

Call for Participation



A Reference Renaissance: Current and Future Trends
August 4-5, 2008
Denver, CO



Conference website: <http://www.bcr.org/referencerenaisance>

**Sponsored by BCR (Bibliographical Center for Research) and
RUSA (Reference and User Services Association), an ALA Division**

Rumors of the "death of reference" have been greatly exaggerated! Reference and information services now encompass not just traditional forms such as in-person point-of-service, telephone, and e-mail, but also Instant Messaging, Text Messaging (SMS), blogs, wikis, library pages on MySpace and Facebook, and virtual reference desks in Second Life.

A Reference Renaissance: Current and Future Trends conference will explore all aspects of reference service in a broad range of contexts, including libraries and information centers, in academic, public, school, corporate, and other special library environments. This two-day conference will incorporate the multitude of established, emerging, and merging types of reference service including both traditional and virtual reference. It presents an opportunity for all reference practitioners and scholars to explore the rapid growth and changing nature of reference, as an escalating array of information technologies blend with traditional reference service to create vibrant hybrids.

Our theme of a "Reference Renaissance" was taken from an editorial by Diane Zabel, in a recent issue of *Reference and User Services Quarterly* (winter 2007). Zabel wrote of a "resurgence of interest in reference" and that "reference is experiencing a regeneration, a reference renaissance."

Submissions of papers, panels, and workshop proposals are welcomed that analyze issues, identify best practices, advance organizational and technological systems, propose standards, and/or suggest innovative approaches that will reveal as well as invent the future of reference in this exciting and unfolding landscape. The conference will be organized around the following interest tracks. Please note that the sub-bullets are intended to be suggested topics, not to be a comprehensive listing.

- Virtual Reference (including e-mail, chat, IM, SMS, Second Life, etc.)
 - Interpersonal aspects of reference service across different types of service
 - Comparison of VR modes
- Innovative Service Models (including face-to-face, outreach, and Web 2.0)
 - Comparison of different modes (locations, configurations, etc.) of service delivery
 - Social networking applications (such as blogs, wikis, Facebook, MySpace, etc.)
 - Case studies in virtual outreach
 - Satellite (or outpost) reference, roving reference
- Managing Reference Services
 - Assessment/Evaluation (including guidelines and best practices, benchmarking performance, service quality, accuracy, effectiveness, and efficiency)
 - Hiring, training and motivating staff in an era of rapid change (including performance issues)
 - Marketing initiatives
- Approaches, Values, & Philosophy of Reference Services
 - Reference as teaching
 - How much help to give (e.g., homework, course assignments)

- Wild Card (including, but not limited to, controversial issues, comparisons, other innovative topics – be creative!)
 - Sustainability and budgeting issues
 - Reference consortia issues
 - Software and hardware development
- Vendor (including demonstrations and workshops)
 - Vendor software and hardware development

TYPES OF SUBMISSIONS:

1. **Papers (500 word abstracts):** include reports and research studies on any aspect of reference, user studies, evaluation projects, innovative practical applications, theme papers, or theoretical developments. In addition, works in progress and student papers are invited. Submissions should include: 1) a cover sheet with the paper title, author(s), contact information and affiliations(s) for each author, conference track(s) and 2) a second page consisting of a 500 word abstract that summarizes the paper but does NOT show your name or any contact information. Papers will be refereed by the program committee.
2. **Panels:** include proposals for 1.5 hour long sessions on topics such as reference innovations, implementation of new technology, evaluation projects, reports by practitioners on current initiatives, theme panels, and contrasting viewpoints on controversial or hot issues. Innovative formats are sought, especially those that encourage audience participation, such as: roundtable discussions, debates, forums, or case studies. Submissions should include: panel title, names, affiliations, and contact information for all participants (moderators, panelists, respondents, etc.), conference track(s), and a brief overview (250 words) of the issues, projects or viewpoints to be discussed. Panels will be refereed by the program committee.
3. **Workshops, Demonstrations, and Reports from the Field:** include proposals for 30 minute sessions on working projects, new services, new approaches to reference instruction, or to developments-in-progress. These can be educational in nature. Submissions should include workshop or demonstration title, names and affiliations of all participants, contact information, conference track(s), and brief overview (250 words) of the session.

DEADLINES:

April 22, 2008

Deadline for All Submissions

May 15, 2008

Notification of Acceptance to Speakers

SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS:

Submissions should be sent in electronic format (as an e-mail attachment as a Word document or pdf) to Program Chair Marie L. Radford (mradford@scils.rutgers.edu).

Information on conference registration and hotel reservations will be forthcoming on the conference website at: www.bcr.org/referencerenaissance