



Identifying recognition opportunities: whom and what do we award in the field of Library and Information Science?



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Introduction

The University of Houston Libraries created the Identifying Recognition Opportunities Committee (IROC) in order to identify available local and national opportunities and encourage employees to apply for and nominate one another for these opportunities. This poster shares how the committee approached this work, as well as insights gained regarding available opportunities for professional librarians, library staff, and LIS students. The committee reviewed over 250 opportunities offered by more than 60 organizations, resulting in the creation of a database to facilitate applications for a wide variety of recognitions, including scholarships, travel grants, and other awards. In creating the searchable database, a controlled vocabulary was created for keywords, such as "leadership," "underrepresented groups," and "innovation." Recognitions were also coded according to their audience: professional librarian, library support staff, or library school student. By reviewing such a large corpus, team members gained a perspective on the types of skills, abilities, and characteristics currently most recognized and awarded by the profession. This poster reports on the results of this research into recognitions and trends identified. Individuals and groups interested in applying for or nominating others for recognitions will benefit by gaining insights into where awards in the field are currently focused. Additionally, awarding institutions or organizations will benefit from learning about areas that may merit additional support in the future.

The Identifying Recognition Opportunities Committee (IROC) at UH

Committee Charge:

- To identify and maintain a list of campus, local, state, and national opportunities and their deadlines for individual or group recognition including, but not limited to scholarships, awards, and conference travel grants
- To raise awareness of these types of opportunities
- To systematically encourage library staff to apply for and to nominate one another for these opportunities, and to work with this committee when considering a nomination
- To coordinate with interested applicants and maintain a list of library staff who have won these scholarships and awards
- To work with the Libraries' Director of Communications as needed

Research, Organization, and Building the Database:

- Committee members reviewed websites to build a list of opportunities
- The team decided what information was necessary to capture, and thought about how people in our library would interact with it
- Keith Komos from Library Technology Services built the actual database
- To facilitate searching, IROC developed a controlled vocabulary and tagged recognitions with relevant keywords

Ongoing Committee Tasks:

- Monthly library-wide emails highlighting upcoming opportunities
- Regular communication with Administration regarding possible nominations
- Review database: check links, add new opportunities and recent awardees
- Manage the controlled vocabulary
- February - annual assessment
- Spring - celebrate recognitions & host an Open Forum

Committee Members:

Jackie Bronicki (Vice-Chair)
Assessment & Statistics Coordinator
Melody Condon (Chair)
Resource Description & Management Coordinator
Renee Fiorini-McManus
Library Specialist
Andrea Malone
Modern & Classical Languages and Ethnic Studies Librarian
Matthew Richardson
Program Manager
Ariana Santiago
Instruction Librarian
Esmeralda Fisher (Ex Officio)
Director of Communications

Special Thanks:

Former Committee Chairs:
Kelli Getz
Interim Head of Acquisitions
Rachel Vacek
(former) Head of Web Services

The architect of the database:
Keith Komos, Technical Lead

With a data entry assist from:
Diana Dulek, Metadata Specialist

Current Study: Analyzing Recognition Opportunities

Research Question:

Using the information gathered by IROC, this study seeks to identify focal points of recognitions in the LIS field.

Methodology:

- IROC generated a corpus of 226 recognitions offered by 63 professional associations and other national organizations.
- A controlled vocabulary was developed to highlight significant aspects of recognitions and facilitate database searching.
- Recognitions were coded according to their target audience and keywords from the controlled vocabulary.
- For this research project, keywords were further categorized as Values, Functions, Subjects, Contributions, People, and Benefits.
- The frequency of keywords was charted. This poster presents the 10 most frequent terms found in the dataset, and further presents keywords broken down by category.

Scope:

- This poster focuses on national recognitions, although IROC also reviewed university, local, state, and regional awards.
- This poster is best understood as a snapshot of the field in early 2017.
- Grants, internships, and most fellowships are excluded.
- Recognitions for Library Science students are included when offered by organizations reviewed. This corpus does not seek to be fully representative of the variety of awards available to students through their institutions, state associations, etc.

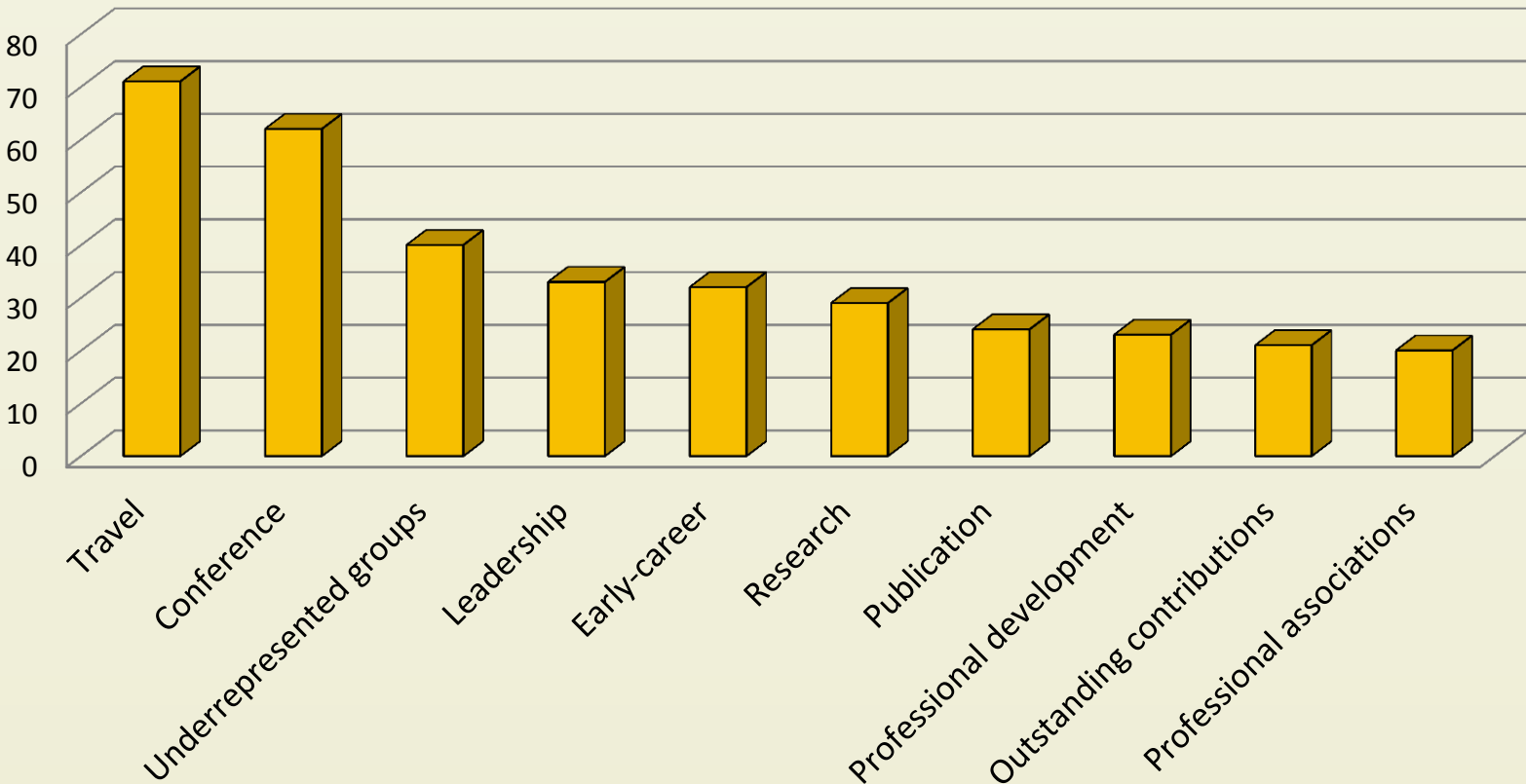
Limitations:

- Recognitions continually appear, disappear, or change. Keeping the recognition database current is a challenge the committee continues to navigate. Data analyzed is drawn from the IROC database shortly after its launch in February 2017. Some corrections and updates—such as updates to tags—have been made as necessary. A small number of awards have been added or removed.
- Recognitions themselves have varying degrees of detail posted online.
- Given environment for which it was generated, the corpus may favor academic and research libraries.
- Not all controlled vocabulary terms operate at same level. "Underrepresented groups" is umbrella term for a variety of more specific groups. However, "Technical services" is not used as umbrella, favoring instead narrower terms like "Acquisitions" or "Preservation" aligning with more specific recognitions.

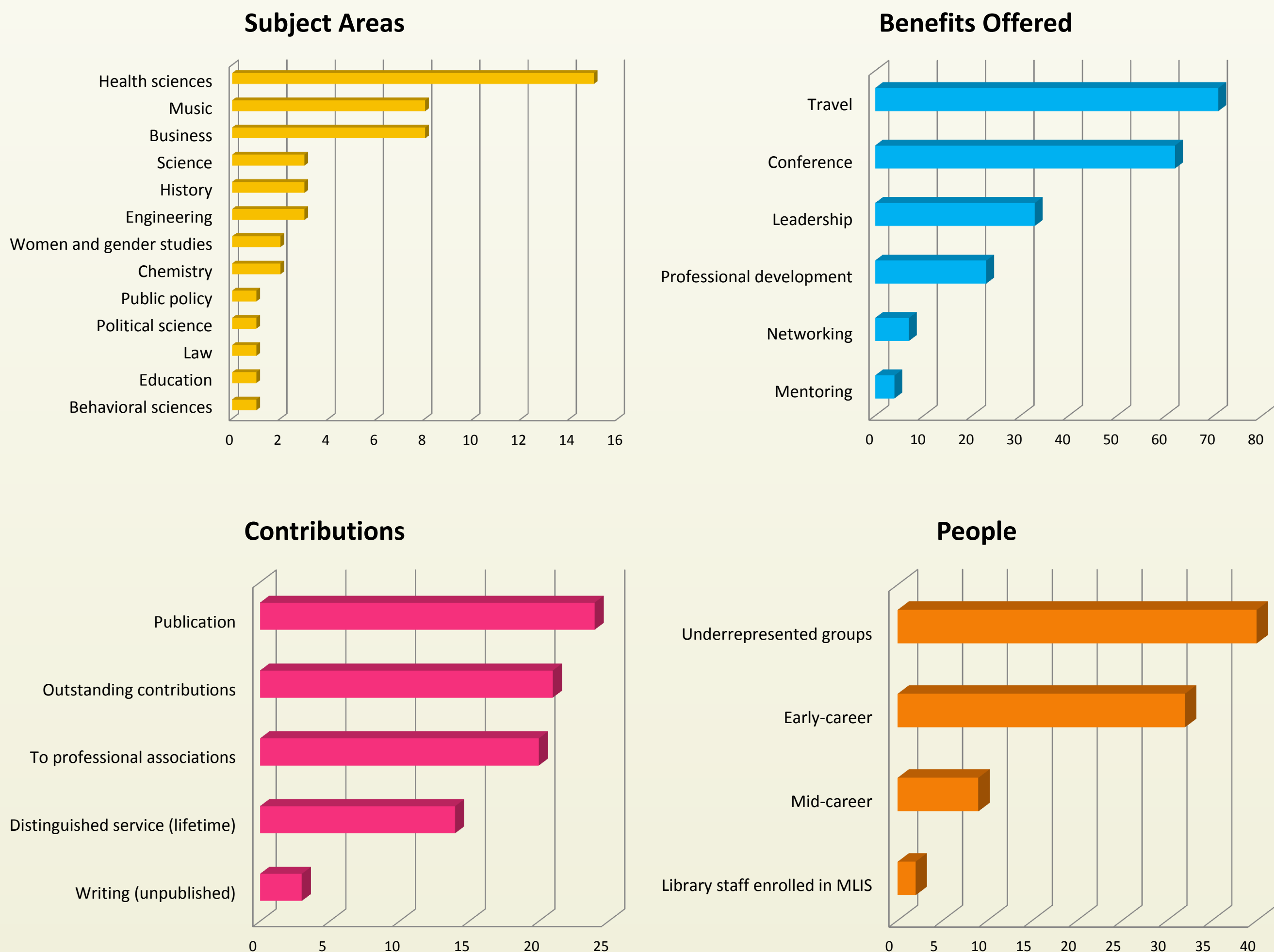
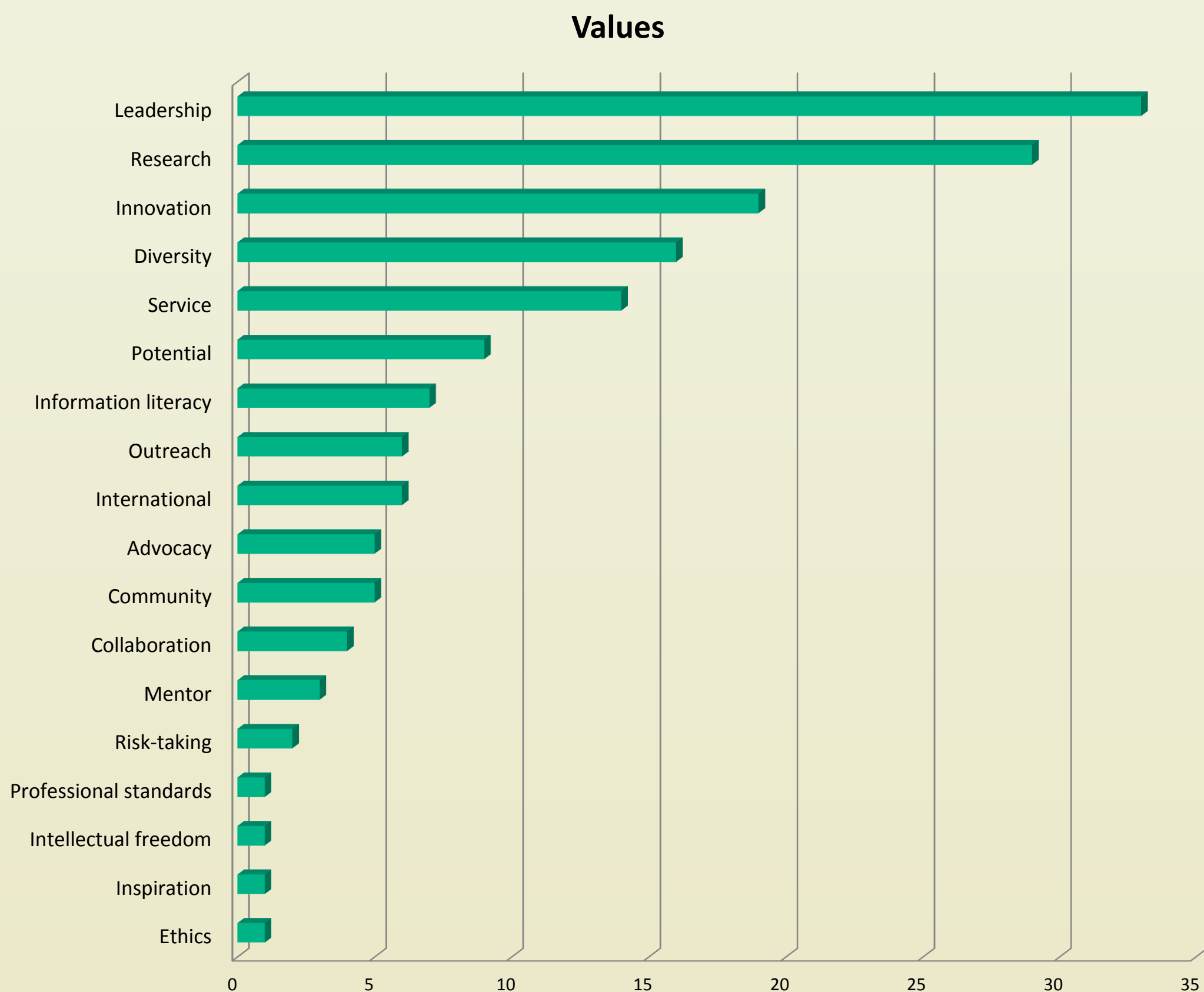
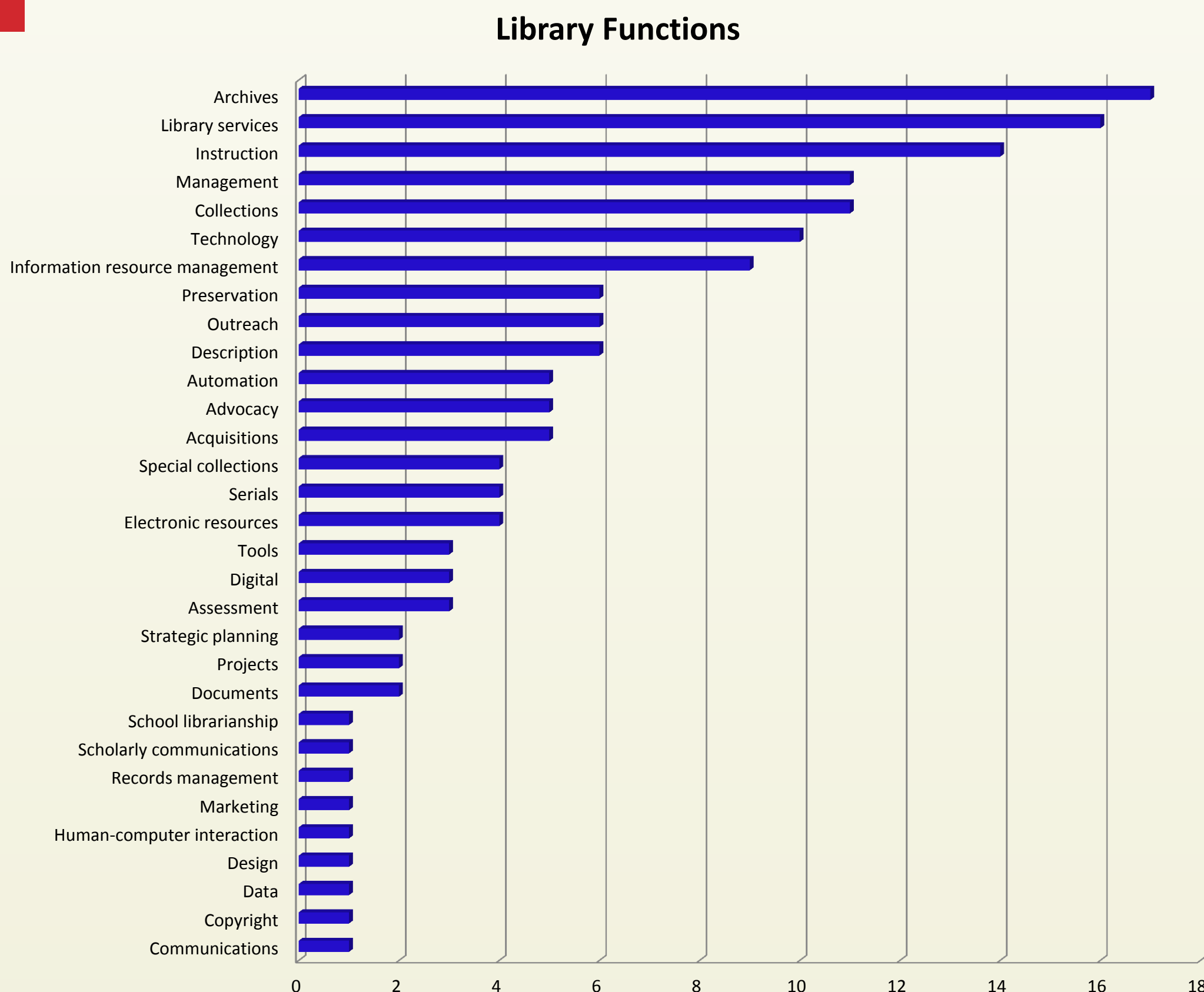
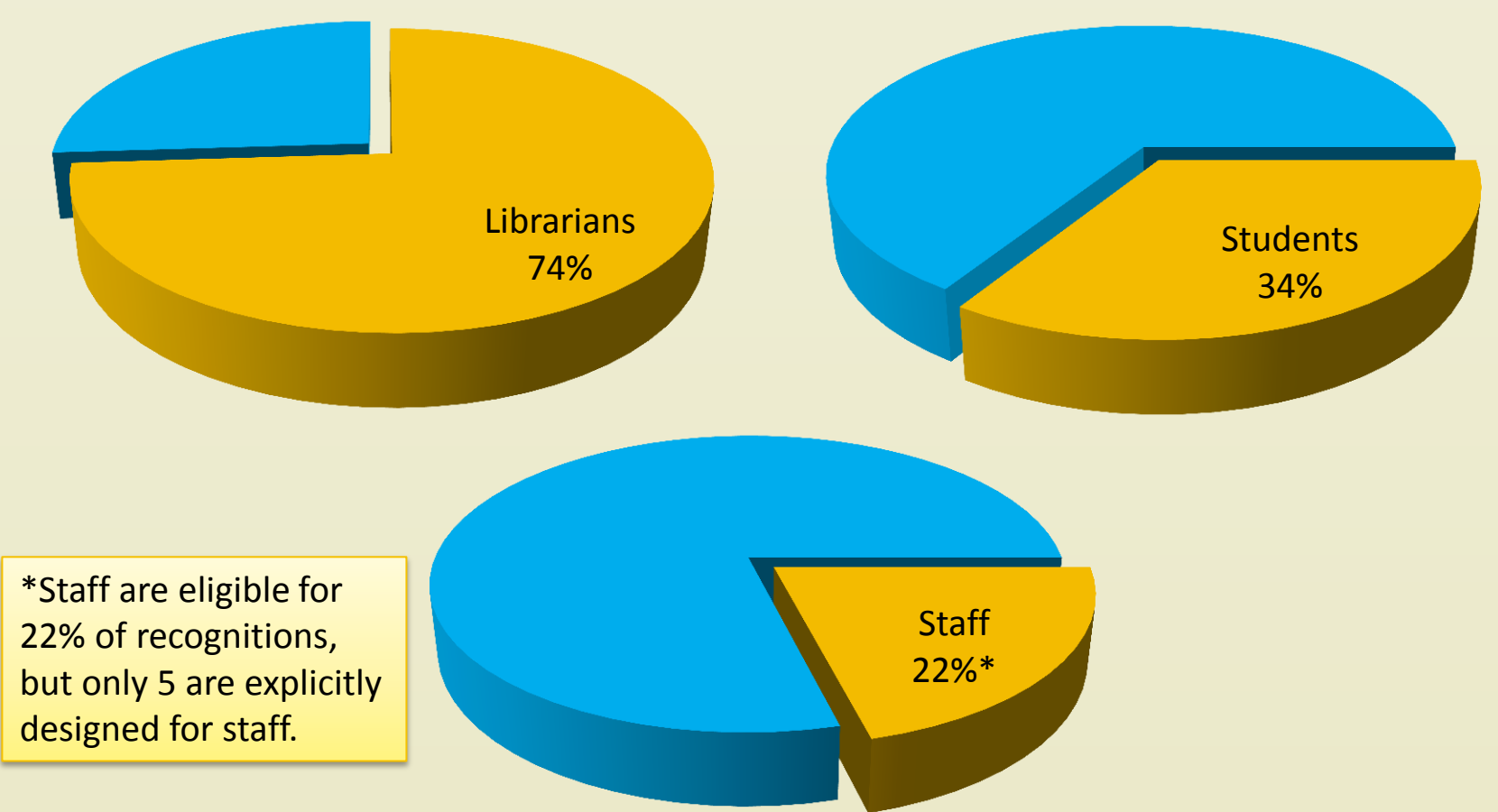
Results



Most Frequent Terms Found in Recognitions



Target Audiences



Summary

Highlights:

- Travel awards are the most common type of recognition. They are often—but not always—for attending professional conferences.
- Broad professional development and leadership terms outnumber more specific library functions or subject areas.
- A significant number of recognitions target Underrepresented Groups and Early-Career Librarians.
- Leadership, Research, and Publication are frequently mentioned. Awards both recognize displays of leadership and offer leadership training as benefits. Similarly, Research may be the basis for a recognition, or may be supported by an award.
- The majority of awards target professional librarians. A number of recognitions are designed specifically for LIS students. While support staff are eligible for many recognitions, only five are explicitly for staff (librarians ineligible). Three of those are for staff in LIS programs.

Recommendations for future study:

- Review the extent to which financial need is a factor in travel/conference awards
- Compare monetary award values across areas
- Compare competencies/qualifications in job postings with recognition opportunities. Do recognition opportunities keep track with changing position requirements?

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- Text analysis generated at www.online-utility.org/text/analyzer.
- "Trophy" icon made by Vectors Market from www.flaticon.com