

REFERENCE

Version 3

I. REFERENCE SERVICES

A. Reference and Research

1. Definition

The Headquarters Library provides basic reference services for all library users. Reference services include information about the library and its resources, quick answers to factual questions, citation verification and directional assistance. Services are provided in person or by telephone.

The Headquarters Library also provides research services to NASA Headquarters employees. Research services include detailed and extensive searching for information, analysis of information sources, and instruction in the use of research tools. Research services may include database searching for specialized information and obtaining materials from other libraries through the interlibrary loan process.

2. Reference Interview

Interview the patron. Find out what information is needed.

Directional—Answers to "where" questions. These include, "Where is the card catalog? Where is the cafeteria? Where is the copier? Where do I pick up free posters? etc." Directional requests are tracked on tally sheets at the reference desk.

Ready Reference—Questions requiring minimal search time or use of Ready Reference collection or Library form letters or FAQs. Typically these type of questions can be answered in under 10 minutes, though some may require up to 15 minutes. Some examples include request for definitions, article inquiries, and inquiries about Library holdings.

Research—Questions requiring extensive time and/or resources. Typically these require more than 15 minutes of time or use of several resources. Complicated requests, comprehensive searches, and requests requiring the use of databases billed on a "by query" or "by time" basis should be handled by the professional staff.

3. Responding to Requests

Timeliness:

Phone calls: All requested calls are returned within two working hours.

Rush requests: All types of support are handled within two working hours. If not complete, refer to the Project Manager.

Reference questions: Cleared/completed within eight working hours.

4. Completed Requests

Upon completion of a **Ready Ref** or **Research** request

B. Online Searching

1. Definition

Database searches are used to prepare subject bibliographies, and to locate items including journal articles, conference papers, biographical details, news stories, statistics and business information.

The Library staff searches for information on work-related topics for NASA employees, employees on detail at NASA and contractors who have received Contract Monitor approval. (See Chart 1 for details about patron search privileges.) Patrons must complete a **Request for Online Search form** (Appendix C) for each search.

The Headquarters Library subscribes to databases that cover aerospace, theoretical and applied science, engineering, management, legislation, patents, and national and international news.

2. Databases

Databases available in the Headquarters Library include:

NASD—NASA's database covering literature in space sciences, aeronautics, astronautics, engineering, chemistry & materials, geosciences, life sciences and mathematics and computer science. Offsite members of the public may be directed to the NASA Technical Report Server, **NTRS** (<http://ntrs.nasa.gov>), an online subset of **NASD** which may have full-image documents available on the patron's request.

DIALOG—More than 450 files covering scientific, business and technical subjects.

FACTIVA—A full-text database that provides articles from major newspapers, trade journals and newswires.

OCLC FirstSearch—A suite of databases covering a variety of business, directory, dissertations, and general science topics. Available to all NASA HQ personnel.

NEXIS—A full-text database that provides articles from major newspapers, trade journals and newswires.

DTIC—A database covering Department of Defense technical research and reports.

INTERNET—Access to the Internet's varied resources.

4. Search Process

Evaluate the search topic to determine which database is most appropriate. (Some searches may require more than one database.)

Perform the search. (Instructions for accessing services are found in the Staff Databases file)

Dialog—Factors to consider include patron's time needs, and relative costs for each Dialog file. Check documentation first.

NASD—Includes a wide variety of full image documents. Some resources that are unavailable in full-image may be available in the Library's microfiche collection.

Other databases—check documentation for print options.

5. Completed Search

Complete an entry in the **Reference Database**

Notify patron that search is complete, and place search in the patron pickup area.

Review search results with patron.

6. Patron Access to Selected Databases

NASA Headquarters employees and onsite NASA contractors may obtain accounts that permit them to search NASD from their offices by completing the **NASA Onsite Registration Request Form for Access to NASD** (Appendix I).

C. Referrals

1. Definition

When a question cannot be answered using resources available in the Headquarters Library, the reference staff refers library users to other sources of information. These include other NASA centers as well as professional, academic, industry and standard-setting groups.

2. Sources Used in Referral Process

Referrals are made from the library's Rolodex contact list, NASA Center phone directories, and the many subject directories available in the Ready Reference collection.

Simple referrals are treated as directional questions, and counted on the reference desk tally sheet.

Complex referrals, requiring staff research prior to responding to the patron, are considered reference questions and recorded on the **Reference Database** (Appendix D).

3. Services Provided by Type of Patron

Questions from NASA staff and NASA contractors:

Call the referral point to ensure that it can be answered, and provide the necessary information to the researcher.

Respond as soon as possible. If the information is not immediately available, call the patron and provide an approximate time frame.

Questions from the public:

Provide a contact within NASA, and/or suggest other libraries and sources of information.

Respond on a time available basis. (Priority is given to NASA staff & contractors).

File completed form in Reference Request box.

4. Translations

Items that need translation are forwarded to Translations Office at NASA Headquarters.

D. Document Identification/Ordering

1. Document Identification Process

Document identification service for NASA publications is available to all library users. The Headquarters Library responds to in-person, telephone and letter requests. NASD and SIRSI are used to locate NASA publications. Document identification/citation checks are treated as directional requests.

The process followed is: check the citation in NASD provide the patron with the information needed about the document; record as directional statistic.

2. Document Requests from the Public

The Headquarters Library refers members of the public to appropriate sources for NASA documents. The Library does not fulfill publication orders.

Determine the appropriate source. May include:

NTIS, CASI, GPO, AIAA, other NASA offices or centers.

Provide referral contact.

3. Document Ordering—NASA employees and contractors

The Headquarters Library orders NASA documents for HQ employees and contractors. (See Chart 1 for eligibility details).

Library users must complete an interlibrary loan form and turn it in to the interlibrary loan technician. Patrons may order no more than ten documents per week and may not exceed 500 pages of orders per week.

Order AIAA (A) documents found in NASD (and not available in hard copy or microfiche in HQ library) by interlibrary loan from AIAA or by purchasing through AIAA or Linda Hall Library.

4. Ordering NASA Restricted Documents

Library users must complete an interlibrary loan form.

NASA restricted (X) documents for NASA employees from CASI are ordered from CASI as follows:

Items that are secret or confidential can be ordered for NASA employees with the necessary security clearance. Check with the head of reference before ordering.

Contractors can request NASA restricted (X) documents through the Freedom of Information Office.

5. Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) Requests

FOIA document requests must be answered by the deadline specified. The Headquarters library checks the availability of the requested item, completes the cover form, and hand-carries the needed information back to the FOIA office.

If the items requested are not restricted, the library supplies ordering information. For restricted (X) items, the library orders the item for FOIA review at their request.

E. General Letter/Phone Requests

1. Referrals

Letters and phone requests of the following types are referred outside the library:

Students requesting information about Scouting certificates should be directed to **Public Communications and Inquiries Management Office**

Congressional requests are referred to **Legislative Affairs**

Requests from news media are referred to the proper desk in **Public Affairs**

Requests for NASA restricted (X) documents are referred to the Freedom of Information Office.

2. International Requests

Most international requests are processed like “public” requests

International requests from restricted nations or that raise questions about release of sensitive or restricted trade information—refer to **International Affairs**

II. LIBRARY PROMOTION

A. Library Fact Sheets

The library fact sheets inform users of the Headquarters Library collection and special user services. Fact sheets are distributed to new users as they register for borrowing privileges. Fact sheets are displayed on the bookcase facing the reference desk.

B. Library Brochure

The library brochure is located in the entrance way of the Library. It provides a map of the Library, contact information, and a brief summary of the services outlined in the Library Fact Sheets.

III. REPORTS AND STATISTICS

Monthly Statistics

The Library staff provides the designated person with monthly statistics for acquisitions, cataloging, circulation, collection maintenance, order and receiving, interlibrary loan, and reference. These statistics are included in the monthly report to the Library Manager.

The staff collects data on circulation, collection maintenance, document orders, interlibrary loan, online searching, reference, and size of collection.

1. Circulation

Data on circulation are taken from the monthly SIRSI printout and noted on the **Circulation statistics form** (Appendix M).

2. Ordering/Receiving

Data on books, journals, newspapers, documents, and serials ordered or received are tallied as acquired then cross-checked with the acquisition files and noted on the **Order/Receiving statistics form** (Appendix M).

3. Interlibrary Loan

Interlibrary Loan statistics include the borrowing and lending of items at the Library. The Interlibrary Loan staff keeps statistics on books, articles and other materials; regular and rush requests are counted, items loaned within NASA or outside of NASA are tracked and are entered on the **Interlibrary Loan statistics form** (Appendix Q).

4. Cataloging

The cataloger complete statistics on all activities and enters the statistics on the **Cataloging Statistics form**.

5. Copier

Records of copier usage by HQ offices, Library staff, and the public are downloaded from the copier and entered on the **Copier Statistics form**.

6. Patron

Daily gate counts are tallied and entered into the **Patron Statistics form**.

7. Reference Requests

Directional requests are tallied from the **Directional Statistics form** (Appendix S) located at the reference desk.

Ready Reference and Research requests are extracted from the **Headquarters Library Reference Database** (Appendix D). All data are entered on the final **Directional Statistics form** (Appendix T) and the **Reference Requests Statistics form** (Appendix U).

Data collected on the statistics forms are entered on a EXCEL spreadsheet. Each work form provides the monthly total, fiscal year, and contractor year total for acquisitions ordered, acquisitions received, circulation, collection maintenance, interlibrary loan, online searches, reference requests and size of collection.

IV. DONATIONS

The Library accepts donations from NASA employees, NASA contractors, and the public.

Individuals donating materials are sent a thank you note:
NASA employees receive **Format 1** (Appendix V).
NASA Contractors/Public receive **Format 2** (Appendix W).

Staff reviews items and determines what is included into the collection.

Items retained for the collection are sent to cataloging.
Complete a **Cataloging Slip** for each item (Appendix X).

Items not retained for the collection are processed according to the procedure outlined in the Acquisitions policy