

PARTNERS IN ACCESSIONING: ENVIRONMENTAL SCAN

Accessioning archivists are at the center of a complex web of relationships, the strength of which can impact the effectiveness of accessioning work and advocacy. These relationships may be with true partners, stakeholders, or facilitators who help provide resources.

Accessioning archivists may be in constant direct communication with some partners and in indirect communication with others. Some infrequent connections may even be the most critical. These interpersonal relationships, partnerships, and dependencies vary based on institutional environments and cultures. Depending on individual circumstances or staffing structures, you may not know exactly what you need, how to get it, or how to identify who does what in acquisitions and accessioning workflows with fuzzy boundaries. As an accessioning archivist, it may be helpful to examine your own environment and conduct a scan of interpersonal relationships and partnerships in your accessioning environment.

For each identified partner, ask yourself:

- How do they move you forward?
- How can they be a better partner?
- What do you need them to do in order to do your job?
- What do you need them to know?
- What do they need from you? How do they benefit from successful accessioning?
- How do they hold you back?
- What are the risks if you don't communicate with them?
- When do you need to communicate with them?
- How often do you need to communicate with them?
- Does communication need to be direct or indirect?

The following table, adapted from a SWOT analysis, can be used to record notes during an environmental scan and can help you learn more about how key relationships impact your work. SWOT stands for Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats. A SWOT analysis is often used in strategic or project planning to better understand an operational environment and the internal and external forces at work.

Partner	Opportunities	Risks	Benefits from Accessioning	Communication Style