

Society of American Archivists – Archivists of Religious Collections Section

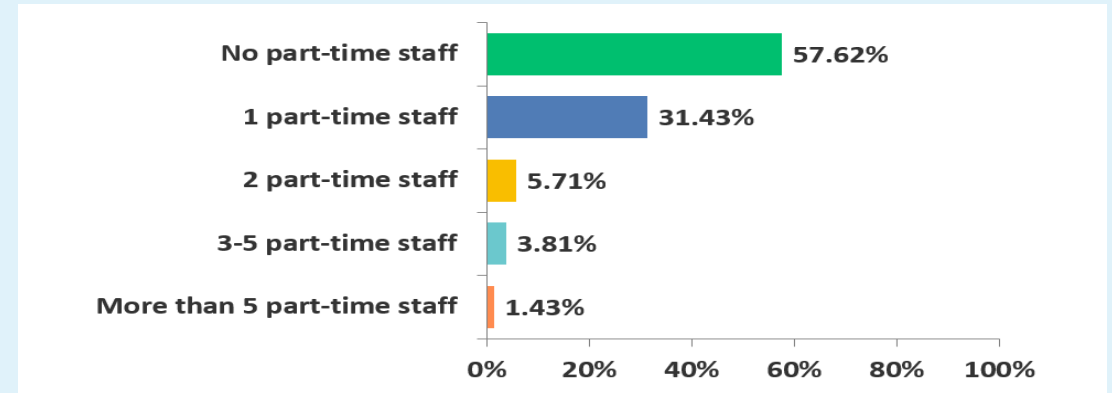
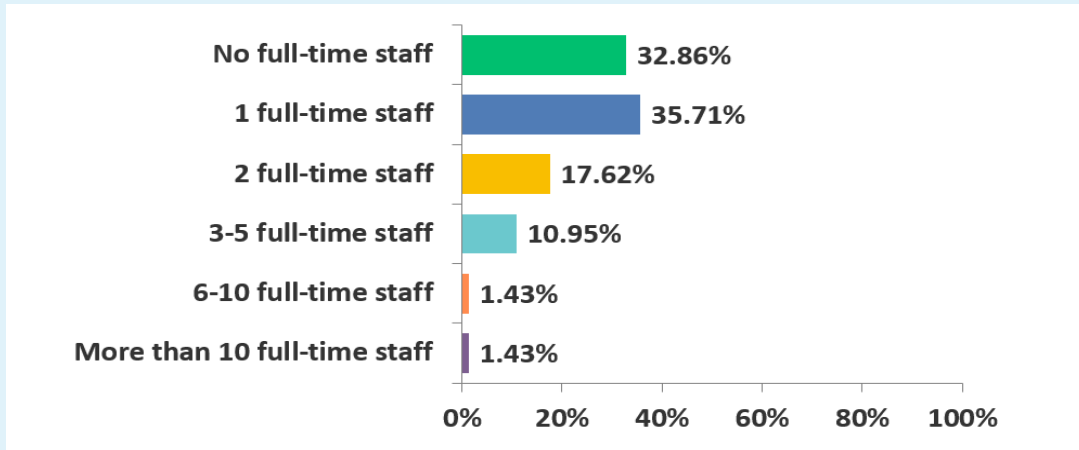
Survey of religious archives 2024

- Survey collected data on religious archives and archivists including on demography, collections, facilities, governance, outreach, reference services, technology, and needs. **
- Most respondents from the USA (87%) compared to Canada (13%), with high percentage Catholic (72%), followed by Protestant (17%).
- Most respondents from archives of a religious community (49%), followed by diocesan or archdiocesan archives (23%), and academic archives (12%).
- ** Raw data will be uploaded to the SAA Dataverse.

Staffing

There was a nearly equal split between having no full-time staff (33%) and having one full-time staff (36%).

Most had no part-time staff (58%), followed by archives with one part-time staff (31%). The remainder had between two to more than five part-time staff (11%).



Q4: How many full-time paid dedicated archives staff (at least 37.5 hours per week) do you have in your archives? (Do not include other staff such as I/T staff or non-archives administrative staff.)

Q5: How many part-time paid dedicated archives staff (20 hours or less per week) do you have in your archives? (Do not include other staff such as I/T or non-archives administrative staff.)

Budgets

The highest number of American respondents (32%) indicated that their annual archives budget excluding salaries was less than \$5,000 per year. A number of archivists had a budget of more than \$50,000 per year (16%).

US Dollar	Total USA archives	Percent
Less than \$5K (\$0-\$4,999)	58	32%
\$5-\$10K	37	20%
\$11-\$20K	20	11%
\$21-\$50K	39	21%
More than \$50K	29	16%
TOTAL	183	

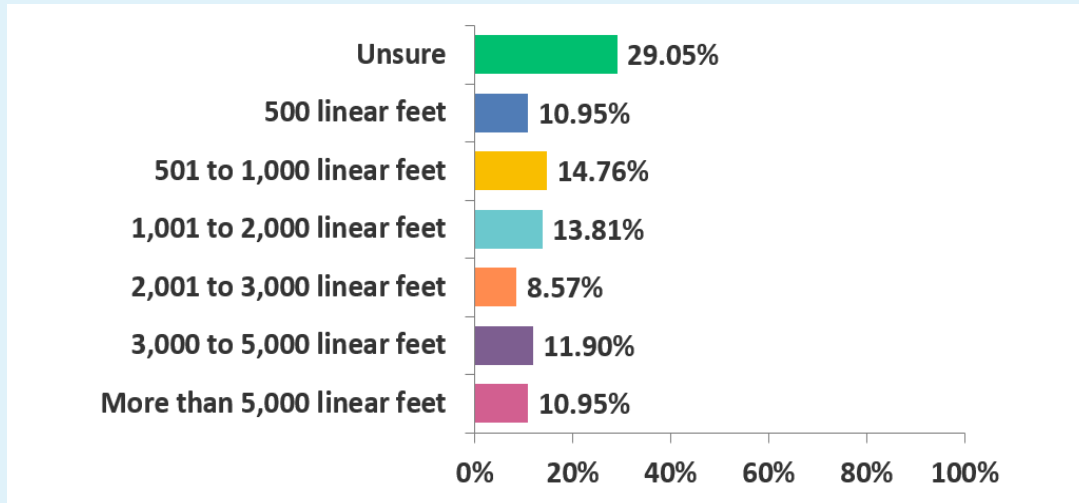
Q13 annual budget excluding salaries for archives in the USA.

Top training needs

- The top key training needs identified by respondents were:
- Overview of digital preservation software options (48%)
- Free and open-source software options for digital preservation (47%)
- Digital preservation workflows (45%)
- Software and hardware options for digitization (40%)
- Copyright law and public domain (40%)
- Privacy law and access restrictions (40%)

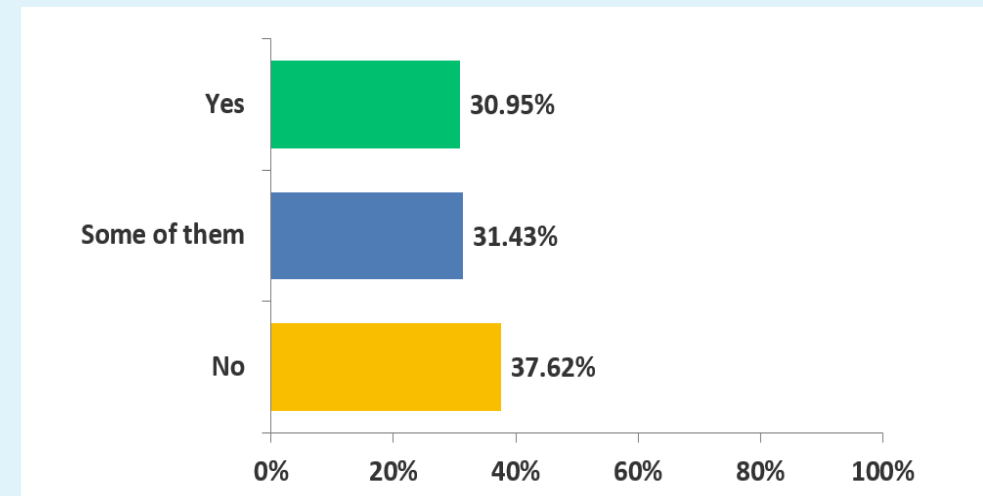
Collections and access

The extent of religious archive holdings spanned a low of 500 linear feet (11%) to a high of from 2,001 to more than 5,000 linear feet (31%).



Q16: Approximately, what is the linear footage of your archival collections?

Most religious archives provided public access to either all or some of their finding aids, inventories and/or catalogs (62%), although a significant number did not (38%).



Q80: Do you provide public access to your finding aids, inventories, and/or catalogs?

Digital preservation and technology

Digital preservation strategies included keeping an inventory and backing up on an external drive or server (43%). Few used a proprietary or hosted open-source digital preservation system (13%), or an in-house digital preservation system built with open-source software (9%).

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
We have an in-house digital preservation workflow using open-source software.	8.57%	18
We use a proprietary digital preservation system (e.g., Preservica or other).	10.48%	22
We use a hosted open-source digital preservation system (e.g., Archivematica or other).	2.38%	5
We have an inventory of digital records and just make sure they are backed up on an external drive or server.	42.86%	90
Not applicable.	35.71%	75
TOTAL		210

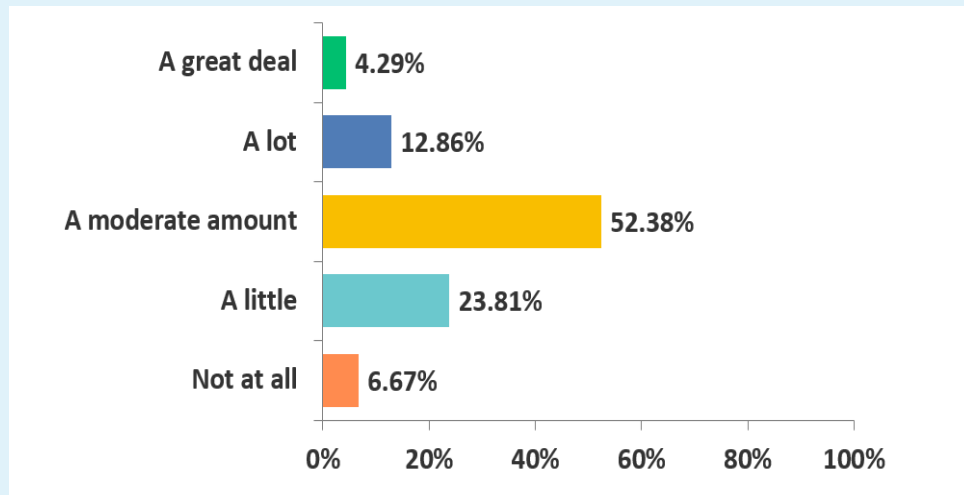
Top technology training needs

- How to choose a digital asset management system (45%)
- How to archive websites (41%)
- How to digitize audiovisual materials (34%)

Q57: How do you preserve both digitized and born-digital records?

Perceptions and needs

52% felt that religious archivists were only respected a moderate amount within the wider information management field, followed by those who felt religious archivists were respected a little (24%).



Q78: How respected do you feel religious archivists are within the wider information management field?

Top needs

- A bigger archives budget for equipment and supplies
- An improved storage facility in terms of either space, environmental control, or both
- Better salary compensation
- Increased staffing