Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL)

Charting Our Future: ACRL Strategic Plan 2020

Approved by the ACRL Board of Directors
June 26, 2004

Revised by the ACRL Executive Committee
October 29, 2005
October 27, 2006
October 20, 2007
May 13, 2009

Revised by the ACRL Board of Directors
January 5, 2009

Core ideology *describes an association's consistent identity that transcends all changes related to its relevant environment. It consists of two elements -* *core purpose* *– the association's reason for being – and* *core values* *– essential and enduring principles that guide an association in creating its culture and making decisions.* *Envisioned future* *conveys a concrete yet unrealized vision for the association. It consists of a* *big audacious goal* *– a clear and compelling catalyst that serves as a focal point for effort – and a* *vivid description* *– vibrant and engaging descriptions of what it will be like to achieve the big audacious goal.*

Core Ideology

Core Purpose:

To lead academic and research librarians and libraries in advancing learning and scholarship.

Core Values:

- ACRL has visionary leadership and is open to change, new ideas, and global perspectives.
- ACRL is committed to service to members.
- ACRL is committed to integrity and transparency.
- ACRL is committed to diversity of people and ideas.
- ACRL is committed to continuous learning.
- ACRL is dedicated to the values of higher education, to intellectual freedom, to the ALA Ethics policy, and to upholding "The Library Bill of Rights."

Envisioned Future

Big Audacious Goal

ACRL is responsible and universally recognized for positioning academic and research librarians and libraries as indispensable in advancing learning and scholarship.

Vivid Description of the desired future:

ACRL Members
- ACRL members are recognized as flexible, dynamic, and progressive leaders in their institutions and in scholarly communities.
- Academic and research librarians regard membership in ACRL as essential to professional development and success.
- ACRL members are recognized as essential partners in learning and scholarship with faculty and other colleagues.
- Academic and research library personnel use ACRL as "first source" for professional development and networking.
- Academic and research librarians reflect the diversity of their communities.

The Association
- ACRL is a leader in transforming the scholarly communication system.
- ACRL is recognized as a leader in building collaborative relationships.
- ACRL is recognized as a key player in higher education.
- Other higher education organizations recognize the value of partnering with ACRL to achieve common goals.
- ACRL's programming engages all personnel in academic and research libraries.
- ACRL is recognized as the leader in setting standards for academic and research libraries.
- ACRL is recognized as the organization that champions issues in support of academic librarianship.
- Its members perceive ACRL as a flexible, dynamic, and progressive organization.
- ACRL is recognized as the authority on trends and issues affecting academic and research libraries.
- ACRL is a global leader in creating, expanding, and transferring academic librarianship's body of knowledge.
- ALA is a strong advocate of ACRL's priorities, programs, and services.

Academic and Research Library Users
- Students, faculty, independent scholars, and administrators are information literate.
- Students, faculty, independent scholars, and administrators turn to academic and research libraries and librarians as their primary source for information and research needs.
- Students, faculty, independent scholars, and administrators highly value libraries, the expertise of library personnel, and life-long learning.
- 100% of faculty, students, and academic administrators use the library.

Higher Education
- Administrators, faculty and other members of the academic community recognize ACRL and its members as authorities on knowledge management, creation, collection, preservation, access, and the exchange of information.
- Administrators, faculty and other members of the academic community seek the expertise of librarians on a wide range of issues.
- Administrators, faculty and other members of the academic community recognize that librarians are essential members of the institution's decision-making team.
- Budgets of academic and research libraries are increased to advance changing learning, teaching, and research needs of their users.

The following thinking represents strategic areas of focus for the next three to five years. They are areas in which ACRL will explicitly state the conditions or attributes it wants to achieve through specific goals. The goals articulate the outcomes ACRL would like to achieve and answer the question, "What will constitute future success?" The achievement of each goal within the strategic areas will move the organization toward realization of its vision articulated in its big audacious goal. These goal areas are not intended to be in priority order. Strategic Objectives provide direction on how the association will accomplish its articulated goals. Strategic direction is set through data-driven decision making and qualitative analysis. Strategic Objectives are considered in the 3-5 year planning horizon.

In addition to Strategic Objectives, strategies and action plans are created to describe how the organization will create the actions and implementation plans to move the organization closer to accomplishing its goals. Strategies and action plans are considered in a 1-3 year planning horizon.

Strategic Areas, Goals, and Strategic Objectives

Strategic Area: Higher Education and Research

Goal Area: Learning
ACRL and its members are recognized internationally as collaborative leaders and partners in ensuring that students leave with lifelong learning skills, improving techniques for assessing learning outcomes, and in creating environments for discovery.

Strategic Objectives:
1. ACRL expands regional, national and international adoption, use and development of information literacy standards.
2. Strengthen ACRL's relationships with higher education organizations that are important to faculty and administrators in order to develop institutional understand of librarians' roles in enhancing teaching and learning.
3. ACRL increases member abilities to create and manage physical, virtual, and digital spaces and the seamless delivery of services.

Goal Area: Scholarship, Research, and Creative Activity
ACRL and its members are recognized internationally as authorities on the integration of content, tools, and services into the evolving workflows of scholars and creators at all stages from initial discovery, to individuals organizing their own resources, to the creation, sharing, publication, aggregation, and preservation processes, including associated intellectual property issues.

Strategic Objectives:
1. Strengthen ACRL's role in serving as a catalyst for and supporting transformative change in scholarly communication systems.

2. Enhance ACRL members' ability to provide education, advocacy, and coalition building to support transformative change in scholarly communication systems.
3. Enhance ACRL members' understanding of how scholars work and the systems, tools, and technology to support the evolving work of the creation, personal organization, aggregation, discovery, preservation, access and exchange of information in all formats.
4. Strengthen ACRL's relationships with learned societies to expand membership knowledge of disciplinary practices in scholarship.

Goal Area: Advocacy
ACRL has greater influence on the higher education and research environment.

Strategic Objectives:
1. Increase ACRL's influence on campus information, academic, and communication technology priorities.
2. Increase ACRL's communication on major trends and issues in libraries and higher education.
3. Strengthen partnerships with other organizations.
4. Increase ACRL's influence in public policy affecting higher education.
5. Increase ACRL's influence on national and regional accrediting entities.
6. Increase ACRL members' ability to respond to and maintain critical levels of excellence in accreditation requirements and professional standards.
7. Expand ACRL research on the value of the library, the value of the librarian, and the value of information

Strategic Area: The Profession

Goal Area: Continuous Learning
ACRL provides continuous learning opportunities enabling members to strengthen their effectiveness and achieve recognition as valued contributors to their academic and research communities.

Strategic Objectives:
1. Expand ACRL's alignment of programs and other learning opportunities based on data, member needs, and strategic priorities.
2. Increase the accessibility of learning opportunities to meet the diverse needs of members by relying on research and best practices for design, delivery, and accessibility.
3. Increase ACRL's agility in providing cutting-edge content for learning programs and publications.
4. Expand ACRL's continuous learning opportunities on advocating the value of the library, the value of the librarian, and the value of information.
5. Continue to play a leadership role in promoting research and publication in academic and research librarianship thereby creating and disseminating tools and a body of knowledge for the field.

Goal Area: Leadership
ACRL members achieve recognition as leaders and advocates for academic and research libraries. ACRL recruits and develops the next generation of academic and research library leaders.

Strategic Objectives:
1. Develop leadership opportunities for ACRL members and increase professional development offerings on leadership.
2. Design and deliver tools to ACRL members to empower them to communicate the value of their contributions to learning and scholarship.
3. Increase recognition of the value of libraries and librarians by leaders in higher education, information technology, funding agencies, and campus decision making.
4. Increase ACRL's efforts to support recruitment of new and diverse talent to academic and research librarianship.

Goal Area: Information Technology
Academic and research librarians are leaders in using information, academic and instructional technologies to create and manage information resources and to deliver library and information services.

Strategic Objectives:
1. Support the development and recognition of academic and research librarians as experts and campus leaders in information technology applications in libraries by offering educational opportunities.
2. Build ACRL's capacity to partner with other technology-oriented higher education organizations to identify standards and best practices for managing digital libraries and digital library services.
3. Support members in their exploration, research on, and implementation of new and emerging information technologies and their application for library services in educational environments.

Strategic Area: The Association

Goal Area: Membership
ACRL's membership growth builds on retaining core membership while recruiting from new and diverse communities.

Strategic Objectives:
1. Expand the appeal of ACRL membership among current members with a special focus on those new to the profession and early in their careers.
2. Increase the number of academic and research librarian members.
3. Increase ACRL's membership from underrepresented ethnic and racial groups.
4. Increase the appeal of ACRL membership to broader communities.
5. Increase efforts to support recruitment of new and diverse talent to ACRL.

6. Support and encourage research and programming on the changing workforce in academic libraries and the implications for library education and training, leadership and middle management development, and staff recruitment and retention.

Goal Area: Organizational Vitality and Effectiveness
ACRL will have the fiscal resources, staff expertise, and organizational structure to advance the association's strategic plan by deploying data-driven decision making to drive entrepreneurial activities.

Strategic Objectives:
1. Increase and diversify fiscal and human assets.
2. Increase the mutual benefits of the ACRL/ALA relationship.
3. Increase and improve ACRL's organizational use of information technology.

Goal Area: Sustainability
ACRL integrates sustainability into all aspects of the life of the association.

Strategic Objectives:
1. Expand commitment to adopting green and sustainable business practices for ACRL offices, conferences, continuing education and operations with business partners.
2. Create a discourse about the significance of sustainability and ways to promote it within ACRL.
3. Foster relationships and collaboration by identifying meaningful opportunities for cross-fertilization of ideas, research and problem-solving around sustainability, both within ACRL and external to the association.
4. Plan and implement continuing education opportunities regarding sustainability for our members.
5. Engage with policy-makers, academics, non-academic non-governmental organizations, and the public in an effort to foster sustainability literacy.