

### Chapter 3: Characteristics of Collecting Institutions in the United States

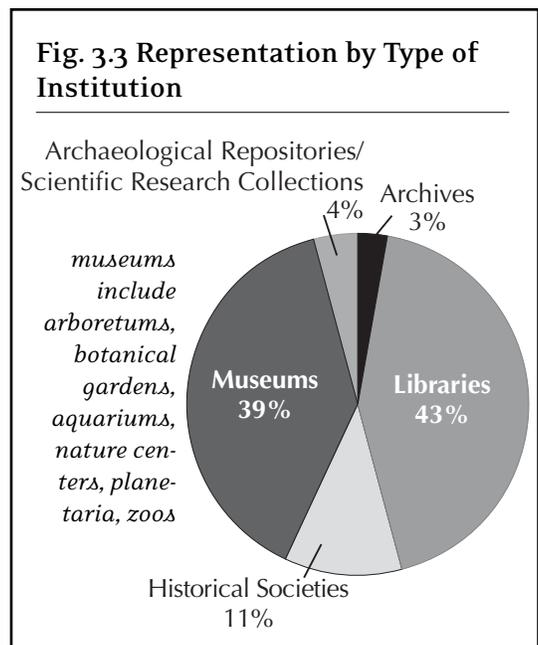
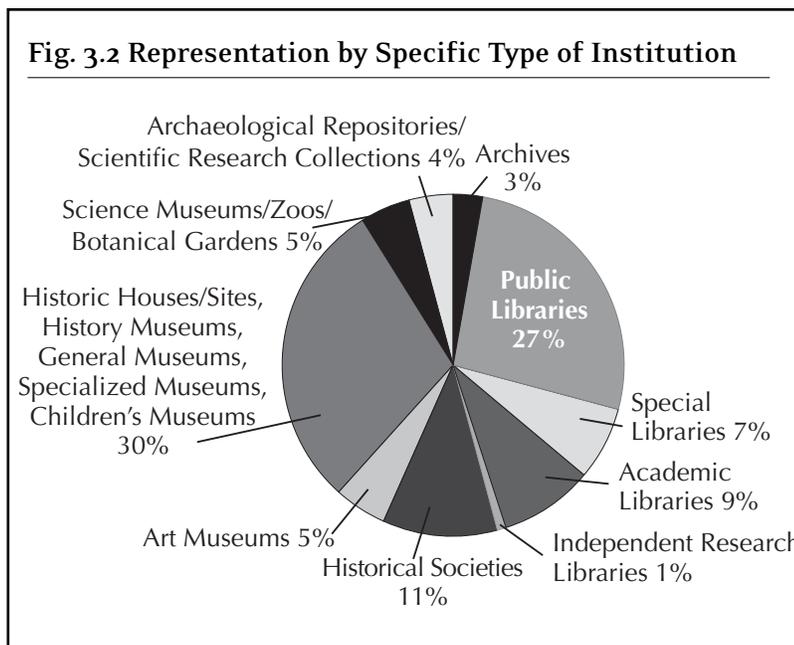
The Heritage Health Index had 3,370 respondents representing the full range of U.S. collecting institutions, large and small, from every state and U.S. territory. As explained in the methodology section, the responses were weighted to the estimated population of 30,827 archives, libraries, historical societies, museums, archaeological repositories, and scientific research organizations that hold collections in public trust (Methodology, p. 20). Throughout this report, data is presented for national totals and by five general types of institutions, ten specific types of institutions, size, region, and type of governance (Methodology, p. 16-20). Since the survey population includes such a wide range of institution types and sizes, it should be noted that national totals and averages are influenced by the characteristics described in this chapter.

Responding institutions were asked to select their primary function or service for the purpose of classifying them with their peers. Figure 3.1 shows the list of 21 options and the percentage of respondents in each category. Similar institution types that had comparable survey findings were combined to create a list of 10 types of institutions. Figure 3.2 shows the weighted responses by each of the 10 types. The categories by type were further condensed to five types; their weighted

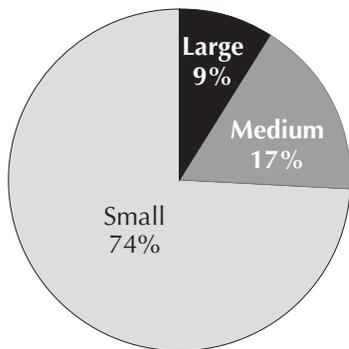
**Fig. 3.1 Heritage Health Index Respondents**

Archives	4%
Public Library	23%
Academic Library	9%
Independent Research Library	1%
Special Library	7%
Historical Society	11%
Historic House/Site	9%
History Museum	11%
Art Museum	6%
Children’s Museum	0.04%
Natural History Museum	2%
Science/Technology Museum	1%
General Museum	5%
Specialized Museum	5%
Archaeological Repository	1%
Scientific Research Collection	3%
Arboretum/Botanical Garden	1%
Aquarium	0.02%
Nature Center	1%
Planetarium	0%
Zoo	1%

distribution is shown in figure 3.3. Over 80% of the collecting institutions are museums or libraries, but within those categories the non-art



**Fig. 3.4 Representation by Size**

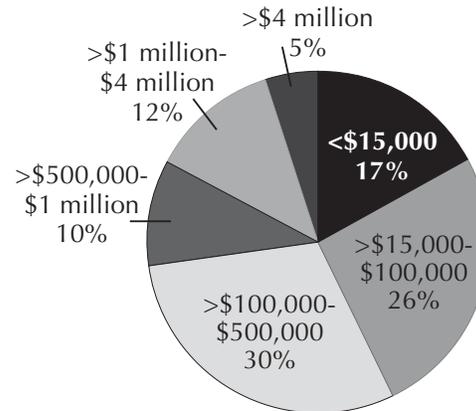


and non-science museums and public (not academic) libraries are the most prevalent.

The estimated study population consists of 74% small institutions, 17% medium-sized institutions, and 9% large institutions (figure 3.4). Therefore, any overall national findings are significantly influenced by the fact that the majority of collecting institutions are considered small. Since size is usually determined by annual institutional budgets, it is useful to note that nearly three-quarters of institutions have annual operating budgets of less than \$500,000 (figure 3.5).

Figure 3.6 indicates the average staff sizes by type of institution, showing that libraries are more likely to have larger, full-time paid staffs than historical societies or archaeological repositories/scientific research collections. This information is useful in keeping preservation staffing and activities in context. For example, historical societies may not have as many conservation/preservation staff or may not have addressed cer-

**Fig. 3.5 Representation by Annual Operating Budget**



tain preservation issues, but on average, historical societies have 2 full-time paid staff, 2 part-time paid staff, and 14 part-time unpaid staff or volunteers.

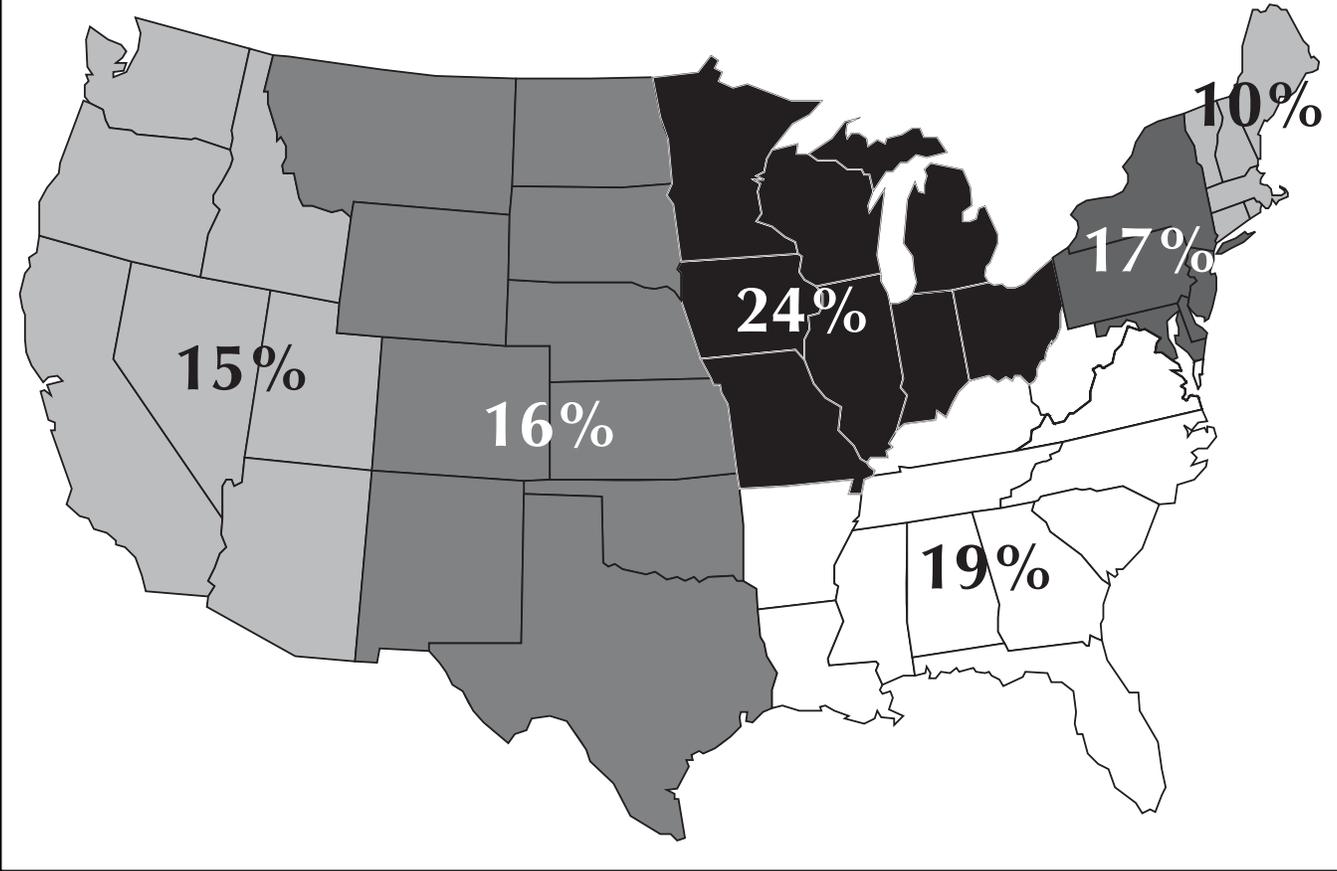
The distribution of institutions by region is shown in figure 3.7. The Midwest has the highest percentage of institutions in the U.S., which also includes the highest percentage of small institutions (25%), libraries (27%), and historical societies (32%). The Southeast contains the largest percentage of large (25%) and medium-sized (24%) institutions, along with having the most archives (24%), museums (22%), and archaeological repositories (26%).

The Heritage Health Index survey asked institutions to indicate any additional functions or services they provide. About one-third do not have any additional functions, but another third have at least one, and the remaining third have more than one (figure 3.8). Less than 1% have more than five additional functions. Archives is

**Fig. 3.6 Average Staff Size (by type)**

	Full-time paid staff	Part-time paid staff	Full-time unpaid staff	Part-time unpaid staff
Archives	8	3	0	4
Libraries	14	9	0	4
Historical Societies	2	2	0	14
Museums	10	7	0	34
Archaeological Repositories/ Scientific Research Collections	3	2	0	3

Fig. 3.7 Representation by Region



the most frequent secondary function (44%), followed by libraries (22%), historic house/sites (17%), and museums (15%) (figure 3.9). It is helpful to remember these additional functions when considering the data by type of institution. Historical societies, followed by museums, were the most likely to have more than three addition-

al functions (47% and 25% respectively). Responses to the question on governance of collecting institutions came from nonprofit institutions (42%), county/municipal governed institutions (28%), academic entities (17%), state institu-

Fig. 3.8 Institutions' Number of Additional Functions

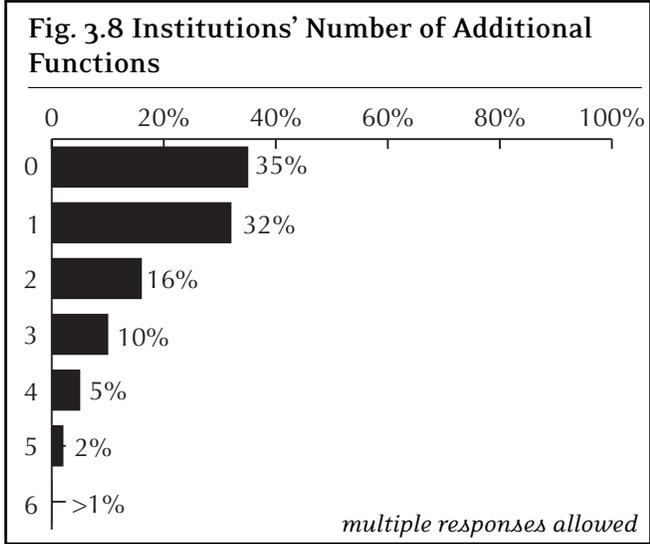
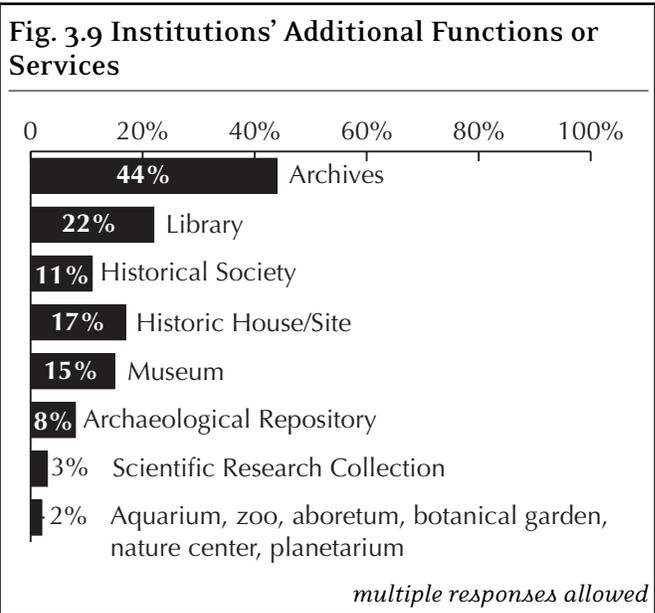
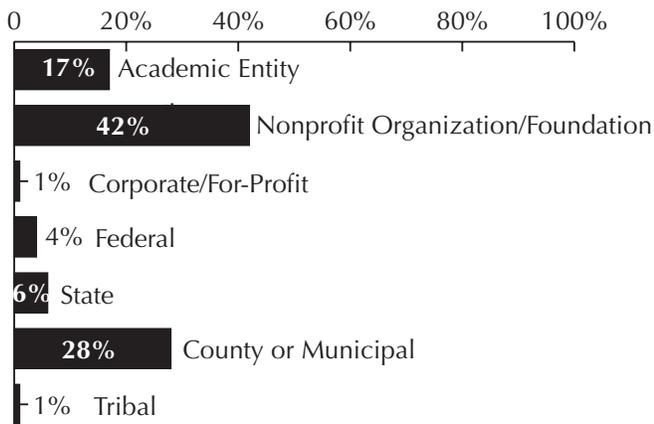


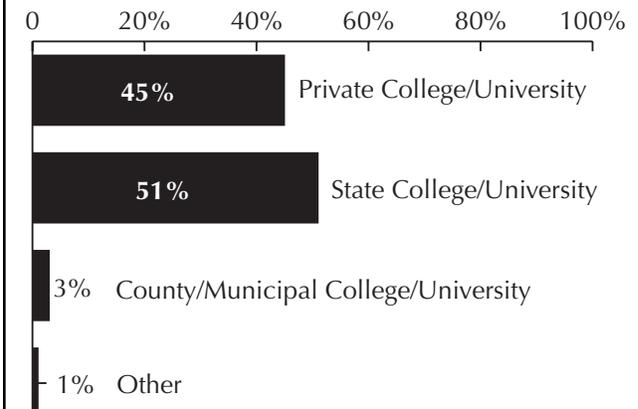
Fig. 3.9 Institutions' Additional Functions or Services



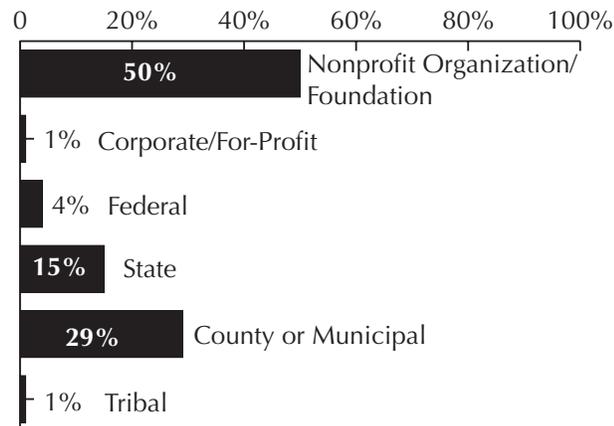
**Fig. 3.10 Representation by Governance**



**Fig. 3.11 Representation of Academic Institutions**



**Fig. 3.12 Representation Including Academic Entities in Governance**



tions (6%), and federal institutions (4%) (figure 3.10). Federal institutions account for 9% of large institutions but for only 3% of small or medium-sized institutions, indicating that large institu-

tions are more prevalent in this type of governance. Viewing academic institutions alone, about half represents private college/universities and the other half represents state college/universities; only 3% of the academic institutions are from county/municipal college/universities and 1% from tribal-governed institutions (figure 3.11). When academic institutions' specific governance is incorporated with non-academic governance, the percentage of nonprofit organizations increases to 50% and state-run institutions to 15%. Figure 3.12 presents the revised distribution of governance used throughout this report.

It is interesting to note that the New England and Mid-Atlantic regions have the highest percentage of non-profit/foundation institutions; the Southeast has the highest percentage of state institutions; the Midwest and Mountain-Plains dominate in locally run institutions; and the West has the largest percent of federal institu-