

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Library and Information Resources for International Education

**Deborah Jakubs
Duke University**

**Dan Hazen
Harvard University**

This paper analyzes contemporary needs for international information by students and scholars in the United States, as manifest through library collections and services. The analysis revisits six broad areas that were highlighted in the session on “Library Collections and Access: Supporting Global Expertise” at the 1997 UCLA conference on *International Education in the New Global Era*: budgets, collection building, research and teaching needs, access to information, electronic resources and digital initiatives, and library staffing. Cooperative efforts to address the challenges currently facing libraries are also described, and the essay then focuses on areas in which federal support, through Title VI and other programs as well, has been or could be helpful for libraries in their efforts to support international education – and for scholars and students as they seek information. The paper concludes with a brief speculation on what an ideal system for access to international education might entail.

What are the principal obstacles today to providing researchers with foreign information and research? Have the recommendations of the 1997 conference been implemented? What additional and previously unforeseen developments have enhanced or complicated our access to international information? Are changes in the nature and direction of scholarship placing new demands on libraries? If so, how are these repositories adapting? What is the impact of new technologies? Responses to these questions were invited from representatives of the institutions that participate in the area studies programs of the Center for Research Libraries, and via area-specific library listservs. Informal interviews were also conducted at a November 2000 conference on *The New Dynamics and Economics of Cooperative Collection Development*.

Findings confirm that challenges exist, but opportunities do as well. Print publishing is growing worldwide, at a time when costly electronic resources are also increasing, and are much in demand among library users. Library funding will need to keep pace with the costs of the full array of resources needed. Cooperative approaches to providing access to information, especially with partner institutions abroad, offer promise and should be actively pursued. To expand the scope of access to foreign information, more materials must be digitized, and funds for these projects will be needed. Language ability among librarians is critical, and successors to the specialist librarians who are retiring need to be found. Finally, a recommendation is made to increase federal funding for libraries in order to ensure that scholars and students enjoy wide access to research resources.