

IASC21 2014 Survey

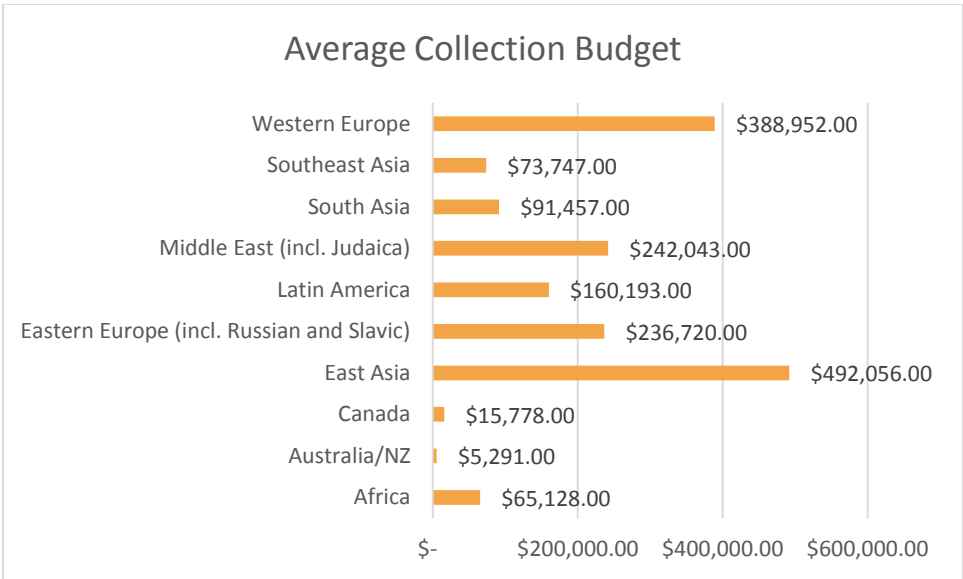
Executive Summary

Throughout December 2013 and January 2014, representatives from 13 research institutions participated in a detailed survey related to the support of area studies in their respective libraries. Survey questions were designed to help broadly and collectively describe the “state of the field” in our libraries, highlighting administrative structures, staffing levels and collections support for international and area studies. The hope is that this information will help the IASC21 collective in both comparatively and collectively lobbying within and across our institutions for support and understanding.

The survey was sent to members of 22 institutions and had a 60% response rate. Participants were from both public (n=8, 60%) and private (n=5, 40%) institutions.

Collections Investment¹

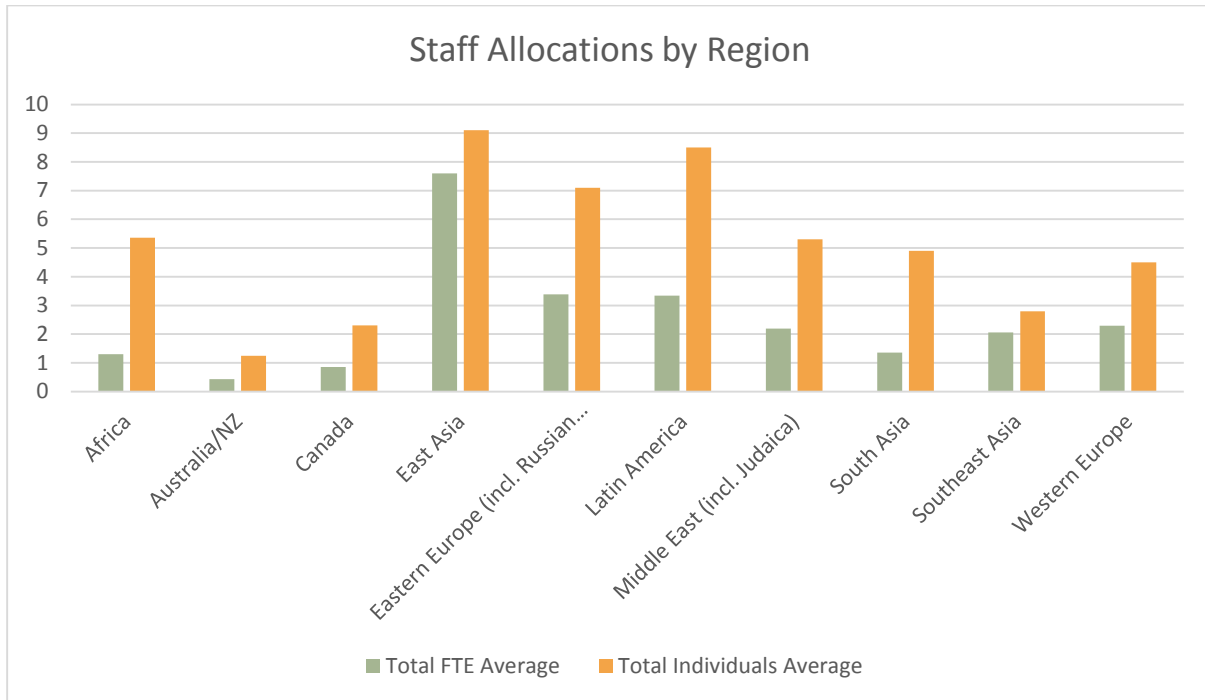
On average, institutions reporting spending approximately 8% of their overall ARL reported collections budgets on area studies; the highest reported spending being 12% and the lowest at 4%. In terms of dollars, the average was \$1.3M per institution with the highest investment being \$2.9M and the lowest being \$214,000.



¹ 3 libraries did not report collection budgets.

Staffing Investment²

Libraries reported an average of 20 FTE in support of all area studies, although the number of individual staff members (as compared to FTE) was much higher at every institution. The highest overall FTE was 33, the lowest was 4.



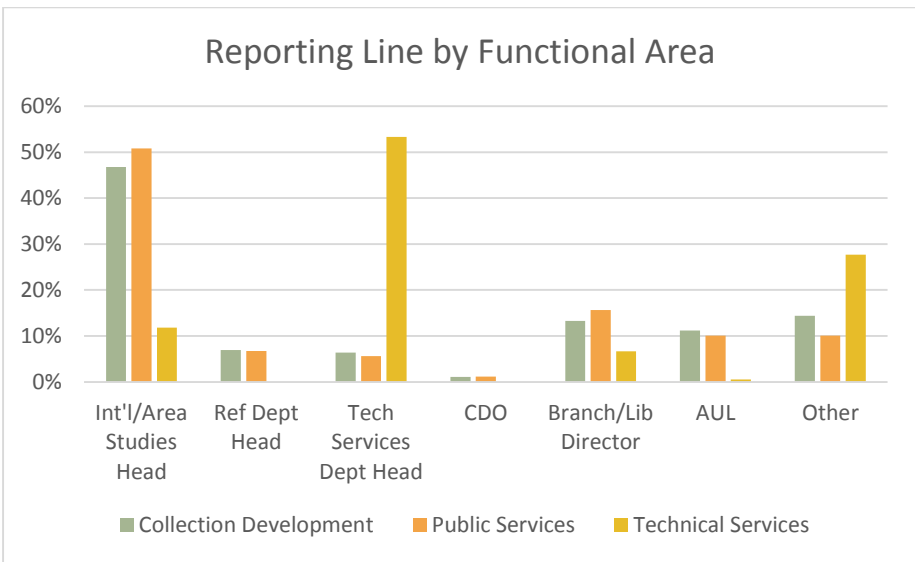
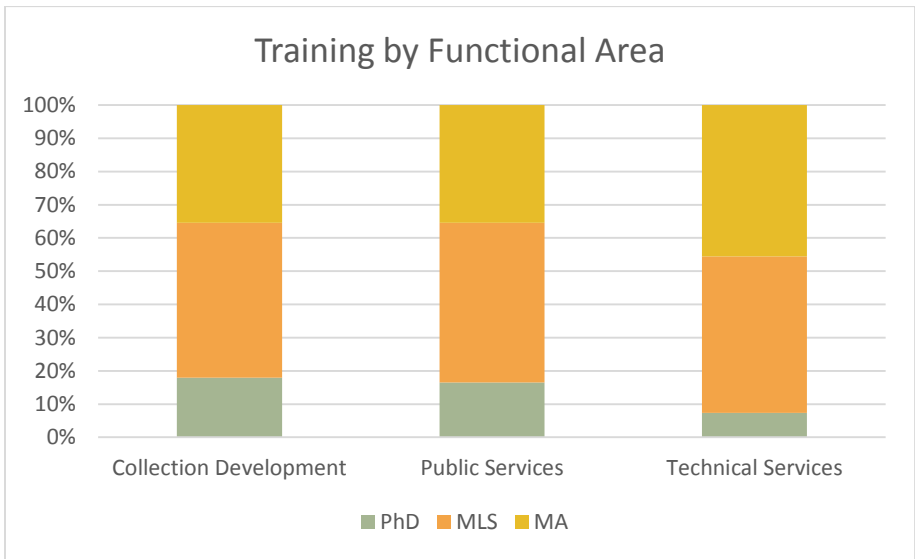
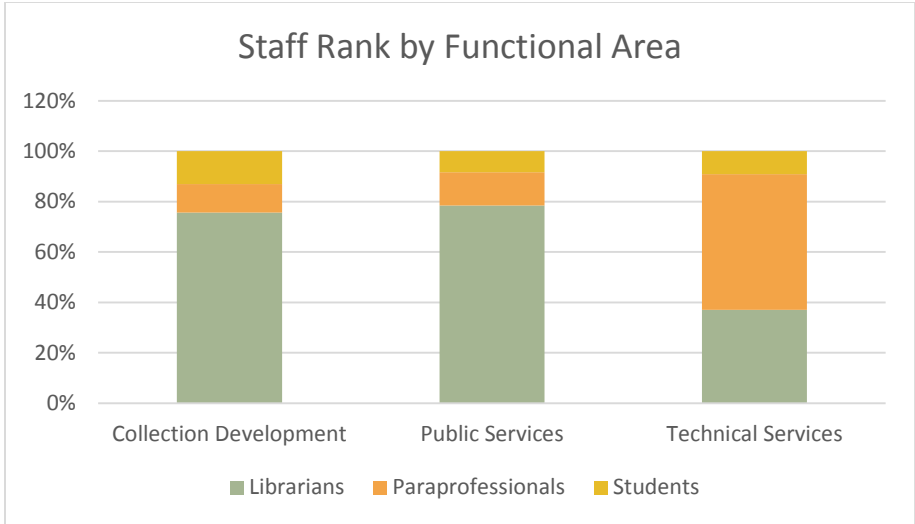
Staffing levels (professional/paraprofessional/students) are very similar across collection development and public services areas (in part, one assumes, because these are in fact the same individuals) while technical services is staffed more heavily by paraprofessionals.

Training is roughly similar across functional area (the percentage of staff with MLS degrees being 47% or 48% in all three areas) with slightly more PhD holders in collection development and public services than technical services (18% and 17% compared to 7%).

While technical services staff continue to report through technical services departments (53%), collection development (47%) and public services (51%) area studies librarians report through an international or area studies department head rather than a more “general” or “function-based” organizational structure.

Every respondent indicated their institution’s support for international travel, including funding and release time. For most, the frequency was widely variable (46%) although some respondents were able to indicate travel once a year (23%) or every other year (31%).

² 1 library did not supply staffing estimates. In addition, reporting of both staffing and budgets for Australia/NZ and Canadian studies was very limited (3 libraries) and so should be interpreted here as merely “suggestive”; likewise, many libraries indicated that statistics for Western Europe were difficult to collect and therefore should also be looked upon as “suggestive.”



Disciplinary Scoping

Responsibility for language and imprint continues to differentiate our institutions. We are almost equally divided on being responsible for subject matter in any language (n=8, 60%) versus only in the languages of the respective region (n=6, 40%) as well as subject matter from any country (n=6, 46%) versus only from the countries of the respective region (n=7, 54%). Finally, and despite recent appeals to the broadening of area studies to include non-traditional disciplines, the majority of respondents indicated that area studies at their institutions continues a central focus on humanities, social sciences and, perhaps interestingly, global studies. Only 2 respondents indicated an overarching support for either the sciences and/or the professional disciplines.