



# Archives is the new pink

A content analysis of national and regional  
archives conference presentation topics<sup>+</sup>

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SAA Research Forum, 2023



# Literature review

- + RQ: how aligned are topics addressed at national and regional meetings with introduction to archives syllabi (namely readings and weekly topics) and GPAS (2016)?
- + Relevant literature:
  - + Poole, Alex H., and Ashley Todd-Diaz, "'Sometime I Feel Like They Hate Us': The Society of American Archivists and Graduate Archival Education," *The American Archivist* 86, no 1 (2023): 79-116. DOI: 10.17723/2327-9702-86.1.79
  - + Poole, Alex H., and Ashley Todd-Diaz, "'I'm not a very good visionary': Challenge and Change in 21st Century North American Graduate Archival Education," *Archival Science* 22 (2022): 585-616. DOI: 10.1007/s10502-022-09389-0
  - + Zhang, Jane, and Alex H. Poole, "Exploring the Current State of North American Graduate Archival Education," *The American Archivist* 85, no. 2 (2022). DOI: 10.17723/2327-9702-85.2.538

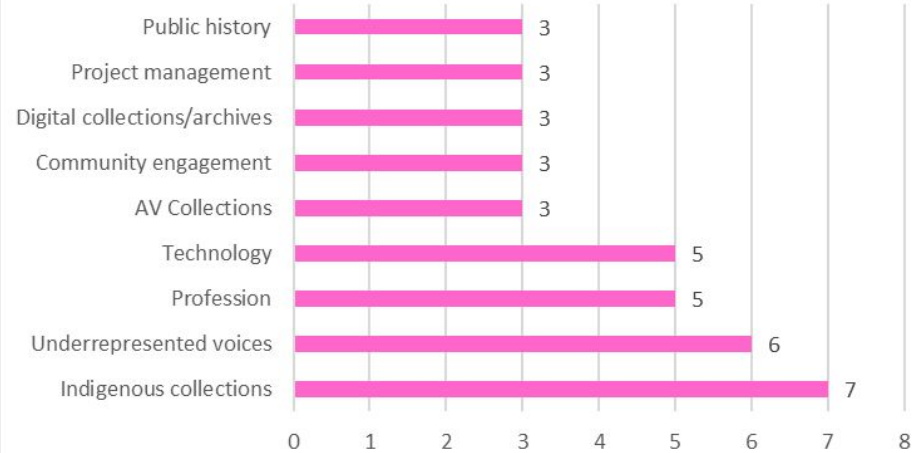


# Methodology

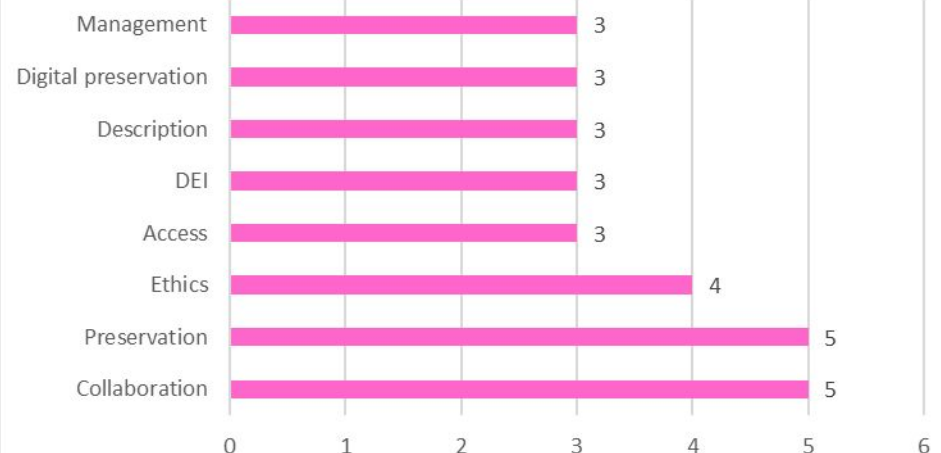
- + Content analysis (Krippendorff, 2013) of national and regional conference papers, presentations, and panels
  - + SAA, NEA, MARAC, MAC, SSA, NWA
  - + Reviewed conference websites and/or programs from 2018-2021
- + Iterative coding of topics
- + Comparison with Introduction to Archives syllabi and readings and GPAS (2016) to examine alignment



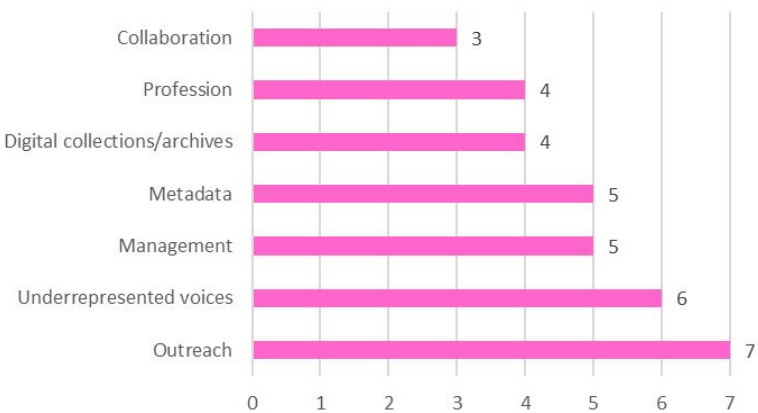
NWA (n=64)



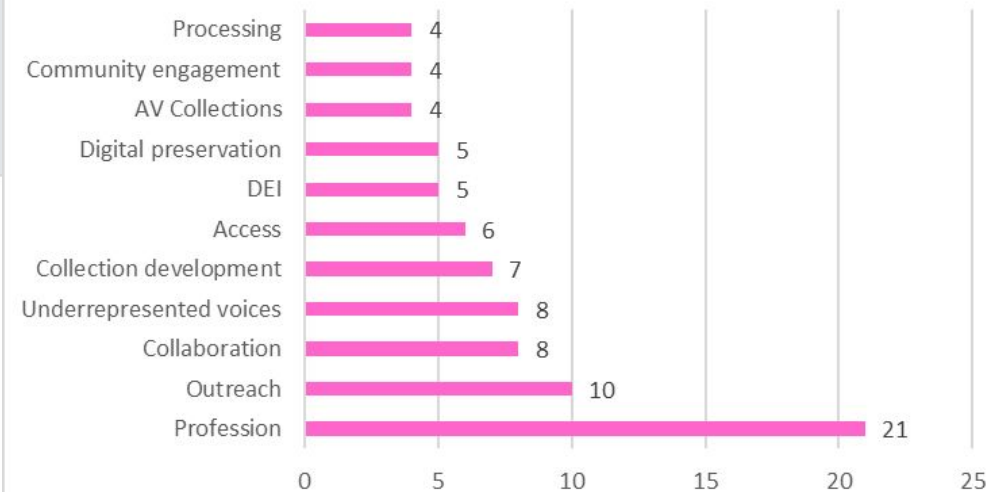
NEA (n=57)



SSA (n=63)



MARAC (n=119)

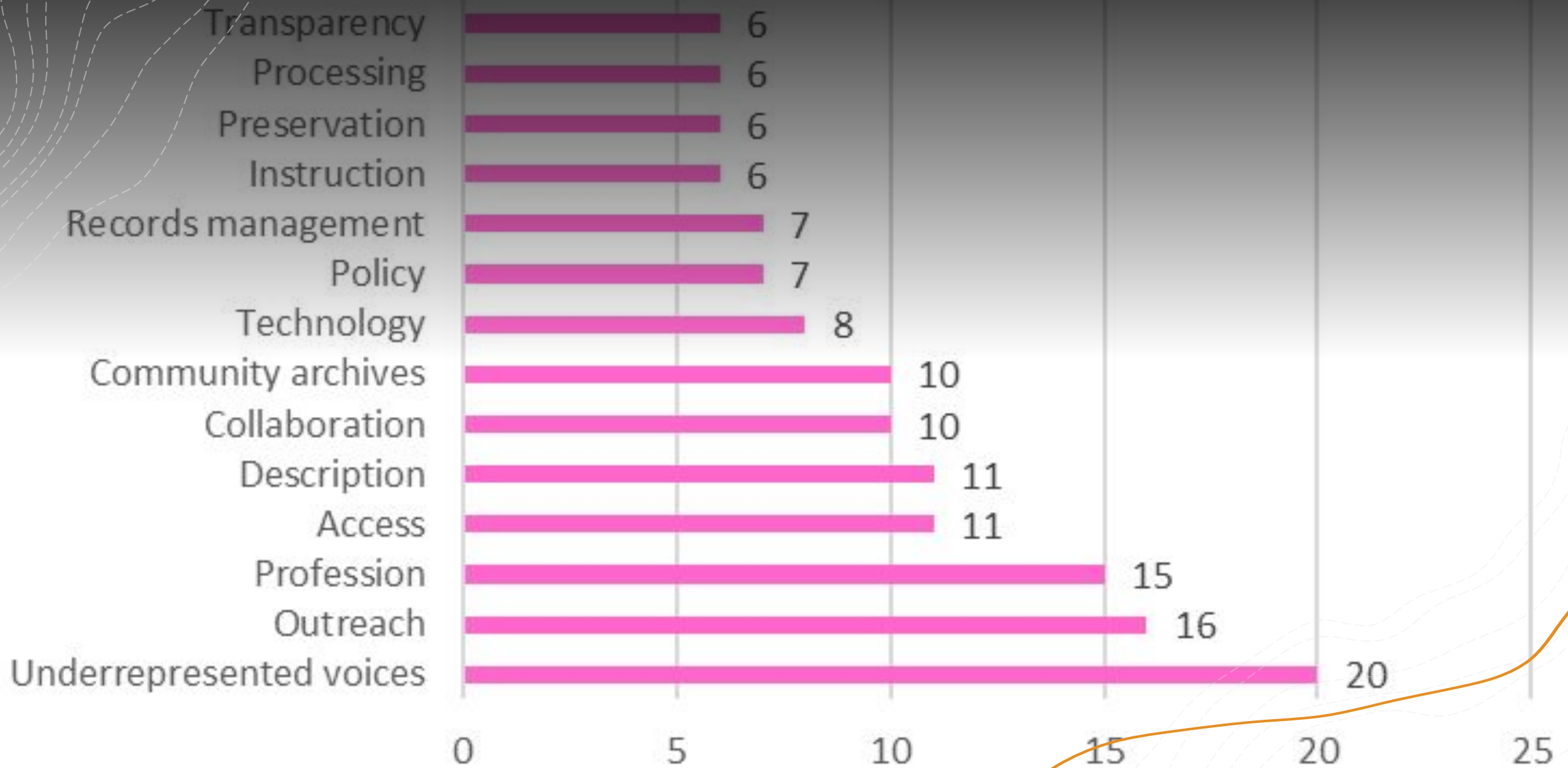


MAC (n=77)



# Regional conferences

# Conference Presentation Topics (SAA, n= 249)

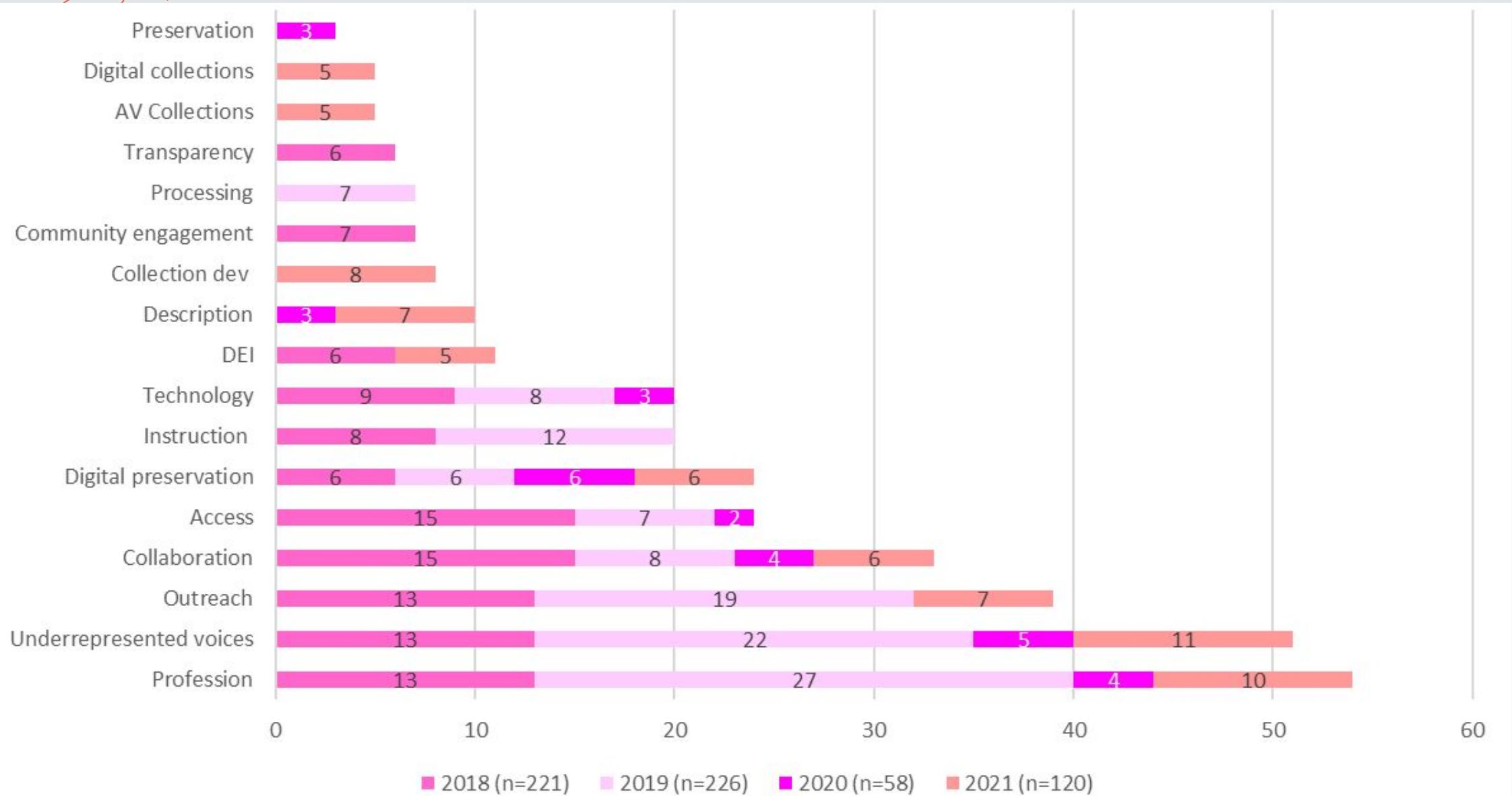


## Conference Presentations Topics (National and Regional, n=630)





# By year



## Weekly topics (38 syllabi)

- + Nature of Records and Archives: 38/38
- + Arrangement and Description: 37/38
- + Reference and Access: 34/38
- + Selection, Appraisal, Acquisition: 32/38
- + Preservation: 29/38
- + History of Archives and the Archives Profession: 26/38
- + Ethics and Values: 23/38
- + DEIA/Social Justice: 21/38
- + Management and Administration: 15/38
- + Outreach, Instruction, Advocacy: 14/38

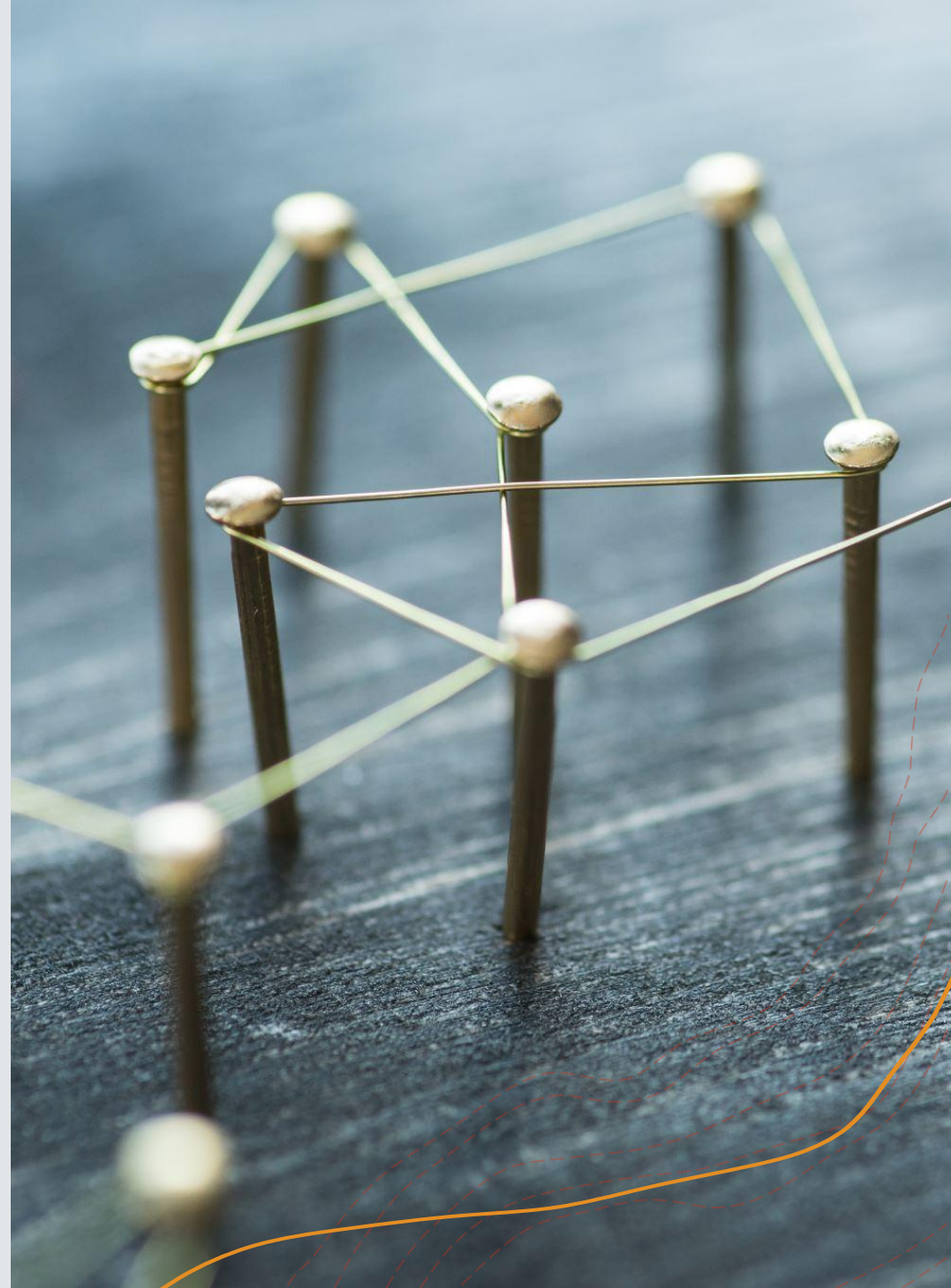
## Readings by GPAS category (1,030 unique readings)

- DEIA/Social Justice: 130
- Nature of Records and Archives: 123
- Arrangement and Description: 95
- Reference and Access: 80
- Digital Materials Management: 77
- Selection, Appraisal, Acquisition: 75
- History of Archives and the Archives Profession: 61
- Outreach, Instruction, and Advocacy: 56
- Ethics and Values: 41
- Preservation: 38



# Discussion

- + Topics differ slightly across regional venues
- + National topics include most primary archival functions
  - + Access and description align with the top two functions identified by A\*CENSUS II respondents
- + Trends emerge across all venues (e.g., under-represented voices, outreach, state of the profession)
- + Strong presence of DEI-related topics reinforces A\*CENSUS II's findings that this is a profession-wide goal
- + Pandemic was a catalyst to shift professional discussions
- + Conference topics and Introduction to Archives syllabi are slightly misaligned



The background features a complex network of nodes and edges in shades of green, purple, and cyan. Overlaid on this are white dashed contour lines that create a topographic map effect. A prominent orange line curves across the bottom right corner. The overall aesthetic is technical and digital.

Thank you!