

# Program Highlights

*August 2018 – July 2019*

**AMICAL**  
CONSORTIUM

Through collaboration, the **AMICAL Consortium** raises the quality of library, technology and curricular resources across the 30 international liberal arts institutions that form our membership.

AMICAL's programs are shaped around the following **strategic focus areas**:

- **Cost-saving on library and information resources**
- **Library and technology leadership**
- **Innovative pedagogy and scholarship** – with a particular focus on
  - information & digital literacies
  - digital liberal arts: digital humanities, and digital tools and methods that enable new forms of learning and scholarship across liberal arts curricular environments more generally

Our work in the above areas has been supported by a series of grants from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, including our current grant of \$1.1M over 2018–2021 for “Building Leadership & Capacity for Digital Liberal Arts across the AMICAL Consortium.”

**Our principal grant-funded programs** include:

- **Staff and faculty development conferences and events, cohort training programs, and consultation services**
- **Small Grants for training, staff exchanges and project support**
- **An online community network and collaboration tools**

Below we highlight some of the recent initiatives supported by AMICAL, focusing primarily on the last full year of August 2018 – July 2019 along with some basic news about more recent events.

## **Small grants**

Our Small Grants program funds training, staff exchanges and projects that support AMICAL's mission, in particular in the following priority areas: library and technology leadership, information and digital literacies, and digital liberal arts.

Last year, **we awarded €27,346 in Small Grants to colleagues at 8 member institutions supporting professional development and consultation**, including participation to the following events:

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| • ACRL Immersion Program                     | • GLCA Library of Congress Research Initiative                 |
| • ARL Digital Scholarship Institute          | • Harvard Leadership Institute for Academic Librarians Program |
| • Digital Humanities at Oxford Summer School | • Library Juice Academy Online                                 |
| • Digital Pedagogy Lab                       |  |

*We have already awarded an additional €33,794 since August 2019, but we will report about this in more detail in the next edition of our Program Highlights.*

## Consortial discounts on library resources

AMICAL's Library Resources Buyers Group, led by the E-Resources Committee, leverages our collective bargaining power to provide discounts on databases and other library resources with vendors such as JSTOR, Oxford, Project Muse, and others.



- 22 member institutions benefited from an average of €10,000/institution in total discounts through AMICAL, with a maximum of €18,500/institution.
- Members participated in a Knowledge Unlatched initiative to enable open access for 355 academic books, mostly in the humanities and social sciences.
- We continue to work with OCLC to bring latest-generation library management technologies to members at discounted prices.

## Cohort program for Digital Liberal Arts

We continued with a second iteration of our Digital Liberal Arts cohort program, which supports teams of faculty, librarians and technologists working on course-integrated digital projects. This program develops member capacity for innovative digital approaches to humanities and interdisciplinary teaching and research and is helping to grow a community of practitioners across the consortium.

As part of this program, we supported participation in the Digital Humanities Institute Beirut for 36 colleagues, with 24 receiving full travel funding. The event took place 3–5 May 2019 at the American University of Beirut and 9 AMICAL institutions were represented. Of the ten parallel 2-day workshops on offer, two were organized specifically for the AMICAL cohort teams and their projects: “Collaborative digital liberal arts pedagogy: Integrating projects and methodologies into your course” and “Omeka as a pedagogical tool in the classroom.”

*Several of the cohort teams' projects were later presented at the AMICAL 2020 Conference.*

## The AMICAL Conference

The AMICAL Conference is our largest annual professional development and networking event. Each year, librarians, faculty and technologists from member institutions come together to participate in workshops, discussions and showcases for local projects/initiatives.

AMICAL 2019 was held 29 March to 1 April 2019 at the American University in Cairo,

marking the consortium's 16th annual conference and AUC's centennial. A cross-consortium program committee organized four days of workshops, discussions and presentations around the theme of “Openness in teaching and research: Broadening our horizons for the digital future.” The program focused on academic openness in all its expressions – from open access publishing, to open educational resources and practices, to openness as a liberal arts value – as well as on many other topics relevant to AMICAL's members.



Invited speakers to AMICAL 2019:

- **Keynotes by Robin DeRosa** (Director of Interdisciplinary Studies, Plymouth State University) **and Anita Walz** (Open Education, Copyright & Scholarly Communication Librarian, Virginia Tech).
- **Workshops on Open Education Resources by Cheryl Hodgkinson-Williams** (Associate Professor, Centre for Innovation in Learning and Teaching, University of Cape Town).

Attendance figures for AMICAL 2019:

- **115 attendees from 24 member institutions** (in addition to 13 invited speakers, sponsors, etc.)
- **78% of member attendees received funding for accommodation or airfare to attend**, and all members' registration fees were covered by AMICAL
- The following roles were represented:
  - 45% Libraries/Archives
  - 33% Faculty or faculty developers
  - 8% IT manager/staff
  - 7% Administrators and other roles
  - 6% Instructional designer/technologist

AMICAL 2020, focused on digital transformation, was held 15–18 January 2020 at the American University of Kuwait and will be reported on in the next edition of our Program Highlights.



## Online events

AMICAL's Standing Committees and Interest Groups organized [17 online events](#) last year for librarians, technologists and faculty across the consortium.

### Webinars on topics of broad interest:

- Teaching multiple literacies through digital liberal arts instruction
- First year experience programs and libraries across AMICAL
- Digital mapping in humanities research and teaching
- Information literacy lesson plans
- Library assessment using standardized surveys
- Cataloging non-English language materials

### Open meetings by Committees or Interest Groups:

- Information Literacy, including a monthly journal club
- Open Source Library Systems
- Faculty Development Centers

To date, we have already organized an additional 18 online events since August 2019, many of which have been part of AMICAL's COVID-19 response, aimed at supporting member institutions' own responses to the pandemic.

## 🔗 Online networking and collaboration

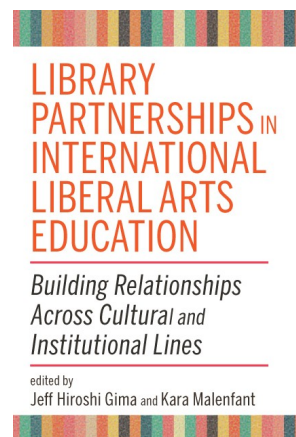
In addition to the events and programs outlined above, AMICAL serves as a collaboration network for over 450 librarians, faculty and technologists at our member institutions. AMICAL Connect, the consortium's forum, serves as the online hub for sharing information with peers and seeking help from them, coordinating action on consortial programs, and finding collaborators across institutions.

During the reported period **over 1800 posts were published** and **61 new colleagues joined** our forum.

## 📖 AMICAL-ACRL book on “Library Partnerships in International Liberal Arts Education”

Reflecting our consortium's growing visibility and recognition among professional organizations of international stature, **the Association of College and Research Libraries published a book in April 2020 developed in partnership between ACRL and AMICAL: *Library Partnerships in International Liberal Arts Education: Building Relationships Across Cultural and Institutional Lines***.

The book reports on innovative library partnerships that cut across lines of cultural and institutional boundaries, but also across professional boundaries, at AMICAL's international liberal arts institutions. Its **10 chapters are authored by 16 librarians, faculty members and instructional technologists from 6 of our member institutions**. Jeff Gima, Consortium Director, co-edited the book with Kara Malenfant (Interim Executive Director, ACRL). Find out more about the book and the project on our [book launch page](#).



## ▶▶ Looking forward: 2020-2021

We are heading into the last half of our current Mellon grant, with an exciting vision built around collaborative capacity building for the digital liberal arts, including development of information and digital literacies, and digital pedagogies and scholarship, through course-integrated projects across our member institutions.



We will be continuing that work, but we will be drawing on feedback from member institutions to adapt our programs in ways that help them face the challenges of COVID-19 and the post-pandemic period. Among other efforts, AMICAL has been ramping up the frequency and improving the facilitation methods of our online events.

We expect to be increasingly facilitating:

- **online staff and faculty development related to our consortial program areas** (e-resource licensing, library/technology leadership, information/digital literacies, and digital liberal arts)
- **training for member colleagues for the delivery of their own online training** to colleagues at their institutions, in areas of timely importance such as online instructional design and digital pedagogy.

As always, we will aim to ensure that consortial programs demonstrate both immediate and long term value to our member institutions.