

CatSIG RDA Survey 2021

The survey was published in SurveyMonkey and made available between September 22 and October 8, 2021. It was promoted directly to LIANZA CatSIG members, and via the CatSIG and NZ-Libs email lists. At completion there were 55 responses.

General demographics

1. What sector do you work in?

Half of the respondents work in public libraries, just over a quarter work in tertiary libraries, 13% (or roughly half the number for tertiary libraries) work in special libraries. There was just one vendor response, 4 responses from the National Library and no response from anyone working in a school library.

A previous survey conducted in 2010 had 120 responses, including 17 from school libraries. The difference in numbers could be an indication of a reduction in the number of cataloguers over this 10-year period.

The lack of response from school librarians might mean other email lists would have been better for making contact with that sector.

Answer choices	No. of responses	% of responses
Tertiary library	15	27.78%
Public library	27	50%
School library	0	0%
Special library	7	12.96%
National Library of NZ	4	7.41%
Vendor	1	1.85%
Other (please specify)	0	0%
No response	1	1.85%
Total	55	

2. In one word or phrase, how would you best describe your work role to others in the library sector?

Most respondents (approx. 75%) are in “cataloguing” work roles: cataloguer, copy cataloguer, metadata librarian or resource description librarian. The “other” responses include a library manager, a sole charge librarian, a heritage librarian, and a role that includes most of the answer choices. There were also 4 roles within the broader Technical Services area: Acquisitions with cataloguing support, Technical librarian, Acquisitions librarian and Collections librarian.

Answer choices	No. of responses	% of responses
Cataloguer	24	43.64%
Copy cataloguer	5	9.09%

Metadata librarian	10	18.18%
Resource description librarian	3	5.45%
Systems librarian	1	1.82%
Library trainers	0	0%
Cataloguing supervisor	4	7.27%
Other (please specify)	8	14.55%

3. What percentage of your work time do you spend on the following activities?

As expected, most people spent most of their time on either copy cataloguing or original cataloguing.

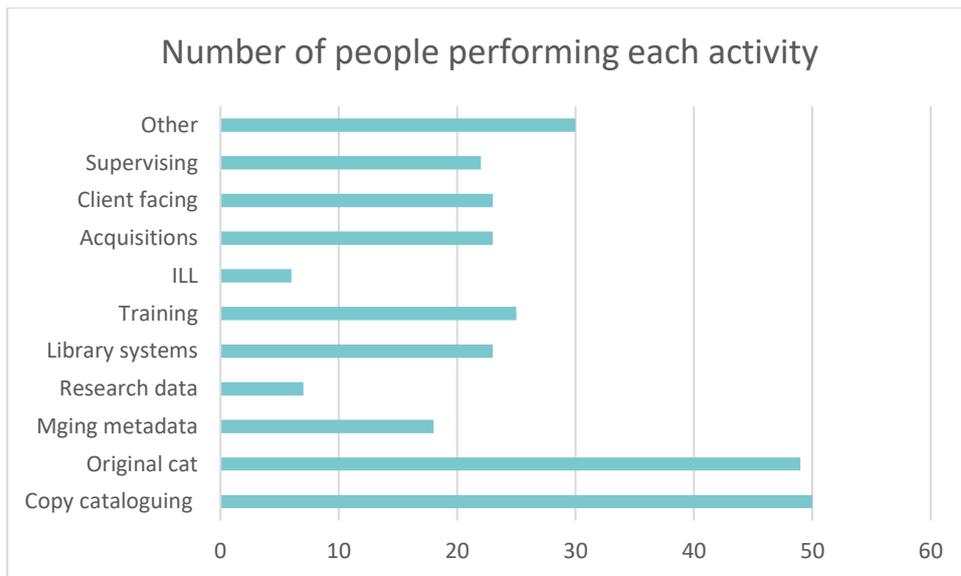
There is more variation with the other activities in the list. More than 20 respondents (40%) spent time on one or more of: Acquisitions, supervising, training, client facing tasks or maintaining library systems, however the amount of time each respondent spent on a task is quite variable.

The survey question did not ask respondents to identify the tasks covered by “Other duties”

The table below gives the **average** time spent on each task.

Answer choices	Average % of time on task
Copy cataloguing individual items	33%
Original cataloguing individual items	19%
Acquisitions	16%
Other duties	14%
Managing metadata in bulk/at scale	12%
Supervising people who undertake any of the above	11%
Client facing duties	10%
Managing research data	4%
Maintaining library systems	6%
Educating/training people	6%
Interlibrary loans	1%

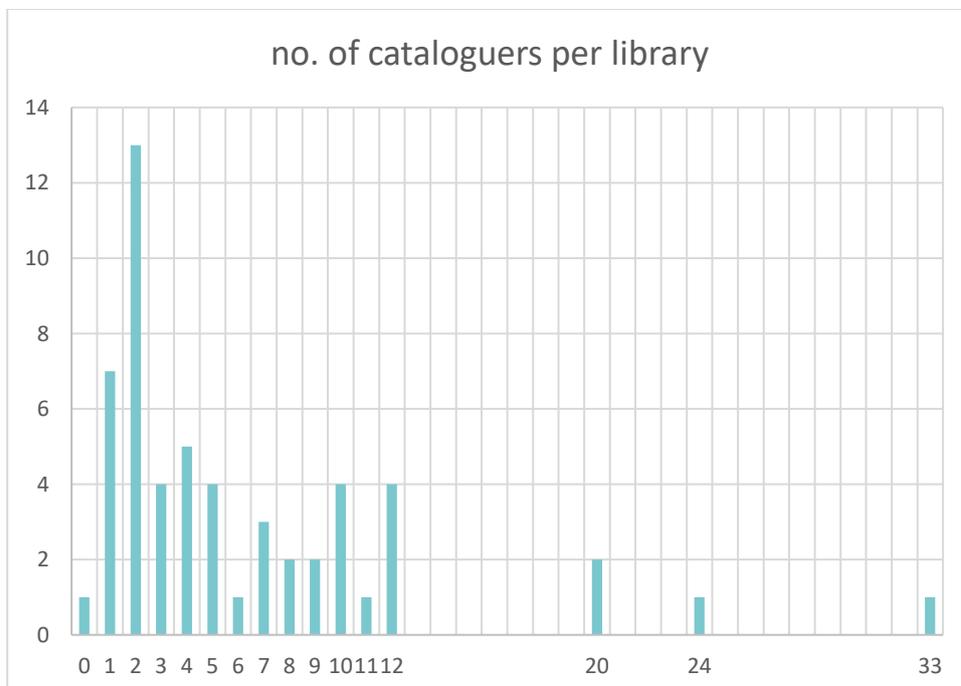
The chart below shows the number of respondents who spend time on each task.



4. In your library, approximately how many of people (including yourself) perform cataloguing/resource description as part of their role?

Over 80% of the respondents had 10 or fewer people cataloguing in their library. Only 4 respondents reported 20 or more people involved in cataloguing. This was the same figure as in the 2010 survey.

The largest cluster of responses was in the range of 1 – 5 cataloguers.



5. What type of resource description/cataloguing do you do?

Most respondents perform both copy and original cataloguing. The “other” responses covered, newspaper indexing and 2 roles that covered cataloguing with other tasks; in one case the task were archival description and research metadata and the other covered organisation, description and search optimisation on an intranet.

Answer choices	No. of responses	% of responses
Copy cataloguing	5	9.09%
Original cataloguing	1	1.82%
Both copy and original cataloguing	41	74.55%
I describe research or learning objects	0	0%
I educate or train people in resource description/cataloguing	3	5.45%
I don't currently describe resources/catalogue	2	3.64%
Other (please specify)	3	5.45%

6. Does your organisation outsource any of its cataloguing activities?

Responses to this question were evenly split with 27 respondents in organisations that outsource at least some of their cataloguing and 27 in organisations that don't outsource any of their cataloguing.

Over half of the libraries who outsource have indicated in comments that they outsource a significant portion of their cataloguing.

There were detailed comments from a number of respondents describing what their library outsources or doesn't outsource. In general, the popular options were main-stream print fiction and non-fiction, with some libraries also outsourcing e-resource cataloguing. Several libraries don't outsource their NZ and heritage collection cataloguing. The survey questions were not specific enough to derive any trends from these comments, particularly where they mention non-print materials.

RDA and other cataloguing standards

7. What descriptive standards does your organisation use? (Select all that apply)

Over 90% of the respondents are using RDA as at least one of their descriptive standards, with 19% using, or also using, AACR2.

Most of those using AACR2 were also using RDA. Three respondents only use AACR2.

Of the “other” responses, 3 use Dublin Core, two use an archival descriptive standard, one uses DCRM (Descriptive Cataloguing of Rare Materials) and one uses a specialised standard (CBI)

Answer choices	No. of responses	% of responses
AACR2	19	34.55%
RDA	51	92.73%
Other descriptive standard (please specify)	8	14.55%

8. Do you, or did you, use the classic (original) RDA Toolkit?

There was quite a spread of responses to this question, with roughly a third of respondents using the original toolkit frequently or all the time.

Answer choices	No. of responses	% of responses
No, not at all	13	23.64%
Yes, a bit	24	43.64%
Yes, frequently	13	23.64%
Yes, all the time	5	9.09%

9. If you haven't used the Toolkit, or don't currently use it, what is the main reason why not?

Just over half the respondents (29) didn't answer this question and all work in libraries that have a Toolkit subscription. These respondents either currently use the Toolkit or have used it at some point.

Another 14 respondents who haven't, or don't currently, use the Toolkit work in libraries that have Toolkit subscriptions.

For those who don't currently use the Toolkit the main barriers are lack of training or not feeling confident in applying the guidelines.

Some respondents had more than one main reason for not using the toolkit and this is reflected in the number of responses below.

The responses in the "Other" category were varied. One related to technical difficulties with access, another uses a different cataloguing standard, one hadn't had any information about the new toolkit, a fourth was probably in the "It's too hard to use" category and another felt familiar enough with the toolkit standard that they didn't need to consult it.

Answer choices	No. of responses	% of responses
My workplace doesn't require it	2	7.69%
I haven't received any training	10	38.46%
I am not confident that I can apply it	9	34.62%
It's too hard to use	4	15.38%
Cost of subscription	3	11.54%
Other (please specify)	5	19.23%

10. What sort of training did you receive in the original RDA? (Select all that apply)

Most people have been trained on the job, with a few taking a course with a training provider, or doing training as part of their formal study. Of the 5 “Other” responses, 1 took a short course, 2 were trained on the job, and 2 participated in online training webinars.

Answer choices	No. of responses	% of responses
I received training during a formal course of study	11	20%
I was trained on the job	25	45.45%
I took a short course from a training provider	15	27.27%
I am self-taught	11	20%
I did not receive training	7	12.73%
Other (please specify)	5	9.09%

11. Does your organisation have a Toolkit subscription?

Most respondents (78%) work in an organisation with a Toolkit subscription.

Answer choices	No. of response	% of responses
Yes	43	78.18%
No, and we never did	8	14.55%
No, but we used to	1	1.82%
I don't know	3	5.45%

12. How much does cost impact your organisation's decision to subscribe to the Toolkit?

Cost impacts were either unknown or not a particular issue for most respondents

Answer choices	No. of responses	% of responses
Not at all	15	27.78%
A little	7	12.96%
Neutral	4	7.41%
A lot	3	5.56%
It is the sole deciding factor	1	1.85%
I don't know	24	44.44%

13. Have you spent time in the new (3R) Toolkit?

Almost half the group had spent a little time looking at the 3R Toolkit, but very few used it often.

Answer choices	No. of responses	% of responses
Not at all	25	45.45%
Yes, a bit	26	47.27%
Yes, frequently	3	5.45%
Yes, all the time	0	0.00%
I did not know there was a 'new' Toolkit	1	1.82%

14. Please rate each of the following in terms of how they apply to you when you think about the new RDA and 3R Toolkit

There appear to have been some issues with the way this question was set up in Survey Monkey. It seems that participants could not select the same rating for more than one option, so although only 1 respondent didn't answer this question, not all were able to rate each option. This makes interpretation of the results more difficult.

The results suggest that respondents are moderately worried, very confused, not at all confident, and slightly informed. This ties in with the preferences expressed for training in Q19, and some of the responses to Q9 from people who don't currently use the Toolkit, but do have access to it.

	Not at all	Slightly	Moderately	Very	Extremely
Worried	5 / 13.51%	11 / 29.73%	14 / 37.84%	7 / 18.92%	0 / 0%
Confused	2 / 5.13%	9 / 23.08%	9 / 23.08%	16 / 41.03%	3 / 7.69%
Confident	20 / 68.97%	3 / 10.34%	4 / 13.79%	2 / 6.90%	0 / 0%
Informed	7 / 19.44%	17 / 47.22%	9 / 25%	2 / 5.56%	1 / 2.78%

Training Needs and preferences

15. How do you engage in professional development (Select all that apply)

Listserves appear to be the most important source of professional development for this group, followed by newsletters. Virtual communities and paid professional development opportunities were also significant, with books and journals followed by blogs, as the least-used forms. These latter 2 forms were still used by at least 30% of respondents.

Among the other options, 5 people referred to webinars and YouTube videos from a range of providers. 3 mentioned workplace discussions and in-house training sessions, while another referred to participating in a cataloguing working group for a consortium of libraries. There was also mention of general internet searching and online applications.

Answer choices	No. of responses	% of responses
Newsletters	36	65.45%
Listerv subscriptions	48	87.27%
Virtual community/communities	28	50.91%
Blogs	17	30.91%
Paid PD opportunities	31	56.36%
Books and journals	21	38.18%
Other (please specify)	11	20%

16. How does your employer support you in terms of professional development (Select all that apply)

Most people seem to have some support from their employer for professional development. One respondent had no support at all from their employer, while 12 others were encouraged, but unable to use work time for professional development. The latter could be a reflection of the pressure on staff resources in many libraries.

Of the 4 respondents in the “Other” category, all indicated some level of support from their employer for development during work time, and one referred to the cost of training as a factor.

Answer Choices	No. of responses	% of responses
I am encouraged to pursue it independently, and can use work time to do so	44	80%
I am encouraged to pursue it independently outside of work time	12	21.82%
My workplace provides relevant professional development for me	27	49.09%
I am required to undertake a certain amount of professional development each year	10	18.18%
I receive no support from my employer in terms of professional development	1	1.82%
Other (please specify)	4	7.87%

17. What style(s) of training do you prefer? (Select all that apply)

The group was fairly evenly divided between those who prefer to start with the practical and then look at theory, versus theory first followed by practice. There was a strong preference for the chance to revisit training via some form of record. The responses in the “other” category tended to support a mix of practical and theoretical training. One respondent highlighted the value of examples of records and another noted that training should not be overwhelming.

Answer choices	No. of responses	% of responses
I prefer practical training where I learn how to do something and then learn the theory	27	49.09%
I prefer guided training where I learn the theory first and then learn how to apply it	31	56.36%
I prefer training that I am able to revisit (e.g. recorded sessions, workbooks, etc)	44	80%
Other (please specify)	7	12.73%

18. What modality of training do you prefer?

Over half of the respondents didn't have a strong preference for either modality of training.

Answer choices	Number of responses	Percentage of responses
Face-to-face training	11	20%
Online training	10	18.18%
I don't have a strong preference	34	61.82%

19. Please describe any ideas you may have about support you would find useful in using the new RDA Toolkit.

There were 21 responses to this question. One theme that appears in all of them is the need for a guided introduction to this new toolkit. People are looking for a way to get started.

One person mentioned strategies to encourage buy-in and endorsing the benefits of the new Toolkit.

At least 3 people referred to the need for a guide to the new terminology.

The need for application profiles to follow was mentioned by 4 people.

A couple of people, in different ways, described the notion of a basic training, which included how to access and navigate the Toolkit. This could be followed up with more specialised or advanced topics.

The strong preference for practical training with examples that showed in the answers to Q17 was also reflected here.

There was an overall emphasis on “concise easily digestible simple training”

Overall conclusions and actions for LIANZA CatSIG

The responses to the general demographic questions, combined with the reduction of responses compared to the previous survey in 2010, suggest that the numbers of cataloguers in New Zealand libraries have dropped over the last decade.

Additionally, only 18 out of 55 respondents answered that 75% or more of their time was spent on cataloguing or related activities (copy cataloguing, original cataloguing, managing metadata at scale) which could also point to a reduction in full-time cataloguing roles.

Responses in the RDA and other cataloguing standards section indicate that many respondents don't feel confident, haven't received training or find the Original Toolkit too hard to use. These responses, combined with the responses to question 14 particularly, suggest that LIANZA CatSIG should focus on supporting the community to develop skills and confidence with RDA.

The responses to the training needs and preferences questions (15-19) give CatSIG a strong steer to plan training that:

- provides clear pathways into the new Toolkit, especially how to get started
- is practical and focused on the needs of professionals using the Toolkit in their daily work (e.g. examples, demonstrations using the Toolkit in real systems)
- is made available in way that can be accessed when convenient, and revisited when needed (e.g. webinars that are recorded, support materials posted on [DescribeNZ](#))