



Strategic Plan 2013-2017

Mapping the Library for the Global Network University

NYU DIVISION OF LIBRARIES



Our Mission

New York University Libraries is a global organization that advances learning, research, and scholarly inquiry in an environment dedicated to the open exchange of information by:

- Building, preserving, interpreting, and providing access to rich and diverse collections;
- Teaching the effective use and critical evaluation of information resources;
- Developing creative and responsive services for diverse user communities.

While our primary responsibility lies with the students and faculty of New York University, the Libraries welcome and engage in scholarly, cultural, and artistic interactions with broader communities.

Introduction

The Division of Libraries Strategic Plan for 2013-2017 builds on the accomplishments and organizational strengths gained through our 2007-2012 Plan, leveraging these strengths to position us as a library for the Global Network University. Our plan grows from a year of hearing from—and listening carefully to—our constituencies and from our own observations. It is based on identifying internal and external trends and thoughtfully analyzing and synthesizing what we learned. The plan is user-centric, and also recognizes two elements essential to successfully achieving our mission: the people who build an organization that is strong, creative, healthy, and fiscally responsible; and infrastructures and processes that are flexible, responsive, and technologically sophisticated. Most importantly, the plan reflects our values and priorities, such as our commitment to open intellectual inquiry, knowledge sharing, teaching, collaboration, excellent client service, and the development of our faculty and staff. We continue to place a high value on being an organization that explores, adapts, and grows; and our plan aims for a new level of our development as a learning organization. The plan will guide us as we make choices—as individuals, as departments, and division-wide—about what we do and how we can deliver the most value to NYU and its scholarly enterprise over the next five years.



Strategic Goals

- 1 USER EXPERIENCE**
Create a user experience that is high quality, consistent, and robust regardless of the user's location, access method, or objective.
- 2 TEACHING ROLE**
Expand and strengthen our teaching role and educational impact as an academic partner.
- 3 DIGITAL INFRASTRUCTURE**
Build the sustainable digital infrastructure needed to support expanding modes of research, teaching, and scholarly communication.
- 4 COLLECTIONS**
Establish processes and support structures that ensure we can select, acquire, preserve, and provide access to the full spectrum of research materials.
- 5 ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE**
Develop and sustain a skilled and engaged workforce that can succeed and thrive in an ever-changing environment.
- 6 GLOBAL SERVICES INTEGRATION**
Build a global organization that works collaboratively and effectively to support integrated services across the NYU Global Network University.
- 7 OUTREACH & MARKETING**
Engage with our users through communication strategies that make Division of Libraries resources and services more visible, more used, and better attuned to user needs.
- 8 DATA-DRIVEN EXPLORATION & DECISION MAKING**
Become a data-aware organization that promotes open exploration of data and grounds our decisions in evidence.



Strategic Goal 1

USER EXPERIENCE Create a user experience that is high quality, consistent, and robust regardless of the user's location, access method, or objective.

Context/Rationale

Users seek tools, interfaces, resources, and services that efficiently and effectively meet their needs. They expect our resources to be intuitive, functional, and transparent, and our tools to be mobile-friendly and effective for novel modes of inquiry. Faculty and students expect service that is easy to access and available when and where needed, and that provides a gateway to networks of specialist expertise. As user expectations continue to expand, we must declutter and demystify the network of personalized services we offer. At the same time, we want to make our resources and as much of our associated data as possible available for purposes that users may define and design.

For many users, their experience centers on interaction with the physical spaces of the Libraries. Here the context is not just the space-constricted university, but also our users' understanding and embrace of the nature and value of library space. They consider access to physical space one of the Libraries' core services; access should therefore be transparent, matched to their needs, and barrier free. In the highly articulated, mapped, and socially driven world many users now inhabit, they expect a sophisticated interface between themselves and our space assets. A "space as service" mentality allows us to impact directly the daily lives of our users.



2017 Outcomes

- 1** Our tools have web interfaces that allow intuitively discoverable and integrated access to all intellectual content, collections, and external resources available to NYU communities regardless of format, source, or location.
- 2** Our service infrastructure is transparent, robust, efficient, and effective through all phases of the inquiry process. The infrastructure is low-friction, user-friendly, recognizes diverse needs across user communities, and resists dead ends and broken linkages.
- 3** We have a sufficient portfolio of Libraries' spaces that match user needs, provide coherent and predictable wayfinding across physical and virtual boundaries, and specifically address the requirements of technology enabled clientele.
- 4** We offer a selection of APIs and data harvesting tools that allow users to interact directly with and use our data and materials even as new and unanticipated methods of using our data evolve.



Strategic Goal 2

TEACHING ROLE Expand and strengthen our teaching role and educational impact as an academic partner.

Context/Rationale

Teaching pervades the Libraries' culture, from course-related instruction in our classrooms and special collections to embedded librarians in evidence-based programs to partner librarians in the College of Arts and Science's first year experience initiative. Every day, staff at service points throughout the Division of Libraries helps students learn the academic research practices they need, from finding a book on the shelf to learning statistical software to taking advantage of classroom technology. A changing information landscape and evolving modes of scholarship, coupled with NYU's global expansion, investment in new areas of research, and increased emphasis on undergraduate research, make it vitally important that we continue to develop our teaching services and programs to ensure that they are cohesive, responsive, scalable, and grounded in a strong foundation of pedagogy and best practice.

We marshal subject expertise, unique collections, classroom technologies, and specialized resources and services across the Division of Libraries. We ensure that our technical, access, and discovery services support the teaching and learning experience. Our teaching reaches across NYU communities locally and globally, is widely integrated into undergraduate and graduate curricula, and is strategic in its partnership with faculty throughout the Global Network University. It is embedded in the online learning environment, incorporates multiple literacies, and links the Libraries' teaching program to university learning objectives.



Outcomes

- 1** Our teaching is aligned with university learning outcomes and our assessment initiatives demonstrate our impact.
- 2** We integrate our teaching services and programs with those of faculty and other appropriate partners across the university.
- 3** Our teaching services and programs support NYU's global reach, evolving research areas, and specialized teaching and learning needs.
- 4** We provide our staff with a professional development program in teaching and learning methods that creates Division-wide engagement and effectiveness.



Strategic Goal 3

DIGITAL INFRASTRUCTURE Build the sustainable digital infrastructure needed to support expanding modes of research, teaching, and scholarly communication.

Context/Rationale

Digital infrastructure, in the form of networked hardware, software, and services, supports the increasingly digital nature of scholarship and teaching. The infrastructure is a changing and expanding assemblage of repositories for both library- and user-generated content, tools for exploring and managing content of all kinds, and services for sharing and exploiting knowledge and ideas. We recognize the value of scalable, extensible, and sustainable infrastructures that enable and support: 1) library services and collections; and 2) users' need to collect, store, use, and share their data, publications, and other research material.

Scholars are exploring new methods of research, resulting in new forms of born digital output, e.g., data sets, blogs, and wikis. Research libraries are increasingly called upon to collect, manage, and preserve these new digital assets. Users have come to expect ubiquitous access and delivery and are looking to exploit technology for research and for creating new forms of scholarship, instructional modes, and content. A robust and flexible digital infrastructure becomes critical to meeting user expectations and desires as well as the demands of collecting digital assets.



2017 Outcomes

- 1 Users are able to discover, access, share, and use the resources they need across the Global Network University.
- 2 Content creators, whether in the Libraries or among faculty/staff collaborators, have a navigable process to produce, use, share, disseminate, and preserve their materials.
- 3 Appropriate access controls and user privacy protections are in place.
- 4 Our systems are robust and highly available in time and space.
- 5 Our infrastructure supports the life cycle for digital content including collection, storage, management, access, sharing, and long term preservation.
- 6 Our digital infrastructure is easily adaptable to changing technologies and student/faculty research needs and can leverage disruptive innovations.
- 7 Infrastructure development is prioritized according to user needs and based on best practices, as determined by the best evidence collected at NYU and peer institutions.



Strategic Goal 4 **COLLECTIONS** Establish processes and support structures that ensure we can select, acquire, preserve, and provide access to the full spectrum of research materials.

Context/Rationale

The modes of producing and disseminating content are increasingly complex, and the needs of the NYU research community are increasingly sophisticated. NYU Libraries must be able to acquire all types of material and utilize the widest range of suppliers worldwide in mass, rare, second-hand, and self-published markets, including sources now designed primarily for the individual consumer. We must in particular be able to acquire and manage materials that are born digital—increasingly the primary format of our culture. To do so effectively, the Libraries must be able to identify, order, and pay for the full range of needed materials with routine procedures. We must also ensure that our users have the best possible intellectual and physical access to our holdings regardless of format. We must be able to house and preserve the full range of research material, both digital and physical. Finally, it is no longer possible for a research library to build its collections in a vacuum. Collaboration among institutions is essential, and the Libraries must build new partnerships and foster existing ones to ensure the broadest access to research materials in a time of rapidly expanding content and finite resources.



2017 Outcomes

- 1 Subject librarians and special collections staff are well supported to select and acquire routinely the wide range of materials available from faculty, specialized vendors worldwide, and portions of the markets designed primarily for individual consumers.
- 2 We routinely select, preserve, and provide access to born digital materials for all disciplines.
- 3 We provide intellectual access to all library collections in a manner that fully meets the needs of our users.
- 4 Our selection, processing, and access models increasingly exploit the collaborative environment provided by association with other academic and research libraries.
- 5 Onsite storage capacities for special collections, audio, and video meet current standards for archival, manuscript, and recorded media and provide sufficient capacity to house heavily used collections.



Strategic Goal 5

ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE Develop and sustain a skilled and engaged workforce that can succeed and thrive in an ever-changing environment.

Context/Rationale

The Division of Libraries is a learning organization that is ever-changing, adapting and transforming itself to meet the challenges of the 21st century library. We aim to be able to embrace disruptive innovation and meet new, often unanticipated, expectations. The human resource challenges that we face in today's environment, such as expanding science and engineering initiatives and other priorities, will continue to shape us as the digital landscape and user demands grow and evolve. These challenges include the continual need for new expertise, both from new recruitment and internal development; intense competition from other universities and from the for-profit market for new skills in emerging areas; achieving and maintaining rich diversity in our workforce; and supporting all of our faculty and staff in both their professional development and their efforts to prioritize multiple and growing demands.

As a result, the organization needs to provide opportunities for growth to foster employee retention and satisfaction while continuing to attract top talent with specialized technical and academic skills. Leadership support is crucial to help individual employees grow, make choices, and work productively. Together we will foster a diverse, multi-generational, and technically skilled workforce that flourishes professionally and provides the highest level of service to the NYU community.



Outcomes

- 1** We have a clear understanding of priorities throughout the organization.
- 2** Our employees actively engage in learning and development opportunities that support our organizational goals.
- 3** We have a strong culture of recognition in which employees know they are valued and appreciated.
- 4** We attract diverse and talented applicants.
- 5** Supervisors and managers actively use, promote, and support professional development tools such as mentorship, rewards and recognition, and coaching across all levels.
- 6** Our workforce can anticipate organizational needs and respond to internal and external challenges to deliver high quality services while analyzing new needs.



Strategic Goal 6

GLOBAL SERVICES INTEGRATION Build a global organization that works collaboratively and effectively to support integrated services across the NYU Global Network University.

Context/Rationale

As NYU develops the Global Network University, increasing numbers of faculty and students will travel among different locations to study, teach, and conduct research. President John Sexton characterizes this fluid intellectual exchange as the "circulatory system" of our university. To support this system, NYU Libraries aims to develop an integrated and collaborative organization that works effectively across locations. We will provide a consistent research experience, supporting access to services and resources uniformly throughout our global system. The means to achieve this are not just technological; we must integrate the skills and expertise of staff members across locations to create a coordinated whole rather than a collection of separate entities. We will foster strong and well-conceived connections among individuals and departments. A coordinated matrix of roles and services will enable us to share and optimize expertise and broaden our knowledge of user needs and library resources, ensuring that our collective expertise is available throughout the global network.



2017 Outcomes

- 1** Engaged, substantive participation by staff in all locations is routine on our committees and in working groups.
- 2** Staff across the organization uses shared communication tools that facilitate collaboration and integration of practices throughout all Global Network University locations.
- 3** An integrated global staff delivers a coordinated array of on-site and online networked services.
- 4** Processes, infrastructure, resources, and expertise are shared, coordinated, and optimized across our global organization.



Strategic Goal 7

OUTREACH & MARKETING Engage with our users through communication strategies that make Division of Libraries resources and services more visible, more used, and better attuned to user needs.

Context/Rationale

The Division of Libraries encompasses a wide array of services and resources in a global environment. Feedback indicates that users—students, faculty, researchers, and administrators across the university—do not take full advantage of our services simply because they are unaware of them. We must extend our marketing reach, beginning internally, so that staff—our best service ambassadors—fully understand the complete scope of our services and tools. We must deploy new forms of communication, fully participating in the social Web while also using older media and staying alert to new opportunities. Our goal is to reach our users wherever they are. We should consider how a Division-wide branding effort could help users take advantage of more services. Recognizing that no communication will be “one size fits all” we must customize messages for various communities based on their needs. Our outreach and marketing efforts must be a two-way street; its success depends on our ability to elicit and take advantage of user feedback, including input from staff.



2017 Outcomes

- 1** Our user communities know about and take advantage of as many of our resources and services as they need.
- 2** We coordinate and collaborate on outreach efforts across the Division.
- 3** Our marketing and outreach initiatives are responsive to, driven by, and anticipatory of user needs. We routinely assess and analyze feedback from users and staff to make outreach efforts effective.
- 4** Our staff is knowledgeable about available services and resources and able to communicate about them to our users accurately and consistently.



Strategic Goal 8

DATA-DRIVEN EXPLORATION & DECISION MAKING

Become a data-aware organization that promotes open exploration of data and grounds our decisions in evidence.

Context/Rationale

We must have a deep understanding of the relationship of our operations, collections, and services to a complex and constantly changing environment if we are to be effective in planning and improving. Knowing which initiatives to pursue is never easy, and decisions regarding prioritization and resource allocation are among the most difficult. The coordinated identification, availability, and analysis of strategic data, both quantitative and qualitative, provide important insights and ensure that our assessments are solidly grounded in evidence. Within individual departments we currently collect data on various aspects of our operations, collections, and services. For example, we track the growth of our collections; we track their usage; we track visits to our various libraries and to our websites. We conduct surveys among students and faculty to gather information about their research habits, user experience with BobCat and other interfaces, and more. These data contribute to our effectiveness.

By defining a comprehensive set of essential data, aligned with the needs of our organization as a whole, and committing to making that data accessible to staff across the Division, we increase our capacity to make confident and informed decisions at all levels in matters of service development, strategic prioritization, and resource allocation.

Comprehensive data, well organized and easily accessible, strengthens our capacity as a learning organization, providing opportunities for creative inquiry by faculty and staff and for professional development and innovation. A data-aware organization fosters a rich environment for discovery, analysis, and decision-making.



2017 Outcomes

- 1 Decisions about resource allocation are supported by evidence drawn from a program of well-specified data management and business intelligence.
- 2 We have a Division-wide structure for data capture, warehousing, and reporting.
- 3 Growing numbers of staff are skilled in the collection, analysis, and interpretation of data.
- 4 Staff has ready access to data needed for decision making, experimentation, exploration, and intellectual curiosity.