ARCHIVISTS WORKING REMOTELY:
SURVEY RESULTS AND INSIGHTS

ARCHIVES MANAGEMENT UNCONFERENCE 2019
JENI SPAMER, VIRGINIA MASON HEALTH SYSTEM
BACKGROUND

• Panel session @ SAA 2018 featuring Veronica Martzahlf, Paul Lasewicz and Ja-Zette Marshburn

• Archival Outlook summary and survey announcement, January 2019

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WHO?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Government</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corporate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Museum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-profit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ARCHIVISTS WORKING REMOTELY?
WHO? WHY? HOW?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WHY?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Recruitment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relocation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work/Life Balance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Digital-only collections</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focused time</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ARCHIVISTS WORKING REMOTELY? WHO? WHY? HOW?
THE SURVEY

• Open January – May 2019

• Sixty-five respondents

• Results at: https://remotearchives.wordpress.com/
QUESTION 1: ARE YOU CURRENTLY WORKING REMOTELY?

Percent of time working remotely

- No, but it sounds awesome: 28%
- Yes, 25% of time: 18%
- Yes, 50% of time: 4%
- Yes, 75% of time: 6%
- Yes, 100% of time: 9%
QUESTION 1: ARE YOU CURRENTLY WORKING REMOTELY?

• “I work remotely perhaps 10% of the time, primarily when weather conditions deem it necessary.”

• “I have worked from home on snow days where travel to work would be risky or inconvenient.”

• “I work remotely once a week to cut down on the time I spend traveling to work.”
QUESTION 2: WHAT TYPE OF ARCHIVES DO YOU WORK FOR?
QUESTION 3: IF YOU SELECTED “OTHER,” WHAT TYPE OF ARCHIVES?
## COMPARISON TO SAA...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5,620 respondents</td>
<td>2,151 respondents</td>
<td>65 respondents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>26% non-profit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>23% for-profit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-profit</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>18% academic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For-profit</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>12% government</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-employed</td>
<td>1.3%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>12% other</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>5% self-employed</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
QUESTION 4: WOULD YOU BE INTERESTED IN AN SAA SECTION OR SIMILAR GROUP TO SUPPORT REMOTE ARCHIVISTS?
QUESTION 5: DO YOU PARTICIPATE IN PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES?

- Through regional organizations where I live: 16
- Through regional organizations where my job is located: 9
- Through national organizations like SAA: 37
IF YOU BUILD IT...

“We are just making things up as we go and I would love to have a community to collaborate with.”

This Photo by Unknown Author is licensed under CC BY-SA-NC
QUESTION 5: IF YOU WORK REMOTELY MORE THAN 50% OF THE TIME, DO YOU FEEL THAT YOU HAVE THE TOOLS TO SUPPORT AN APPROPRIATE WORK/LIFE BALANCE?
OTHER TRENDS

• Deloitte Human Capital Trends 2017:
  • 70% of employees value the option to telecommute
  • 23% of employers think they do an excellent job supporting work/life balance

• Gallup poll, 2017:
  • 35% of employees (50% Millennials) would leave their job for one with a flexible / offsite location
  • 51% (63% Millennials) would leave for a job with flexible hours
QUESTION 7: HOW DO YOU RESPOND TO THE USE OF “POST-CUSTODIAL” AS A TERM FOR DESCRIBING THIS WORK ARRANGEMENT?
QUESTION 8: WOULD YOU HAVE ANOTHER SUGGESTION BESIDES “POST-CUSTODIAL?”
QUESTION 9: ANYTHING ELSE?

• “This arrangement really depends on good arrangement and description and accurate/consistent controls.”

• “We have remote storage locations all over the world that are staffed by volunteers. The remote facilities are managed by a few small teams at our headquarters.”

• “Figuring out avenues for archivists to be successful with remote projects is very important to those considering entering the field who plan on becoming mothers.”
NEW INSIGHTS

• Prevent attrition
• Possibilities for internships
• Increase access to jobs / access to candidates
• SAA working group could help managers develop strategies!
CONCLUSION

This emerging trend should be tracked by archives managers for all the ways it may impact recruiting and retaining employees.
THANK YOU!

JENI SPAMER
JENI.SPAMER@GMAIL.COM

with

VERONICA MARTZAHNL
VERONICA.MARTZAHL@GMAIL.COM