The RISS meeting this year was designed as a forum for institutions to discuss current projects.

The creation of an art reference FAQ knowledge base was discussed, a project that former RISS moderators Ross Day and Jacqueline Rogers investigated over the last year. A model being considered is the University of Pennsylvania Library Business FAQ (http://datafarm.library.upenn.edu/pennlibraryfaq/faqmain.htm). Karen Bucky (Clark Art Institute) put out a call on the ARLIS/NA listserv for suggestions with little response. The question as to whether this is a project that RISS wants to continue to pursue was asked. Laura Graveline (Dartmouth College) worked on the website reference project for RISS and
Linda Seckelson (Metropolitan Museum of Art) discussed the reference forum held at the Thomas J. Watson Library at the Metropolitan Museum of Art on May 8, 2007. Sarah G. Wenzel, Head of Reference Programs at the Columbia University Libraries (2005-2007), spoke at the forum about the current reference models used at several of the libraries at Columbia University. The forum was open to all librarians, not just art librarians, and the future of reference services was discussed in terms of new models for reference services both in workflow and through technologies (live chat, email). Seckelson is planning another reference forum in the New York City area.

Liv Valmestad (University of Manitoba) suggested setting up a RISS blog. Anne Haas (Bowdoin College) mentioned RISS’ previous discussion of starting a listserv. The general comments seem to support a blog over a listserv. It was commented that a listserv can be intrusive, while a blog is something that someone can seek out when needed. Lisa Velarde (Academy of Art, San Francisco) suggested created a RISS Del.icio.us account.

A discussion of the current format of the RISS meeting resulted in a suggestion of structuring the meeting around small presentations related to reference issues. A possibility of structuring the meeting as a round robin Ask ARLIS session was discussed. A round robin Ask ARLIS meeting would center on short ten minutes talks with a question and answer session.

Linda Seckelson (Metropolitan Museum) raised the issue of proposing a reference-centered panel discussion focused on current staffing issues/trends for the ARLIS/NA conference in Indianapolis. She stated that she felt that reference issues have been overlooked the past few years at the ARLIS/NA conferences.

The collection and use of statistics was another topic of discussion. RISS members wanted to know what other members were collecting in regard to reference statistics and if they keep a reference question log. Some libraries are using Wikis to track questions at the reference desk. Other institutions are using a sampling of statistics to determine usage. Desk Tracker (http://www.desktracker.com) software is being used at a few institutions to track reference statistics. Anne Haas (Bowdoin College) stated that she sends an email to all classes to set up appointments to learn how to use the art library to cut down on keeping statistics. Susan Augustine (Art Institute of Chicago) said that the Art Institute of Chicago does not keep desk statistics, but has started keeping statistics on email questions and electronic resources usage. She is also doing outreach to curatorial departments to promote library resources. Webpage hits were mentioned as a legitimate way of collecting statistics for justifying reference departments.
Reference desk traffic was discussed. A consensus of RISS attendees is that reference desks are still very busy. Outreach was stressed as a way to get to the users even if they are not coming to the library to ask questions at the reference desk. Rebecca Friedman (Princeton University) mentioned the Columbia University sixth annual reference symposium *Beyond the Desk* ([https://www1.columbia.edu/sec/cu/libraries/bts/symposia/reference/2008/index.html](https://www1.columbia.edu/sec/cu/libraries/bts/symposia/reference/2008/index.html)) held March 14, 2008. The symposium examined changes in reference services due to new technologies and other factors.

Barbara Polowy (Smith College) mentioned that Smith College uses Web Trends ([http://www.webtrends.com](http://www.webtrends.com)) software to keep track of website usage. Smith College has used Web Trends to examine vocabulary chosen for the titles of webpages.

The meeting concluded with a discussion about proposals for the conference in 2009 in Indianapolis related to reference staffing and the use of Web 2.0 tools in reference services. Also, there was brief mention of the series “They Didn’t Cover This in Library School,” and all agreed this was an important series of programs to continue. This year, a workshop on Maps and Atlases was held in Denver.