

## Labour, Solidarity, And Libraries

(Panel) Jennifer Dekker (University of Ottawa); John Fink (McMaster University); Sam Popowich (University of Alberta)

*Solidarity*: “The fact or quality, on the part of communities, etc., of being perfectly united or at one in some respect, esp. in interests, sympathies, or aspirations; spec. with reference to the aspirations or actions of trade-union members.”

- "Solidarity, n.". OED Online. June 2017. Oxford University Press.

Academic librarians have working conditions and challenges that mirror those of wider society: outsourcing is routine, budgets are cut, transparency is lacking, decision-making is centralized, technology is uncritically adopted, work is often more specialized and individualized, precarious employment is common and support from unions (especially faculty unions) varies. How do we work with each other to build the networks and support systems that lead to solidarity? What are the benefits of doing so?

This panel will explore the challenges - institutional, cultural, and social - to building solidarity in academic libraries. What are the factors impeding academic librarians from building greater solidarity in our own workplaces, with colleagues in the same province, with librarians across Canada and possibly even building international solidarity? Are there examples of successful solidarity actions that we can share? We hope to engage audience participation to round out the discussion with your experiences, examples and potential solutions.

The panelists represent four different perspectives:

1. A large research intensive university where librarians have been unionized members of the professors association since the 1970's;
2. A large research intensive university where librarians unionized apart from professors in 2010;
3. A large research intensive university where librarians have recently unionized alongside professors through government legislation after being long-time members of a non-union academic association;
4. A private university in New York, where librarians and library instructors have been involved in labour disputes with management over the last few years, including a lockout in the fall of 2016.

The different backgrounds, current situations, experiences, and perspectives of the panelists will uncover some of the challenges - and opportunities - for solidarity across academic librarianship. Moving the conversation forward is vital to achieving professional solidarity in times to come. The format of the panel will be question and answer with a moderator. As a result, the four panelists do not have individual abstracts, but will respond to the moderator's questions (prepared by the panel in advance).