



## Profiles

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### Profile of Kristen Wilson, NASIG President

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Kristen Wilson is the president of NASIG for 2019-2020. She serves as the Project Manager/Business Analyst for Index Data, and she is based in Raleigh, North Carolina. Before arriving at Index Data, she had worked in library positions at the State Library of New York, Syracuse University, and North Carolina State University. I completed my interview with Kristen by e-mail on Monday, September 2, 2019.



Photo Courtesy of Kristen Wilson

I have to thank my former supervisor at NC State Libraries, Maria Collins, for getting me involved. Maria always spoke so positively about NASIG, telling me how fun, informal, and welcoming the community was — and that all turned out to be true! Maria also encouraged me to apply for the Horizon Award, which I won in 2009, leading me to attend my first NASIG conference in Asheville, NC. I really enjoyed that meeting and met a lot of great people. That experience has kept me coming back all these years.

#### ***When did you decide to become a librarian?***

I decided to become a librarian on a bit of a whim. I was a reporter for the student newspaper at Lehigh University, and one day I had to do some research in the university archives, located in the beautiful Linderman Library. I remember thinking, “I could see myself working in a place like this. I wonder what you have to do become a librarian?” I went home and Googled it and the rest is history.

#### ***What has been your greatest reward as a librarian?***

Even though as a technical services and systems librarian I’ve always been a bit behind the scenes, I’ve felt rewarded by the extent to which my work has helped make people’s lives better. As a serials and e-resources supervisor at NC State, I also tried my best to provide clarity, structure, and compassion to the people who reported to me. And now, in my role at Index Data, I try to design tools and systems that will make work easier and more fun for the people who use them. And of course, the end goal in all of this is making sure that

***Who or what drew you to NASIG initially?***

students and researchers can get access to the information they need. I might not see the end product everyday, but I feel happy knowing that my work in libraries is a net good for the world.

### ***How did you begin working with electronic resources?***

This story is another case of serendipity. In library school, I was very interested in metadata and taxonomies. When I interviewed for a job as a Libraries Fellow at NC State, I said that I wanted to work on metadata projects. The Fellows position involves a dual assignment, so in addition to being assigned a role in Metadata & Cataloging, I was given a special project to work on NC State's homegrown electronic resources management system, E-Matrix. I knew nothing about e-resources at the time, but the work appealed to my love for creating structure, analyzing processes, creating efficiencies, and making work easier for those who do it. I also had two great supervisors — Maria Collins and Erin Stalberg — who mentored me and cultivated my desire to remain in that area of librarianship.

### ***What drew you to academic libraries?***

As I mentioned earlier, I love college campuses and beautiful buildings, so the atmosphere alone was a big draw. I also greatly enjoyed my studies in college — English and journalism — and I had desire to do work that would help others be successful as students and researchers.

### ***How did you transition to your position at Index Data?***

At NC State, I spent a good portion of my time participating in software design projects, including E-Matrix, Quali OLE, The Global Open Knowledgebase (GOKb), and FOLIO. These experiences brought me into contact with a different side of the library world, helping to design the tools that people use for core processes like acquisitions, cataloging, and circulation. I really enjoyed that role, and I had an opportunity to get to know several of the people at Index Data through my work on FOLIO. I was really impressed by their sincere desire to be a partner to libraries, so when a chance

came up to work with them on library software design full time, I took it. The transition has actually been easier than it might seem, since I'm continuing to work with so many of the people I met through my various projects over the years.

### ***Have you had any memorable moments in this role?***

The most fun part of the job has been getting to expand my work into other areas of librarianship. I'm serving as the project coordinator for ReShare, a consortial resource sharing tool, so I'm learning a ton about interlibrary loan and meeting a lot of new people in that subset of the field. I've also gotten some great exposure to the international BIBFRAME community, and last fall I got to travel to the European BIBFRAME Workshop in Florence, which was of course wonderful. Most recently, Index Data has taken on its first FOLIO implementation customers. It's been really exciting to see this system, which has been in the works for years (especially if you count OLE as a precursor), actually becoming a real product.

### ***Who are you currently reading?***

I recently reread The Deptford Trilogy, which is made up of three of my favorite novels by Canadian author Robertson Davies. These books just have everything: great storytelling, unusual characters, vivid settings, and a wise sense of the degree to which feeling and myth must play a role in life, alongside more rational or intellectual approaches.

I've also been achieving completist status for J.K. Rowling's novels. While I like Harry Potter as much as the next person, I've been really impressed by her Cormoran Strike mysteries. And I'm currently finishing her standalone novel *The Casual Vacancy*, which is a homage to 19th Century authors like Trollope and Elliott. It does a great job of capturing small town life and the way that issues that may seem petty to an outsider can become magnified in an insular community.

***How has NASIG changed/evolved during the time that you've been involved?***

I've seen NASIG expand its emphasis from more traditional serials and cataloging work to broader issues such as scholarly communication and digital preservation. I think it's good for NASIG to be taking a bigger picture view, but I also hope that we can retain our focus as a practitioner's community, a place where people can come to swap war stories and learn from their peers. NASIG has also been trying to focus more on issues of equity and inclusion in libraries and in technical services specifically. This is an area where I believe we can make a real impact, especially if we can organize our energy and begin to put forward practical suggestions to the community. Our town hall at the Pittsburgh conference was a good early step in this direction.

***What are your priorities/goals as the president of NASIG for the coming year?***

A lot of my goals are very practical. I want to help us develop a budget and manage our priorities, so that we can better evaluate the other things we want to do. Broader goals that have come up so far include moving the proceedings to an open access publisher, figuring out whether we can benefit from paid help within the organization, expanding our activities in the area of equity and inclusion, and doing more outreach through marketing and fundraising. All of these activities will require investments of people and funds. I mentioned earlier that I love making sense of complex systems and finding efficiencies, so I'm trying my best to bring those skills to NASIG. I want to create an environment where our board members, committee members, and membership feel like they have a stable platform to pursue the work they're passionate about.