# Principles for the Networked World

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**Intellectual Freedom:** The right to express ideas and receive information in the networked world.

**Privacy:** The freedom to choose the degree to which personal information is monitored, collected, disclosed, and distributed.

**Intellectual Property Rights:** A fair and equitable balance of the rights and privileges of users, creators, and owners of intellectual property to stimulate creativity and innovation and to promote the progress of science and the useful arts.

**Infrastructure:** Physical and social architectures that enable and affect the operation of the networked world.

## Introduction

Libraries are stewards of the world's knowledge base: they provide a wide range of services that connect people with the wealth of electronic information available. Libraries are crucial to assuring that society benefits fully from the promises of the networked world. But libraries find themselves challenged by an information policy debate that seems to threaten their ability to perform these critically important public roles effectively and efficiently.

The principles stated in this brochure establish a baseline for the ongoing public policy debate by stating the fundamental public policy requirements needed to support and enhance the ability of libraries to serve the public's information needs. These principles are the consensus product of a broad, representative process within the library community. They are intended to further discussion within the library community and with the public about the critical information policy issues libraries face.

## What is the Networked World?

The networked world moves beyond the Internet we know today. It links people to people, people to business, people to information, people to culture. This interconnected world encompasses an ever-expanding communications network of traditional telecommunications and computing systems. But it also employs new frameworks that move data, audio and video via increased bandwidth, wireless technologies, and systems not yet imagined.

We must constantly reevaluate how we communicate in a networked world. Now, more than ever, libraries –institutions with a historical and social imperative to ensure information access and flow –must assume a key position in facilitating the evolution of the networked world. Crucial themes – privacy, intellectual freedom and equitable access – take center stage in our efforts to maintain the free flow of information in a democratic society.

## Libraries in the Networked World

In this document, libraries present their traditional and evolving role–a role that is essential to the advancement of the public interest in the networked world. Policy and decision makers will welcome this document as a blueprint for building a networked world that is democratic, inclusive and accessible to all. The following policy issues warrant full attention if the networked world is to fulfill its promise.

Equitable Access: User-centered, barrier-free, and format-independent access to information.

Content: Information accessed by users of the networked world, including public information from government sources.

Information Literacy: Ability to identify, locate, evaluate, create and use information effectively, critically and ethically to fulfill immediate and lifelong needs for knowledge and information.

## Intellectual Freedom: The right to express ideas and receive information in the networked world.

### Principles:

1. Intellectual Freedom is the right of all to seek, receive, and impart information and ideas in the networked world regardless of age, origin, background, or views.

2. The networked world must provide room for all people's voices.

3. The networked world must ensure effective access to information for all people from all sources, including public, government, commercial, and not-for-profit sectors.

4. Within the United States, all levels of government have the responsibility to protect First Amendment rights including freedom of speech and assembly in the networked world.

5. The public interest must guide the development and deployment of networking technology.

## Privacy: The freedom to choose the degree to which personal information is monitored, collected, disclosed, and distributed.

### Principles:

1. Privacy is a right of all people and must be protected in the networked world.

2. The rights of anonymity and privacy while people retrieve and communicate information must be protected as an essential element of intellectual freedom.

3. The long-established principles of Fair Information Practices that underlie U.S. and many other national privacy laws must be at the core of privacy policies in the networked world.

4. Users have the right to be fully informed about privacy policies and principles in the networked world.

5. Library patron confidentiality must be protected by law and policy.

## Equitable Access: User-centered, barrier-free, and format-independent access to information.

### Principles:

1. Access to information resources in the networked world should be barrier free, format independent, and ubiquitous to ensure an open flow of ideas.

2. To achieve maximum accessibility by the public in the networked world, cost of information access must be fair and equitable.

3. Library access should be crafted in collaboration with communities to reflect local needs and conditions.

4. People must have predictable, sustainable, location-independent access to information resources without sacrificing privacy.

5. Libraries in the networked world should provide alternative approaches, methods, and access points that meet the unique needs and circumstances of all people.

## Intellectual Property Rights: A fair and equitable balance of the rights and privileges of users, creators, and owners of intellectual property to stimulate creativity and innovation and to promote the progress of science and the useful arts.

### Principles:

1. Intellectual property law must ensure a fair and equitable balance among the needs of the public, creators, and copyright owners.

2. Fair use, first sale and related library and educational exceptions must be fully realized in the networked world.

3. Intellectual property law must encourage and protect a robust public domain that includes facts, government information and similar resources and is enriched by a fair time limit on copyrighted terms.

4. Intellectual property policy must enhance the ability of public, education, research, and library communities to promote the advancement and sharing of knowledge, innovation, and creativity.

5. Intellectual property law must provide fair and rea-

sonable incentives to authors and creators.

6. Librarians and educators share the responsibility for educating their constituents about their rights to and responsibilities for intellectual property. Constituents need to know how to exercise their rights to access, use, and transform copyrighted materials.

## Infrastructure: Physical and social architectures that enable and affect the operation of the networked world.

### Principles:

1. Every library should have an adequate high-speed connection to the Internet.

2. Libraries and other civic institutions should play an active role in policymaking for, and management and regulation of, technological infrastructures.

3. Technological infrastructures must ensure, through interoperability and open standards, participation by all in the delivery and creation of content.

4. Technological infrastructures must evolve to continually support new and innovative information formats.

6. Libraries should promote partnerships and collaborations among diverse communities to guide full participation in the networked world.

7. Technological infrastructures must guarantee a secure and private environment.

8. Technological infrastructures must provide compatibility between leading edge and trailing edge technologies.

## Access to Content: Information accessed by users of the networked world, including public information from government sources.

### Principles:

1. Information in the networked world must be organized and preserved for historic, current, and future access by the public.

2. Government at all levels must provide authenticated, permanent public access to government information.

3. Privacy of personal information must be maintained when access to government documents and records is provided.

4. People must have access to a rich variety of content that reflects their diverse perspectives, histories, concerns, and visions of the future.

5. Publishers of digital information must establish alternative methods for ensuring permanent public access to information resources in the networked world.

6. In licensing access to digital content, libraries must negotiate terms that reflect user protections under copyright law.

7. To enhance and maximize access to our diverse heritage, libraries must coordinate digitization of historical and cultural documents and artifacts while respecting the cultural values of all groups.

## Information Literacy: Ability to identify, locate, evaluate, create and use information effectively, critically and ethically to fulfill immediate and lifelong needs for knowledge and information.

### Principles:

1. Even the most well designed information systems are limited and require individuals to learn how to use them effectively.

2. The availability of content relevant to the information needs of all users is a prerequisite for information literacy. Libraries should provide content that is linguistically, culturally, and geographically relevant to the information needs of all users.

3. Libraries should play an active role in promoting and developing information literacy.

4. Libraries should teach users how to formulate questions, and how to find, synthesize, think critically about, and use information efficiently and ethically.

5. Libraries should help users learn to assess the relative value of all sorts of information tools, items, formats and services, regardless of their source.

6. Libraries should promote partnerships and collaborations among all types of libraries and among diverse groups and learning institutions to develop and promote information literacy within all segments of society.

7. In acquiring digital materials and services, libraries should negotiate user-friendly and effective help for online users.

8. Instruction in information literacy should be provided in the language that is appropriate to the user.