

## **1981: CLR Establishes the Professional Education and Training for Research Librarianship Program**

In 1981, CLR committed \$742,000 to establish the Professional Education and Training for Research Librarianship (PETREL) Program. The program was prompted by a recognition that library science degree programs were not providing the kind of training that was needed for many research library positions. “Much library school coursework is generalized, and the curriculum has failed to respond to specialized or unique requirements. Consequently, new graduates require substantial on-the-job training and instruction in basic technical skills,” noted the 1981 annual report. A central objective of the program was to promote more productive communication between library educators and practitioners.

CLR awarded funds to three library schools—the University of Chicago, University of California at Los Angeles (UCLA), and University of Michigan—to carry out specific aspects of the PETREL program. Most of the funding was designated for the support of students, as it was thought to be the best way to attract well-qualified candidates. With PETREL funding, the University of Chicago Graduate Library School began offering a new Certificate of Advanced Study in Library Management, and six students began work in the 1982-83 academic year. The Graduate School of Library and Information Science at UCLA initiated a Senior Fellows program, in which 12 outstanding librarians participated in six weeks of intensive study of the contexts of research libraries and best practices in research library management. The University of Michigan School of Library Science augmented its basic professional curriculum with an intensive research library internship, awarded to five students a year. A preliminary assessment of the program at Michigan, written by Ronald Powell and Nancy Becker Johnson, was published in the *Journal of Education for Library and Information Science* in winter 1987.

The program was supported by CLR for three years. Two of the schools found ways to incorporate the special program into their regular curriculum. In addition, a series of planning and implementation grants was established in 1983/84 to help library schools and universities think through the future educational needs of research librarians.

[Read more](#) about the creation of this program in CLR’s annual report ending June 30, 1981, pp. 34–36.