

This document is framed by the following question: How might we, as workers in special collections technical services, make good use of our time if obligated to work remotely for an extended period (at least two weeks, perhaps much longer)?

The focus of this document is special collections technical services, but it may also be useful to list activities of broader scope if they support our primary focus.

Please add your suggestions under the appropriate categories, or create new headings where necessary. Your ideas may be prompted by projects at your institution; consider generalizing these ideas to suggest similar projects elsewhere.

If sharing links, please consider using a URL shortener, such as [bitly](#), or overlay the link on existing text.

This is a community document. Anyone may contribute.

Cataloging / Processing

- Create new MARC records, or improve existing records, to describe material for which digital images exist in the repository's digital library, e.g. for maps, prints (where practical); add genre terms to facilitate searching by facets
- Proofread, edit, or enhance finding aid descriptions that are in progress (to the extent where it is not necessary to have the material in hand)
- Create/edit MARC records for new/revised finding aids
- Check out the [Archivists at Home](#) document for archives-specific ideas
- Convert finding aids or other collection descriptions in nonstandard formats (e.g. Word Docs) to EAD or MARC.
- Identify titles needing original cataloging using approval download spreadsheets. Create original MARC records by combining data from local EOCRS with information from national libraries, online publisher information/descriptions, and when available PDFs of the titles in question. After record creation and local record overlay, flag the records for review when back in the office.

Catalog Maintenance

- Search for common typos in your catalog. E.g. "teh" for "the", "accordian" for "accordion", etc. and then fix.
- Correct incorrect MARC tags or other errors
- Create and update rare materials PyMarc scripts ([752 generator](#) and 340 \$m converter)
- Update ESTC holdings: Pull holdings for your library from estc; query local database for english imprints; compare; update estc and add 510 if needed
- Clean-up racist, sexist, homophobic language in resource and collection descriptions

- 752 batch add: query local database for imprints from major cities; quality control list; batch add 752
- Add genre/form headings to records whose content indicates a need for them; e.g., if a keyword search turns up records with references to a typeface, add RBMS type specimen headings
- Manually check existing 655 genre terms for accuracy (especially for those vocabularies that may not be part of vendor-processed authority control e.g. AAT)
- Convert old citation forms in 510 fields to new standard citation forms

Authority Work

- Develop new authority records for NACO (e.g., when authority worksheets have been completed but not yet entered online)
- Develop document to identify NACO contributors: non-NACO contributors could identify problematic identities needing NACO work, and identify surrogates available online (e.g., via [Hathi Trust](#), [Gallica](#), etc.)
- Contributing to SNAC (<https://snaccooperative.org/>); participating in SNACSchool to get started (<https://portal.snaccooperative.org/SNACSchool>)
- Contribute to the PERSNAME-L list, “a forum for communication among librarians and others concerned with the accuracy of catalog entries for individuals” (<https://lists.ou.edu/cgi-bin/wa?SUBED1=PERSNAME-L&A=1>)

Other Technical Services Activities

- Help SCF begin to gather the id.loc.gov URLs into a spreadsheet (if a spreadsheet seems best) for entry into the SCF database; the SCF team can add them when the new field is added and ready. [Not sure where to put this so I added it here & below in Group Activities.]
- Review, develop and/or update Disaster Preparedness policies
- This is a great time to apply your knowledge of collections to support public service work, though the creation of LibGuides or other collection guides, digital exhibits, etc.
- Improve Wikipedia entries for subjects, individuals, and corporate bodies represented in your collections, including links to your catalog records or finding aids.

Documentation Development

- Review local documentation and update as necessary
- Take home printed finding aids and begin transcribing them to be published online
- Organize your department’s documentation and digital files (shared server, Google Drive, etc.)

Group Activities

- Contribute to ongoing committee activities, for the institution or for national organizations (RBMS, SAA)
- Develop presentations, coursework, etc.
- Help SCF begin to gather the id.loc.gov URLs into a spreadsheet (if a spreadsheet seems best) for entry into the SCF database; the SCF team can add them when the new field is added and ready. [Not sure where to put this so I added it here & above in Other Tech Services Activities.]
- Go to <http://rbms.info/scf/> and submit standard citation proposals for rare materials bibliographies.
- Participate in crowdsourcing tagging/transcription projects, such as: [Smithsonian Digital Transcription](#); [Zooniverse projects](#); [Library of Congress crowdsourcing](#) projects
- Some more crowdsourcing projects (from the British Library): [Playbills](#); [Living with machines](#); [Georeferencer](#) (historic maps)

Online Training

- Future Learn free short courses: <https://www.futurelearn.com/courses>
Of particular interest might be the following one:
<https://www.futurelearn.com/courses/history-of-the-book>
- Online language learning: it's not ideal and not always free but it's a possibility
 - Latin
 - <https://medieval.utoronto.ca/latin/resources/>
 - https://www.paideiainstitute.org/telepaideia_courses_spring_2020
 - Latin course in Duolingo mobile app or website (duolingo.com)
- Familiarize staff with RDA BetaToolkit (presuming remote access is available).
[Instructions on accessing BetaToolkit remotely.](#)
- Coursera:
 - <https://www.coursera.org/learn/burgos-deciphering-secrets-medieval-spain>
 - <https://www.coursera.org/learn/copyright-for-education?page=2>
- [Paleographical Challenge 2020](#) (Beinecke Rare Book & Manuscript Library). See also: *English Paleography and Manuscript Culture, 1500-1800*, by Kathryn James ([a new book!](#))
- ALCTS Cataloging and RDA [Webinars](#) (older webinars are available at no cost)
- MarcEdit: Terry Reese has produced [a slew of videos](#) offering instruction on the use of MarcEdit (a great tool for making batch changes to MARC records)

Online Presentations

- 2019 LD4 Conference on Linked Data in Libraries. Includes videos of most presentations: <http://bit.ly/ld4conference>
- Rare Book School YouTube videos: <https://www.youtube.com/user/rarebookschool>
- [Rare Book School lectures](#): Earliest recording from 1973! (Audio quality can be sketchy on older recordings)
- [WebJunction Course Catalog](#)
 - These are all free to the library community. Requires complementary registration. Much of it is geared to public libraries but there are some basic skills (professional, personnel and personal development) that staff might find useful.
- [American Library Association \(ALA\) eLearning opportunities](#)
 - Some courses are free to the public.
 - Includes content from all ALA sections and divisions
- [ALA Preservation Week Trainings](#)
- [Association of Library Collections and Technical Services \(ALCTS\) Webinar Archives](#)
 - Free to the public.
 - Includes recordings of presentations and slides.
- [Bibframe workshop](#)
 - Free to the public.
 - Includes slides and handouts from course.
- [Bibliographical Society of America Youtube channel \(webinars and lectures\)](#)
- [Connecting to Collections Care Training Archives](#)
- [Illinois Metadata Matter Series](#)
 - Free to the public.
 - Includes slides.
- [Library of Congress Cataloging Workshop Courses](#)
 - Free to the public.
 - Includes slides from presentations and some handouts.
- [Library of Congress YouTube Trainings](#)
- [Library Leadership Webinar Archives and Online Courses](#)
 - Most information is free to the public.
- [New York State Archives Workshop Recordings](#)
- [OCLC Webinars](#)
 - Free to the public.
 - Includes descriptions and slides for past webinars.
- [Texas State Library -- Webinar Archives](#)
 - Free to public
- [WebJunction Webinar Recordings](#)
- RBMS Conference presentations: <https://alair.ala.org/handle/11213/8544>
- Beinecke Library YouTube videos: https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCU8AjmvFE_jGBxuQCpfgaOg/featured

- Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library lectures (audio):
<https://fisher.library.utoronto.ca/exhibitions/lectures-audio>
- Bridwell Library lectures (audio):
<https://www.smu.edu/Bridwell/About/NewsandEvents/Previous-Lectures>

Readings

- *Best Practices for Cataloging Objects Using RDA and MARC 21*. January 2020. Created by the Objects Best Practices Task Force, Cataloging Policy Committee, OLAC:
<https://bit.ly/2WgtCxZ>
- [Web Resources for Rare Materials Catalogers](https://bit.ly/2WgtCxZ)
 - This is very rare books and special collections specific. Most links are free to the public

Coffee Break Material (Diversions / Levity)

- Podcasts about libraries, for librarians
- List of library/librarian-hosted podcasts
 - Kitchen Sisters podcast
 - Librarian Is In (NYPL) podcast
 - Talking in the Library (Library Company)
- I've had the experience of [Folger Tea](#)... Maybe we could have a casual RBMS BSC wide Folger Tea-inspired get together that we can drop into on a weekly basis. (using zoom and just chatting about whatever). I just had a "virtual coffee" session with two of my co-workers and it was by far the BEST thing that has happened all week long. Just Sayin. The only thing that would have made it better would be more discourse on rare materials (the other participants were both music catalogers.)