

RAILS Board Advocacy Committee

Advocacy for Specialized Libraries

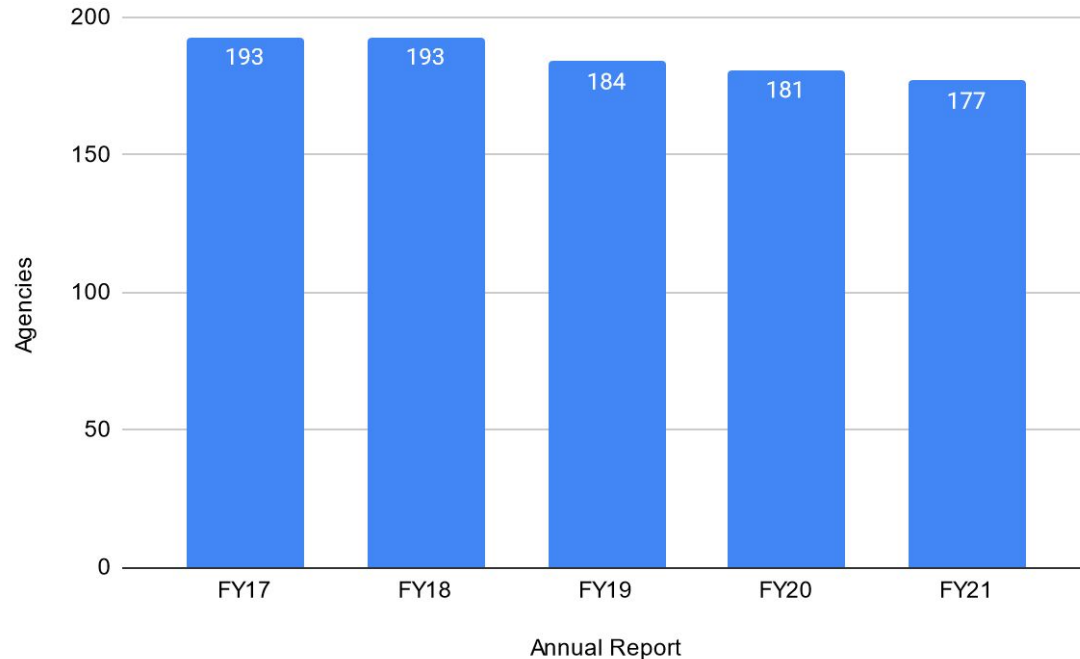
Ten year slide in Special Libraries Association membership

- Lost 25% of membership, 2017-2021
- Lost 70% of membership, 2010-2021
- Significant loss of revenue, volunteers, support from vendors
- Loss of local chapters, very little local control



Decline in RAILS specialized libraries agency membership

Agencies vs. Annual Report



Annual Report	Agencies	# Gain/Loss	% Gain/Loss
FY17	193	n/a	n/a
FY18	193	0	0.00%
FY19	184	-9	-4.66%
FY20	181	-3	-1.63%
FY21	177	-4	-2.21%
Average		-4	-2.13%

Factors for decline in specialized libraries

- Mergers & acquisitions (esp. medical)
- Retirements
- Changes in title/responsibilities, rebranding
- Big declines in print collections
- Need for high-cost specialized resources (databases, aggregation tools)

What is currently RAILS doing?

Member engagement:

- Site visits
- Member networking, collaboration w/ SLA Illinois
- Webinars & continuing education
- My Library Is... campaign, Specialized Library Spotlight

Member benefits:

- ILL delivery
- Shared catalog support
- E-book support
- Networking
- Continuing education
- Deals & discounts
- Consulting

How can RAILS advocate for specialized libraries?

Member feedback:

- Best practices for demonstrating ROI
- More continuing education that focuses on topics related specialized libraries
- Funding through grants
- More specialized library jobs on the RAILS Jobs Board
- Continuing to partner with SLA Illinois and SLA National