

IG WBS

Interessengruppe
Wissenschaftliche
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GI BSS

Groupe d'intérêt des
bibliothécaires
scientifiques de Suisse

AALS

Association of
Academic librarian
Switzerland



Profile of the profession

Academic and research librarian

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Profile of the profession Academic and research librarian

The responsibilities and duties of an academic or research librarian are varied and complex. For those considering the profession or just starting in it, for employers, as well as other interested people, this profile of the profession gives insight into the activities, requirements, range of skills and educational opportunities, as well as the outlook for the future of the profession. It was developed in 2012-2013 by an internal working group of the Association of Academic Librarians Switzerland (AALS) and replaces the profile from 1997.

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ALEXANDRA MÜLLER

Alexandra Müller (1984), academic librarian in training, Swiss National Library in Bern (from 2011 to 2013)

Librarianship is changing rapidly: what role do new developments and innovation play in your tasks and how do you keep up to date?



Foto: Simon Schmid, Schweizerische Nationalbibliothek NB

How did you become an academic librarian?

While studying English language and literature, I worked as an undergraduate assistant in the library of the English institute of the University. I discovered that I like library work. After I completed my studies, I successfully got a trainee's position at the Swiss National Library. At the same time, from 2011 to April 2013, I completed the Master of Advanced Studies degree in Library and Information Science at the University of Zurich.

What are your main activities at the moment?

Currently, my work is very diverse, because I change departments on average every two months. This has provided me with a lot of interesting insights into the wide range of activities at the National Library - although they all involve, in some way, collecting, indexing, preservation or dissemination.

In the Zurich MAS program "librarianship in transition" is a central theme. We, the future academic librarians, must grapple with these changes at every level. It will be our task to help shape the new role of libraries, and to adapt to the changes required in an information society.

During my education acquiring the basic skills came first. However, participating in an internal working group, I could also contribute significantly to shaping the innovation concepts at the National Library. This was an exciting experience!

Which channels do you use to exchange professional experiences and views?

I read the daily emails on the Swiss-Lib mailing list - of particular interest to me at the moment are, of course, the job advertisements. I am also a member of the AALS and the Swiss Library and Information Association (BIS) and have already attended several events and conferences. I find the Library Science Talks in the National Library very inspiring. And in addition, to keep abreast, I regularly read various library blogs, and follow several library related profiles on Twitter.

What do you like most about your current job and/or generally about your profession?

I like to work in a professional field that is undergoing great change and in which you have to deal with new developments and challenges. I find the varied and interesting activities in my profession very exciting, as well as the diverse possibilities opened up through my education and my Master's degree.

Science and research

AREA OF ACTIVITY

Provision of academic literature and information

As an academic librarian you are responsible for the provision of literature and information, in printed and in electronic form, within your special subject area, and sometimes outside it too. In doing this, you make decisions about what to acquire, under the aegis of an overall collection development plan. You evaluate the development of the collection, taking into account the available financial resources, and you are responsible for weeding it.

Content analysis

Printed and electronic media must also be indexed by subject. As a subject specialist, you undertake to make the library resources searchable in this way via their content. You allocate subject headings to each resource, or assign them within a classification system. Additionally, you support the use of subject headings and/or shelf classification schemes that are used internationally, or are especially relevant for regional or special collections.

Development and support of information literacy

As an academic librarian you are responsible for information provision in your subject area. You give subject related introductions to the library collections, conduct courses on subject specific databases, create online training and tutorials on the use of databases in general, as well as developing various other materials. The support of information literacy, as one of the key skills within the Bologna process, enjoys a high priority in the work of subject-specialist librarians. You teach your students how to conduct academic research work, develop their literature search and management skills, as well as their awareness of electronic publishing in general, and, for example, in the area of open access.

Also included in your field of activity are advice and guidance: in addition to subject specialized information regarding resources in the library, you give advice on searches, provide information to academic staff on publications, create and maintain subject specific information for the website or are involved in answering general reference enquiries.

Scholarly contact

Through your own subject relevant qualifications you become the library specialist for one or more academic fields. Your personal experience in an academic environment makes you the ideal link between the library and the teaching and research institution.

You are responsible for developing and maintaining a good relationship with your assigned institution (university, academic institute, research group etc.). You are active in informing students and staff of the services on offer.

As primary contact person for subject specific questions relating to the library services, you always have the needs of your customers in mind, and are continuously evaluating what they require through, for example, web usage analysis, user statistics etc. As an academic librarian you are also active academically yourself. You write articles and books in your field or on library themes, give presentations at conferences, and look after displays or exhibitions.

REQUIREMENTS

Education

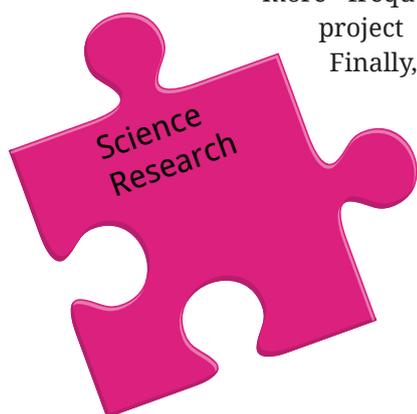
For work in a scientific or research environment (university, research institute, etc.) you need a subject specific tertiary qualification. Sound knowledge of an academic discipline, its terminology and development, as well as your own experience studying and perhaps in research, provide you with a solid basis for contact with your main clientele, lecturers, researchers and students. If you do not already have a post-graduate qualification in librarianship, you can enroll part-time or can compensate with equivalent professional experience over several years.

Skills and experience

Teamwork, good communication and cooperation skills, as well as customer- and service-oriented thinking are essential for a good working relationship in a scientific or research environment, or within a large academic library. Library staff, who are responsible for maintaining and developing library services for staff and students, must possess technical skills, but in addition must have knowledge of the relevant information landscape. Furthermore, language skills are also expected (German, French and English, and other subject specific languages if required), and more and more frequently teaching and project experience as well.

Finally, new challenges in librarianship demand a keen interest in current

developments and the willingness to continuously learn new skills and take on new tasks. Examples include the development of information literacy, for which good teaching skills are required, or legal knowledge for clarification of license agreements or copyright issues etc.



GÉRALD GAVILLET



Foto: Laurent Dubois

Gérald Gavillet (1967), responsable de la Bibliothèque de l'Internef, Bibliothèque Cantonale et Universitaire de Lausanne (BCUL)

Comment êtes-vous devenu bibliothécaire scientifique ?

Je suis né dans le canton de Fribourg. Dès mon plus jeune âge, j'ai dévoré la bibliothèque familiale, puis fréquenté assidûment la bibliothèque cantonale. Après des études universitaires en sciences économiques et sociales, j'ai répondu à une offre d'emploi qui avait retenu mon attention : bibliothécaire scientifique à la Bibliothèque de Sciences économiques et Sociales de Fribourg. Très vite, j'ai ressenti le besoin de suivre une formation en bibliothéconomie et j'ai choisi le cours BBS pour bibliothécaires scientifiques, dispensé à Zürich, en allemand.

Quelles sont vos activités principales aujourd'hui ?

Après près de dix ans passés à Fribourg, j'ai été engagé comme responsable de la Bibliothèque de droit et de sciences économiques (Internef), filiale de la BCUL. J'occupe ce poste depuis plus de 10 ans. Depuis plus d'une année, je suis également membre du conseil de direction de la BCUL.

Aujourd'hui, mes principales activités sont la gestion de la bibliothèque, à savoir le management d'une équipe de six professionnels et de sept auxiliaires, la gestion d'un budget, la coordination avec

les autres sites de la BCUL, la collaboration avec les Professeurs des Facultés de droit et de HEC de l'Université, la mise en place d'un accueil de qualité et de formations adaptées aux étudiants, la création d'une politique documentaire pour les disciplines droit et sciences économiques.

Le monde des bibliothèques est en mutation : quel rôle jouent le progrès et l'innovation dans vos tâches et comment restez-vous informé ?

J'essaie de m'adapter en permanence aux évolutions des nouvelles technologies de l'information et de la communication ainsi qu'aux besoins des usagers. Nous cherchons constamment à enrichir notre offre documentaire avec des nouvelles ressources électroniques. Nous prévoyons également d'agrandir la bibliothèque en 2014 afin de fournir plus d'espace de travail pour nos étudiants.

Quels réseaux nationaux et internationaux utilisez-vous pour les échanges professionnels ?

Selon moi, les échanges avec les professionnels travaillant dans des institutions similaires à la BCUL sont fondamentaux. Dans le cadre de la discipline droit, je rencontre mes collègues plusieurs fois l'an, dans le cadre d'un congrès annuel et de séances de travail. Je fais également partie des associations BIS et IG WBS/GI BSS.

Qu'est-ce qui vous plaît particulièrement dans votre travail et/ou plus généralement dans votre profession ?

Travailler au sein d'une bibliothèque universitaire est pour moi une source de satisfaction au quotidien : j'aime tout particulièrement le caractère dynamique et multiculturel de l'Université de Lausanne, les contacts avec les usagers ainsi qu'avec mes collègues et collaborateurs. Un tel environnement ne peut que favoriser l'engagement, l'ouverture d'esprit et la volonté d'innover.

Management and leadership

AREA OF ACTIVITY

Leadership

As an academic librarian you are also often entrusted with management tasks. Be it in a central staff role, as a project, department or division head or even as the principal, as the person responsible for parts of or the complete management of an organization. You are faced with strategic development, operational management and funding issues. In a managerial role, you need to maintain a broad network within your professional field. You represent your library on various bodies, maintain contacts at the academic level or are

a member of various committees, such as those within a library network.

Personnel management

You manage a team of several people and see to the further education and training requirements of your staff. You assign tasks, coordinate library internal processes, furnish information on library-related developments and conduct regular staff meetings.

Infrastructure

If building maintenance is required - or renovations, new construction or relocation - you ensure that they are carried out optimally for the library. You also take care of the procurement of new equipment - always within your budget constraints.



REQUIREMENTS

As a rule, a university degree is required for management positions, usually in combination with a qualification in librarianship (consecutive Master's or Master of Advanced Studies). For the management of large libraries or entire library networks, a further qualification in business administration can be an advantage.

Skills and experience

As a senior librarian you are a role model, and you will need to have solid work experience over several years in a similar institution, as

well as excellent library skills. Proven leadership know-how, proficiency in several languages (German, French and English), as well as experience in organizational and project management are among the most common requirements. In the university sector an understanding of the academic environment is also expected. A library leader should possess negotiation and communication skills for use in dealing with employees and users, with trusts and other responsible bodies, with cooperating institutions and other external partners. Moreover, you

will be expected to be customer- and service-oriented, and be entrepreneurial in thought and deed. In your everyday work, team spirit, conceptual analysis, the ability to work independently as well as organizational flair are demanded. To be able to lead a library, answers must be found with creativity, openness and initiative, to the problems that arise in the daily work, as well as to new challenges and developments.

MARIANNE RUBLI SUPERSAXO

Marianne Rubli Supersaxo (1962), Director of the University Library Bern



How did you become an academic librarian?

The dissemination of information as an essential service for teaching and research interested me during my own studies in the humanities (Lic. Phil. in German, Art History and Media Studies). The then newly created post-graduate course - the "Zurich Course" for academic librarians - formed an ideal starting point in my library career. I gained work experience during a two year traineeship at what was then the City and

University Library of Bern (StUB), while studying at the same time. Following that, I had the opportunity to take on responsibility as (project-) manager of the main library, Unitobler, and quickly found the diverse demands of leadership to my liking.

What are your main activities at the moment?

Since taking on my current role, I don't do much "traditional" library work myself (technical services, reader services, training etc.), but I deal with it daily, indirectly. As I have overall responsibility for operations, for the services offered and for the further development of the university library, my work day is filled with planning and controlling, organizing, writing, discussing, informing, supporting and making decisions. Dealing with the developments in our immediate surroundings, as well as analyzing trends in librarianship, are as much a part of my duties as strategic questions or addressing management issues. In this respect, close cooperation with the executive team of the library and also with the senior administrative staff of the university has proven to be of great value.

Librarianship is changing rapidly: what role do new developments and innovation play in your tasks and how do you keep up to date?

Development and innovation play an extremely important role, change has become a permanent feature in our institution, our business is increasingly project-driven, while the power of innovation and the ability to motivate the employees are rapidly becoming significant success factors.

Which channels do you use to exchange professional experiences and views?

I spend a lot of time in discussions on various committees and boards, in which I participate ex officio. Meetings with the administrative departmental heads of the university and the various university library commissions are the basis for internal networking. In addition to the exchange of ideas and information in the inter-regional and national committees of Swiss academic librarianship (Steering Committee IDS Basel Bern, Conference of German Swiss Academic Libraries KDH, Conference of Swiss University Libraries KUB, Consortium of Swiss Academic Libraries) there are shared services and cooperative projects to plan and shape. And aside from also participating in conferences, that brings me finally to being a member of the Association of Academic Librarians Switzerland (AALS). My involvement in library and information science courses (MAS Universities Bern / Lausanne, MAS University of Zurich) regularly help me to grapple with new professional demands and with the latest developments in academic librarianship.

What do you like most about your current job and/or generally about your profession?

My work is challenging and varied, no day is the same as another. And despite a broad framework there remains much room for manoeuvre. In general, I see the profession of academic librarianship as fulfilling a meaningful role, as dynamic and many-sided, and with a willingness and an ability to respond to new challenges, it has enormous potential for the future.

CHRISTINA SCHLATTER

Christina Schlatter (1955), Head of User Services at the Vadiana Library, the Cantonal Library of St. Gallen

How did you become an academic librarian?

After my philosophy degree and several years of artistic activity in a gallery, I worked in the Abbey Library of St. Gallen. In 1999/2001 I completed a postgraduate diploma in Information & Documentation at the HTW in Chur.

What are your main activities at the moment?

Since 1st November 2001 I work as Head of Reader Services at the Vadiana Library, the Cantonal Library of St. Gallen. I value the contact with the public, as well as the back office work. As head of a team of ten staff and as a member of the executive team of the library, I can help shape developments in many areas. Our library is an ideal size, so besides circulation, reference work and inter-library loan, I'm also in charge of parts of public relations and of events such as the museum night. In addition, I am responsible for the subject area matriarchy research, which includes international literature on ethnology, and women and society. It is the world's first matriarchy collection (www.matriarchiv.info).

Librarianship is changing rapidly: what role do new developments and innovation play in your tasks and how do you keep up to date?

Our library is also facing the digital challenge. Back in 2008 we were the first network to introduce the e-book service "Onleihe" and have developed it continuously since. As of the summer of 2013, nearly 100 libraries from eastern Switzerland, the Zurich region and the Principality of Liechtenstein belong to "Dibiost", the digital library of eastern Switzerland (www.dibiost.ch). My team is responsible for the hotline in cooperation with the Swiss Library Service (SBD) and thus has acquired a lot of e-media know-how. The online loans have doubled every year, and our traditional lending continues to rise as well.

My workplace is a storage library, built originally in 1907. Plans for a new building in the city center

have existed for years. But now, following a successful library initiative and new library legislation, it looks like we've found a temporary solution in the old St. Gallen main post office building. Together with the city public library, 70,000 media will be available in open access from 2014 onwards. The whole reader services team as well as circulation will move, and it is already clear that this will result in major changes in work processes.

Which channels do you use to exchange professional experiences and views?

Library visits, courses, Swiss Library and Information Association (BIS) conferences together with other library conferences at home and abroad help me to face the challenges. As President of the BIS Working Group on Document Delivery I particularly appreciate the sharing of ideas and information on inter-library loans and on other lending issues. In my special subject area I keep myself up to date, among other things, through an international e-group, which was established after the Second World Congress on Matriarchal Studies, and includes researchers from all over the world.

What do you like most about your current job and/or generally about your profession?

In my job I particularly appreciate the opportunity to suggest ideas and then to be able to carry them through. For example, I organized a matriarchal studies conference in 2011 in St. Gallen, in collaboration with the Academy HAGIA, with about 500 participants, and was able to take this opportunity to make the MatriArchive known to an international audience.



Foto: alea iacta

Technology and innovation

AREA OF ACTIVITY

Information and communication technologies

Academic and research libraries today are dependent on technology. As an academic librarian you actively follow trends and the development of new web technologies (e.g. social media or semantic web). You strive to usher them into effective use in your library. As a specialist in information use and management you recognize important new developments in the information branch early in their life cycle and integrate these in the strategic planning of your library. You play a leading role, both in planning the implementation of new technologies, as well as in the development and optimization of existing digital library services.

Digital content

Academic and research librarians are responsible for planning, monitoring and maintaining not just online portals, but also library systems, library catalogues, image and object databases, virtual libraries, social media applications and websites. In addition, they are regularly involved in evaluations and testing of new web-based solutions. The focus is on the ease of use of various libra-



ry services, verified by means of usability tests. Strategic decisions about digitization projects or the optimization of processes in digital data management are also required. As an academic librarian you play a coordinating role between specialists from computer science, conservation, public relations and archiving. The latest developments in IT must be skillfully combined with management of historic collections.

REQUIREMENTS

Qualifications

The formal qualifications required for innovation-driven and technology-savvy academic librarians vary. The combination of a university degree with a professional library education is sometimes explicitly requested. A computer science education is rarely expected, but can be an advantage, depending on the precise area of responsibility.

Skills and experience

Academic librarians who are closely concerned with the technical aspects of our information age must be well-versed in the use of the internet, and particularly in electronic resources, research tools and social media. Good English skills are essential. In this technically oriented area you should be especially interested in innovation and follow further developments in the field of information technology. You will work often independently and require a lot of self-initiative but you also must remain team-oriented and be a good communicator.

JENS VIGEN

Jens Vigen (1966), Head Librarian, CERN Scientific Information Service, Geneva

How did you become a scientific librarian?

This was really by chance. I am trained as a civil engineer, specialized in photogrammetry. As a student I was elected to be the archivist of the student association in Trondheim. Through this activity I naturally got to know many of the academic librarians at the University. When I completed my degree, a depression had struck the Norwegian economy, so it was not easy to find a job for a fresh engineer. I did not really want to leave the university, so when I was offered to join the training program for academic librarians, I accepted without any hesitation. Following the trainee program, I got a temporary position as an academic librarian at the University. One day the Head Librarian passed by my office to tell me that she had received a letter from CERN stating that they were looking for an engineer with library qualifications and encouraged me to apply. So I ended up here a few months later.

Which are your main activities right now?

I am the head of service which has for mandate the management of the Library and the Historical and Scientific Archives of CERN. But as our service is not so big, I am still involved in a variety of the classical library operations. However, a significant amount of time goes to management of staff and budgets. As a senior member of staff I also have responsibilities beyond the library itself. Ever so often I have to serve on some CERN-wide committee. What I enjoy most in my work is to assist the scientific community with their publishing issues. These activities involve a lot of negotiations with publishers and I actually believe that we have contributed to a change towards open access over the last years – not only in particle physics.

The world of scientific libraries is changing: How important are trends and innovation for your activities and how do you keep yourself updated?

It is all about change; now we are publishing open access, we retain copyright applying the CC-BY li-

cense and we are starting to publish data sets linked to plots in the articles. Only 5 years ago we did not do anything of this. I keep myself updated by following specialized email lists, exchanging email with colleagues in the field and by participating to relevant conferences in the field.

How about your network as a scientific librarian?

The network is fantastic. Librarians feel very strongly about their profession and are by default interlinked. This is a spirit that goes across all the continents. The IFLA meetings I find too big. Personally I like smaller, more specialized venues – being national or international. However, very often our issues are of an international character, so you quickly end up acting on the international arena anyway.

I have also been involved in the Library Science Talks since the beginning, but the initiative was launched by my predecessor Corrado Pettenati. Today this is run as a real tripartite operation between AILIS, The Swiss National Library and CERN – a cooperation I appreciate very much.

What do you especially like about your profession?

I find myself in a stream of information every day. In addition I have the opportunity to be in contact with many people across the world. What I enjoy most in my work is to assist the scientific community with their publishing issues. These activities involve a lot of negotiations with publishers and I actually believe that we have contributed to a change towards open access over the last years – not only in particle physics.



Foto: Berigt Sagnell

MATTHIAS TÖWE

Matthias Töwe (1970), Head of Digital Data Preservation, ETH Library, ETH Zurich

How did you become an academic librarian?

After studying chemistry in Hamburg, I was a doctoral student in Basel, and also worked and was in charge of the library of the Institute of Physics. I liked this task a lot, because not only could I look after a beautiful open-access library, but at that time we also got access to the first online periodicals. As a result, I came into contact with the relevant subject specialists from the university library. Quite by accident I learned that it was possible to train as an academic librarian in the library itself.

What are your main activities at the moment?

These days I work, on the one hand, at a conceptual and a technical level in the preservation of digital data. On the other hand I am a project manager, in charge of personnel and budget planning. My daily work, of course, is done in large part on the computer, in addition to meetings with internal and external partners, e.g. with software vendors, in research groups and with other libraries. We configure and use applications that we run ourselves or that we make available for our customers in the research teams of the ETH. Because we offer services in connection with research data, we cooperate closely with pilot customers out of the research area itself, starting at the development stage. They communicate their needs and give us feedback, for example, regarding the functionality of the software.

Librarianship is changing rapidly: what role do new developments and innovation play in your tasks and how do you keep up to date?

I have always been lucky enough to work on innovative projects and to be able to implement them in practice. When starting on a project you can quickly acquire an overview of current developments from journals, relevant blogs and online lists, from meetings or from visits to or from professional colleagues. You can quickly identify the relevant, as well as the less relevant channels.



Which channels do you use to exchange professional experiences and views?

Since I have always dealt with the latest issues, I get the opportunity to attend numerous conferences and meetings, and to present papers. Initially I also gave individual lectures in the Master's program (MAS) in Archival, Library and Information Science at the Universities of Bern and Lausanne. Later, from 2012, I taught the subject "Digital preservation and conversion of information objects" in the MAS Library and Information Science course offered at the University of Zurich and the Central Library in Zurich. Despite the time and effort required to prepare, I find it great fun, and good questions force me to try to get to the bottom of some of our apparent certainties and explain them in an understandable way. Teaching, therefore, is a true enrichment of my everyday work.

What do you like most about your current job and/or generally about your profession?

Although I have had the same employer for almost ten years, my function has changed several times, and I have been able to get an insight into many areas. Even now, not a day passes when I don't learn something new. As a project manager, you are particularly dependent on cooperation with others, and that is why I appreciate very much the openness and support of my colleagues. My work is certainly many-sided and interesting, being a service provider in the field of research.

Projects and special tasks

AREA OF ACTIVITY

Academic librarians are often in charge of projects to develop new library services and products. Such projects regularly complement the library core tasks and are imaginable in almost all areas. Examples are building or renovation projects, digitization, storage and archive planning, statistics, electronic publishing, coordinated regional collection plans, public relations, etc. Some projects are locally based, while others depend on national or international cooperation. New permanent long term library services can arise from such projects.

Statistics

As an academic librarian you could be involved in analysis and reporting. In this function you will create statistics, evaluate data (data mining) or monitor the scientific output of your institution using bibliometric methods, e.g., through citation analysis.

Public relations

Academic librarians are also often involved in public relations. They design marketing concepts, decide on merchandising products and are responsible for library publications in general including the website. They also contribute to communication with

customers, for example, community-building via social media.

Special collections

Within the framework of tasks related to special collections (old books and manuscripts, musical works, digitized works etc.) academic librarians organize exhibitions, write articles, create bibliographies and answer user questions. They also are regularly involved in expanding these collections, including through purchases at exhibitions, trade fairs or at auctions.

REQUIREMENTS

Qualifications

Often a university degree and/or library specialized training is required for projects or other special tasks.

Skills and experience

Professional experience and specialist skills are an advantage, while experience in projects and project management is often essential.

Projects and other special assignments are often innovative in nature and outside the traditional role of libraries, so team members need to have the analytical and conceptual skills necessary for the development and implementation of new ideas. High levels of self-reliance, creativity and initiative, as well as the ability to coordinate and prioritize, help to successfully implement projects on time. Because project staff are often dependent on the cooperation of experts from different areas, they should, ideally, also count among their strengths a strong team orientation and good communication and coordination skills.



EVA MARTINA HANKE

Eva Martina Hanke (1977), Team Member, Department of Music and in Special Collections Projects in the Central Library in Zurich

How did you become an academic librarian?

After studying music, English and English literature and law at the Universities of Marburg/Lahn and York (UK), I obtained my doctorate at the University of Zurich as part of the SNF project "Music in Zurich - Zurich in music history". Since 2005 I work as an academic librarian in the music department of the Central Library Zurich, where I look after collections and bequests. In 2011, I completed the master's course (MAS) in Library and Information Science at the University of Zurich.

What are your main activities at the moment?

In the first place, I catalogue the collections and bequests in the music department. Secondly, I help users in the music reading room, and thirdly, I work in the Special Collections projects. So, for example, I took over the project management of the manuscript platform e-manuscripta.ch. In all these fields our main concern is making historical collections visible, i.e. to enable online searching and access to the documents. Especially in projects, the work is often inter-departmental, and with e-manuscripta.ch it's even cross-institutional, as well as involving external companies (especially software development, graphics and web design).

Librarianship is changing rapidly: what role do new developments and innovation play in your tasks and how do you keep up to date?

As in libraries in general, Special Collections are busy making themselves "fit for the future". Digitization projects are an important area of work, because historical collections benefit particularly from the use of new technologies. In finding innovative and workable solutions, the exchange of ideas and opinions with colleagues, and collaboration with other institutions in the library and ar-

chive area are just as valuable as contact with the users.

Which channels do you use to exchange professional experiences and views?

In addition to personal contacts, there are also conferences and other events, specialist publications and newsletters, all of which are major channels in the special collections and archives scene. The



AALS facilitates a network for professional exchange between colleagues.

What do you like most about your current job and/or generally about your profession?

The three areas mentioned above offer a wide range of tasks and challenges, for which musicological and library expertise is necessary, as well as a flair for organizational and project management. At this stage of development and renewal, projects especially are an opportunity to shape the future. The collaboration between departments and organizations provides not only a welcome change to everyday work in the office, but also promotes exchange with professional colleagues.

TOBIAS VIEGENER

Tobias Viegener (1974), Project Coordinator for "swissbib", University Library, University of Basel

How did you become an academic librarian?

After studying German language and literature and History, I originally wanted to become a high school teacher. I became aware of the academic librarian's course, through a conversation with an academic librarian in the bus on the way to the library. I was fascinated by the close connection to the university, which allows you to keep in close touch with a subject area but without having to directly pursue an academic career. After that I graduated from the City and University Library of Bern (StUB - today Library of the University of Bern) with what then was known as the "Zurich course" (now MAS Library and Information Science, University of Zurich), the course to become an academic librarian.

What are your main activities at the moment?

My current work is the administrative leadership of "swissbib", the search engine for the Swiss university libraries, the National Library and the majority of colleges of higher education. However, my job also includes all the areas of the project not directly related to software maintenance and development in the narrower sense, for example, communicating with the participating libraries, or working with record transmission formats and the adaptation of bibliographic metadata, the configuration of the user interface and much much more. My work is completely computer-based - I only get to see the actual library media when I place a reservation for myself.

Librarianship is changing rapidly: what role do new developments and innovation play in your tasks and how do you keep up to date?

Innovation and development, in addition to stability and reliability, are the cornerstones of a user-oriented service. What is perhaps somewhat paradoxical - a user service must be stable and work reliably to be accepted, but it must also keep up with the latest developments in the relevant field, so that it can continue being attractive. In order to offer library-relevant features, the communication



Foto: Daniel Lüthi

with colleagues is essential. However, keeping up through mailing lists, blogs and journals is also indispensable but always in the context of what is work-wise possible.

Which channels do you use to exchange professional experiences and views?

Conferences are particularly useful for contact with colleagues from different areas and sometimes from different parts of the world. The Internet cannot replace this form of communication - try drinking a beer online...

What do you like most about your current job and/or generally about your profession?

The variety of tasks, the service character of the work and the regular monitoring of trends in the field, make my work multi-faceted. It is also fascinating that I am able to, and sometimes must, deal with a great variety of user and stakeholder groups from the world of librarianship. Both give good insights into the current state of things.

Generally I like it that the profession does not limit you to a certain path, there are many possibilities. Also, I find it good that careers are not linked just to obtaining certain qualifications, there is a lot of room to manoeuvre - you only need to use it.

The future of our profession



Academic libraries have the task of collecting information, making it accessible, supporting its use and also preserving it. In the future, these tasks will still be required, but will change constantly in how they will be carried out. Without comprehensive online offerings it would be hard to imagine libraries as key locations of the information society of the future. New media such as e-journals (online journals) and e-books (electronic books) are now an integral part of library collections and influence the development of processes and services. The importance of information technology for library services and operations will therefore continue to grow and to transform the work of academic library staff. Collaboration with other institutions can allow the development of additional services by building shared databases and sharing their ongoing costs. Examples are online network catalogues or common platforms for digitized content. The need to tackle tasks together, operate technological solutions efficiently, and realize synergies, will increase still further, just like the high-tech that underpins them.

Collecting information

As a result of more and more digitization projects and the growing

production of digital resources, the flood of information continues to increase. Libraries are faced with the challenge of selecting relevant information from the mass on offer. This must continue to be done in the future, based on the expertise of academic librarians in the role of subject librarians, and probably increasingly supported by the appropriate automated processes.

Making information accessible

The high-quality data structure that libraries have developed in their online catalogues, will increase in value in the coming years, in the wake of new applications

based on Semantic Web concepts. The potential of this quality data has been already partially recognized, but until now has been little used for new services. A more recent development is also making catalogue data available in the form of Linked Open Data, for re-use by third parties as they wish.

Dissemination of information

Modern academic libraries are active in supporting and promoting information proficiency among their customers. The basis of information literacy and the methods by which it is taught, for example, in the form of univer-

sity courses, must therefore constantly adapt to the changing information landscape. Measurable growth, improvement in the quality of searching and accessibility, as well as linking with other related information, will all remain as ongoing focal points in information dissemination. Although academic libraries today offer a broad palette of online information services directly to clients at their workstations, there is new emphasis being placed on the parallel development of the library as a (learning) place. Innovative space, layout and usage concepts are being developed according to these changing needs.

Preservation

Academic libraries endeavour to permanently preserve the collections entrusted to them. Using long-term digital preservation methods, this task is increasingly relevant for electronic data. This is at the same time an excellent opportunity for a smooth transition to supporting data management in the research process, as is proposed for Virtual Research En-

vironments. This will require intensive dialogue with the researchers at the institution. Academic librarians can make an important contribution here, working closely together with researchers, and in cooperation, for example, with data centers.

Managing change

Academic and research librarians have the opportunity to help in shaping the developments described above. This requires a receptiveness to new developments that are shaped to a large extent by the advances in information technology. This must be critically evaluated, weighing up the costs as well as the benefits of use. Continuous change means an ever increasing challenge for academic libraries, not only to offer innovative services but also to optimize their traditional services and to continue to maintain their coll-

ections at the same level. The importance of particular services varies, depending on the profile and mission of a library. Academic librarians play a central role in mastering these tasks.

Education

The title "Academic and Research Librarian" is neither protected in Switzerland nor is there a federally recognized and approved course of studies. In fact, the title is a collective term for academically trained staff in libraries and other information institutions. It refers to staff who have a university degree and preferably additional qualifications in Library and Information Science.

In Switzerland, there are several ways you can become an academic librarian:

- You can complete a post-graduate program (Master of Advanced Studies - MAS) in Library and Information Science, after the successful completion of other subject-specific, non-library university studies
- You can obtain an undergraduate degree and continue with a consecutive Master (Master of Science MSc) in Library and Information Science at a college of further education.

Some courses in neighboring countries, including distance learning options, are also open to applicants from Switzerland.

Switzerland - Post-graduate education courses for the Master of Advanced Studies (MAS)

Master of Advanced Studies courses (formerly postgraduate studies), are open to graduates who either already work in an Information and Documentation (I+D) institution and want to continue their studies, or are starting in the profession, and are normally undertaken part-time, with study and work in parallel. Some modules of the following courses can also be taken individually, which can lead to certificate level (Certificate of Advanced Studies, CAS) or diploma level (Diploma of Advanced Studies, DAS) qualifications.

Course schedules: All four further education courses are offered every two years, run over four semesters part-time, and can be completed with an average of one to two course days a week.

Costs: between CHF 21'200 to CHF 25,000 (for the complete Master's program)

MAS Library and Information Science (MAS BIW) at the University of Zurich

The course in the Faculty of Arts at the University of Zurich is the most clearly focused on the profession of "Academic Librarian", and is offered in cooperation with the Central Library Zurich (ZBZ). (Study location is Zurich)

Parallel to this MAS program the libraries of the Universities of Basel and Bern, the ZBZ and the Swiss National Library, all offer traineeships that enable a practical vocational training.

Qualification on completion: Master of Advanced Studies in Library and Information Science at the University of Zurich (MAS BIW University of Zurich) (60 ECTS)

Admission requirements: A university degree is mandatory (Bachelor's or Master's) as well as professional experience in a library or other I+D institution, with not less than a 50% workload, during at least the 4 months preceding the start of the course. The admission of others persons with comparable qualifications at the discretion of the program director based on the individual applications.

Information: <http://www.mas-biw.uzh.ch>

MAS in Archival, Library and Information Science (MAS ALIS) at the Universities of Bern and Lausanne

The course is offered jointly by the respective Historical Institutes of the Universities of Bern and Lausanne (Study location is primarily Bern, but partly also Lausanne)





Qualification on completion: Master of Advanced Studies in Archival, Library and Information Science (MAS ALIS) (60 ECTS)

Admission requirements: All the following conditions must be fulfilled for admission to the program: a) a university degree (Master's from a university or college of higher education), b) practical experience, equivalent at least to three months full-time, in an archive, a library or a documentation center, or in an information management role in the government or corporate sector. It may be possible to admit applicants without a degree, when their ability to participate can be otherwise verified. Applications for admittance on this basis are at the discretion by the program director.

Information: <http://www.bibliothekswissenschaft.ch/>

MAS course in Information Science (MAS IS) at the University of Applied Sciences (HTW) Chur

The course at HTW Chur. (Study location is Chur)

Qualification on completion: Master of Advanced Studies FHO in Information Science (MAS IS) (60 ECTS)

Admission requirements: The MAS Information Science is aimed at graduates from universities and colleges of higher education in all disciplines. Applicants who do not have a degree may be admitted if their ability to par-

ticipate can be otherwise proved. The final decision rests with the head of the MAS course.

Information: <http://www.htwchur.ch/informationswissenschaft/weiterbildung/mas-in-information-science.html>

MAS in Library and Information Science (LIS MAS) at the University of Applied Sciences and Arts of Southern Switzerland (SUPSI)

A program of the Department of Innovative Technology of the University of Applied Sciences and Arts of Southern Switzerland in collaboration with the Library Network of Ticino (Sbt). Study location is Manno.

Qualification on completion: Master of Advanced Studies SUPSI in Library and Information Science (MAS IS) (60 ECTS)

Admission requirements: Candidates are eligible to enroll in the MAS program, who have a Master's, a Licentiate or a Bachelor's ASP/SUPSI-DFA qualification. Other cases will be decided individually based on the application.

Information: <http://www.supsi.ch/fc/offerta-formativa/advanced-studies/mas/library-information-science.html>

Switzerland - Consecutive Master's program leading to a Master of Science (MSc)

Professional courses of study in Library and Information Sciences in Switzerland are offered at Bachelor's level with a follow-on, "consecutive", Master's program.

Admission to the consecutive Master's programs listed below requires a first degree in the field (e.g. Bachelor) or in a related subject.

Course schedules: both Master's courses run over four semesters part-time and can be completed with an average of one to two course days a week.

Costs: between CHF 500 to CHF 960 per semester (excl. admission and exam costs)

FHO MSc in Business Administration with a major in Information Science (MSc BA IS) at the University of Applied Sciences (HTW) Chur

Part-time Master's program over four semesters, with the possibility of specialization in "Information Asset Management" or "Information Design". (Study location is Chur)

Qualification on completion: Master of Science FHO in Business Administration, with a Major in Information Science (90 ECTS)

Admission requirements: Enrolment in a consecutive Master's course generally requires a Bachelor's degree or tertiary college diploma. Graduates of the Bachelor's program in Information Science (formerly I+D diploma) from the HTW Chur itself are immediately eligible for admission. Admission of graduates from library science related Bachelor's courses or with other Swiss or foreign tertiary qualifications is based on individual application.

Information: <http://www.htwchur.ch/informationswissenschaft/master-studium.html>

MSc in "information documentaire" (MSc ID) at the Haute école de gestion Genève

Offered every two years for part-time study. (Study location is Geneva)





Qualification on completion: Master of Science, Western Switzerland University of Applied Sciences and Arts (HES-SO) in "information documentaire" (90 ECTS)

Admission requirements: Bachelor or Diploma HES or from another Swiss tertiary institution teaching information and documentation. Other degrees may be accepted based on individual application.

Information: http://www.hesge.ch/heg/master_id/welcome.asp

Study in neighboring countries

Germany

In Germany, as in Switzerland, library training is possible either with an additional qualification in librarianship after a non-library university degree or with a consecutive Master's degree:

Library traineeship (library further education):

Full-time traineeships consisting of internal training with additional theory classes at the Bavarian Library School in Munich or via distance education at the School of Library and Information Science (IBI) of the Humboldt University of Berlin (or at the North Rhine-Westphalia University of Applied Sciences, Cologne).

Admission requirements: university degree, if possible a doctorate

Information: <http://www.vdb-online.org/kommissionen/qualifikation/ausbildungsinfo/>

Consecutive Master's program:

A consecutive Master of Information Science is offered at several universities, at the IBI Berlin as a distance learning course, based on Blended Learning. Graduates of such programs can usually obtain civil service status after two years professional experience, and are then on the same level as those who completed a traineeship (see above).

Qualification on completion: Master of Arts in Library and Information Science (MA LIS) (60 ECTS)

Admission requirements: university or other tertiary qualification at Bachelor's level

List of participating institutions: <http://www.vdb-online.org/kommissionen/qualifikation/ausbildungsinfo/master.php>

Austria

In Austria since 2005 the training of academic librarians is based on the inter-university course "Master of Science (MSc) Library and Information Studies" at the Universities of Vienna, Graz, Salzburg and Innsbruck (in cooperation with other library organizations such as Austrian National Library).

This training program is divided into a two-semester basic course and a two-semester advanced course.

Qualification on completion: Master of Science (MSc) in Library and Information Studies (60 ECTS)

Admission requirements: completion of secondary education and a university degree

Information: <http://www.bibliotheksausbildung.at/hochschulabschluss/>

INA BRUECKEL RHYNER

Ina Brueckel Rhyner (1957), Head of Public Relations and Cultural Activities, Central and University Library (ZHB), Lucerne

How did you become an academic librarian?

It wasn't planned. Maybe more the opposite. To begin with, I completed an education in design and went on to study Humanities (literature, sociology and psychology) followed by a doctorate. I applied, for family reasons, to an advertisement for a subject specialist in the ZHB Lucerne. Right from the start

I was actually in charge of exhibition design and implementation, and the tasks belonging to the repertoire of public relations. With a post-graduate course in Culture Management I was well equipped and from 2000 onwards, I took over the appropriate department at the ZHB.

What are your main activities at the moment?

My portfolio is associated with two fields. Firstly, public relations, which is mainly characterized by the development and implementation of communication goals, the conveying of corporate aims and viewpoints, the editorial responsibility for the publications of the ZHB in different formats, the design and maintenance of library-relevant external relations, media relations in general and the development and maintenance of corporate design and visual communication. The cultural work includes the conception of and organization of exhibitions and events. The daily challenge of this portfolio is to keep in mind the long-term perspective. That is only feasible with self-discipline and strict time management. Creative public relations come alive through new impulses, fresh ideas and having the time to implement them.



Librarianship is changing rapidly: what role do new developments and innovation play in your tasks and how do you keep up to date?

In public relations work, which by nature must be timely and topical, it is a must that you yourself first grapple with new developments in the library's services. What does this mean in practice? Staying alert, taking notice of the work of others, reading a lot and maintaining constant communication with those colleagues in the ZHB who work "at the front". And to distrust "routine", whether your own or others. Through my work as a lecturer in public relations at the University of Applied Sciences (HTW) Chur (MAS Information Science) and at the University of Teacher Education (PHZ) Lucerne (basic education for librarians) I work again and again with new theoretical and methodological inputs.

Which channels do you use to exchange professional experiences and views?

Most decidedly I spend too little time with colleagues from other libraries. Unfortunately, in my field, library public relations, further education possibilities are extremely limited, and this means there is little opportunity to meet together, to reflect and to exchange ideas. But networking functions well in the local cultural scene and with neighboring institutions.

What do you like most about your current job and/or generally about your profession?

Libraries like the ZHB Lucerne operate in a crowded, highly competitive arena of culture and education providers. Above all, it is essential to swiftly add new content, to find fresh solutions, to develop promising new forms of dissemination. For an inquisitive, innovative person this, together with the combination of design tasks as well as strategic analytical thinking, is very congenial.

Opportunities in further education and professional development

Academic librarians are faced with constantly changing demands, so that the "reality" of the profession is constantly evolving. They must maintain equilibrium between the development and use of existing knowledge and experience, and the need to be up-to-date all the time. The development of new services and products, as well as taking over bridging functions between traditional tasks, make the acquisition of new skills a must. It is therefore important for academic librarians to constantly further their education and professional development.

Continuing education

The most exciting and versatile form is the exchange of ideas and views with colleagues - whether at conferences, through reading the literature and blogs, or through involvement in a wor-

king group. This demands a lot of self-initiative as an academic librarian. In larger libraries especially learning on-the-job is promoted through internal courses and lectures. Also, library associations offer hands-on continuing education courses on current topics.

Further education

Those who want to change professional direction or want to take a step up in their career can take advantage of the range of further education courses in the universities or colleges of higher education, or enroll in a distance learning program, for example, in teaching, information technology, law, management, or personnel.

Opportunities for professional development

Dedicated and well trained academic librarians are sought after for leadership positions in libraries. Managers, who are well networked at national and international level can also represent the interests of the profession in politics and to the public in general.

Moreover, the skills of academic librarians are highly valued in business and industry. Librarians who are willing to take the leap and become self-employed can find work, for example, as "information brokers", carrying out research assignments for private individuals and companies, or can conduct studies and lead projects on a contract basis.

By specializing in the relevant professional field, a lecturer's position or even a chair at an educational institution may also be possible.