
Statewide California Electronic Library Consortium (SCELC)	1	0
Texas Digital Library	1	0
Virginia Association of Museums (VAM)	1	1
Western Museums Association (WMA)	6	6

## Appendix C: Lessons Learned

The Task Force was charged in October 2014 with submitting a final report to the VRA Board by October 15, 2015. The challenges outlined below made that a problematic target date. In its Annual Report for 2014, Task Force co-chairs proposed a more feasible timeline to the VRA Board, which outlined completion of the Task Force's work with an 18-month timeframe rather than a 12-month timeframe.

After the Task Force was charged, it took more than two months to collect from various sources all of the survey questions and related data from the 2007 survey and to begin to work. The issue of organizational records stewardship raised concerns among the members of the Task Force about how the 2015-16 report, survey, and data will be archived. Recommendations for sharing and archiving the results of this survey are detailed in the Introduction to this report.

The 2015 VRA Professional Status Task Force benefitted immensely from the work performed by the University of Minnesota Research Survey Team; without their expertise in survey design, the Task Force would not have been able to produce a high quality product. The time that the Research Survey team was able to provide to this project was made possible only through the professional connections of a Task Force member. It is, therefore, recommended that future survey endeavors include the funding to hire survey design assistance.

Task Force members faced challenges with data analysis and the normalizing of data. One of the big issues was the use of write-in responses. Data analysis becomes more difficult and complex when answers are not constrained. In an effort to be inclusive, the Task Force frequently allowed for "Other" in questions and encouraged write-in answers, not considering the effort that would be involved in data interpretation. Much time was spent in the cross analysis of data--looking at individuals' answers to several questions together, such as degrees earned and salary. It should be noted that the 2007 Professional Status Task Force had access to pro-bono professional analysis; it is also recommended that future survey projects include funding to outsource this time-consuming task.