

# University Libraries Strategic Plan 2025-2033

Libraries serve as the core for curiosity and intellectual exploration at universities, and have evolved to encompass roles as learning spaces, innovation spaces, collaboration spaces, and - to some degree - recreational spaces that support student well being.

URI's University Libraries support the University's scholarly and research mission via four foundational actions:

1. Acquiring materials to support the curriculum and research missions of the institution
2. Ensuring efficient access to materials for all users
3. Preserving materials to ensure access into the future
4. Instructing users in accessing and use of materials as well as general literature-based research

Building on a collection of approximately one million print volumes intentionally curated since the University's inception to support the curriculum, the Libraries have expanded collections and improved access via the acquisition of ebooks, online journals, and other unique digital collections to support the work of local students and researchers, as well as curious scholars beyond the University.

Selected highlights:

- 91% of current book purchases are ebooks
- Current journals are electronic only. There are some collections of older material in paper which are being replaced with electronic as they become available at an acceptable price
- Collections of unique student and faculty work, photographic collections, data sets, and complementary materials are preserved and accessible through the Digital Commons
- Rare and historically significant materials are preserved and made accessible to researchers in University Archives and Special Collections
- Federal and State Depository Library status ensures public access to the output of federal and local governments from the 1800s to the present, including laws, scientific materials, and more
- Innovation spaces connect students with technology and experiences to thrive in an increasingly online world
- Instruction and research help services equip students, faculty, and staff to be effective, efficient, and ethical users and creators of information

This Strategic Plan combines the actions and priorities of the University Libraries' two academic departments, Technical Services and Public Services, the Library Innovation Labs, and the Dean's office. It aligns with the priorities in [FOCUS URI: A Strategic Vision for the University of Rhode Island](#).

It should be noted that while each Unit may not be represented under every “Priority,” each strives to ensure the success of our colleagues and the entire University community. Student, research, and teaching success depend on each Unit of the Library working together to make that happen seamlessly.

## **Priority 1: Broaden Our Impact**

### **Acquisitions**

- Continue to leverage the library materials budget to support collaborative, scholar-led open access initiatives that advance the transition to a scholarly publishing system that provides open access to scholarly outputs. Unfettered access to scholarly information for people worldwide who would not otherwise be able to access this content promotes equity in the information ecosystem, ensuring the representation of diverse points of view and experiences.
- Continue to acquire scholarly information resources in support of the growing teaching and research needs of a R1 university. Investigate purchasing models and negotiate license terms and conditions that maximize cost-savings, workflow efficiencies, and information use rights for the URI community.
- Collaborate with purchasing consortia such as Lyris and NERL when advantageous.

### **Administration**

- Continue to build on shared library documents and policies folder, providing important operational information for library faculty and staff.

### **Digital Initiatives**

- Look for innovative new partnerships, technologies, and funding opportunities in digital library initiatives.
- Provide global, online access to URI's unique scholarly output and historical collections through DigitalCommons@URI and JStor Forum.
- Enable URI faculty to create their own open educational resources (OER) such as open textbooks using Pressbooks.
- Facilitate open access to faculty research that would not otherwise be openly available, through the URI Open Access Policy.

### **Government Publications**

- Set up direct email access for patrons in order to provide online assistance to those looking for government publication help. This includes assisting our Reference Unit when called upon.
- Protect materials that might otherwise be lost for future generations of researchers: NOAA Preservation Steward; State Publications in all formats; Sea Grant Library materials.
- Start a collaboration with Digital Initiatives for preservation of born digital government documents, particularly for the State of Rhode Island.

### **Library Innovation Labs**

- Explore opportunities to leverage the Labs as a site of experimentation utilizing URI Libraries' digital collections.

### **Metadata and Content Management**

- Continue to be an active partner in consortia and other regional, national and international organizations that provide increased access to metadata and materials for our University community, such as the Boston Library Consortium.
- Collaborate in State of Rhode Island initiatives including: exploring a one catalog system, and RI Hub for Digital Library of America.
- Protect materials that might otherwise be lost for future generations of researchers by cataloging materials for distinctive collections (archives); work with the Chief Digital Preservation Officer to ensure proper metadata; and provide access to materials stored in the digital preservation software from our online catalog.
- Collaborate with the Digital Initiatives Unit to increase and maintain seamless access to our repository, ensuring proper metadata and easy access from our online catalog.
- Preserve and catalog Sea Grant Library materials, with a focus on items with Rhode Island and New England content.
- Collaborate with the Government Publications Unit to preserve and maintain federal and state materials such as working to maintain and increase the number of NOAA (National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration) cataloged materials for which the University Libraries is a national preservation steward.
- Work with the Eastern Academic Scholars Trust (EAST) to ensure that we catalog and maintain access to print-format scholarly materials that otherwise might be lost.

## **Priority 2: Enhance Student Achievement**

### **Administration**

- Support student wellbeing by organizing recurring visits of University therapy dogs to the library.
- Support student worker experience by maximizing Work Study budget dollars to support work in all library departments.
- Continue to manage library materials budget to support optimal use of funds for student benefit.

### **Instruction**

- Offer continued support for first-year students and students from marginalized groups through programmatic instruction to WRT 104 & 106 and the Talent Development Program.
- Provide a scaffolded information literacy curriculum to college students through credit-bearing Library courses like LIB 150, LIB 250, and LIB 350.

- Develop a program of instruction options that faculty can choose from to best meet the needs of their students. (This was created in December 2023.)
- Pending the addition of 2-4 Reference & Instruction Librarians, reestablish standardized sessions with each URI 101 section that orient students to library and research resources and information literacy skills to support their academic success.
- Pending the addition of 2-4 Reference & Instruction Librarians, return to providing subject-specific one-shot and embedded information literacy instruction for courses with a B4: Information Literacy learning outcome.

#### **Library Innovation Labs**

- Partner with faculty and departments to embed Innovation Lab tools, mentorship, and experiential learning into curricular pathways, supporting student success and post-graduate readiness.

#### **Reference/Research Help**

- Explore and recommend potential models for providing service. (This was completed at the department's 2024 retreat.)
- Continue ongoing enhancement and standardization of asynchronous learning materials and learning objects (e.g., LibGuides, tutorials, etc.) to ensure consistency, accessibility, and alignment with community needs.
- Increase outreach and advertising of Research Help services to support researcher and student success.
- Liaise with the MLIS program to improve advertising for Reference Graduate Student Assistants and explore alternative staffing models as needed to support researchers and students.

#### **University Archives and Special Collections**

- Continue to collaborate with faculty (particularly those in the College of Arts and Sciences) to incorporate University Archives & Special Collections resources into their courses.

## **Priority 3: Foster an Inclusive Culture**

#### **Acquisitions**

- Prioritize collections that support diverse perspectives on topics of current scholarly and historical interest.
- Ensure that purchased electronic resources meet industry best practices for accessibility.

#### **Administration**

- Work with facilities to ensure all public spaces are accessible to patrons.

- Review library website, addressing content that does not align with University accessibility standards.
- Maintain timely and appropriate communication of building-related information through proper channels.

### **Digital Initiatives**

- Ensure that all our digital library systems, collections, and services reflect diverse voices and perspectives.
- Work to ensure all digitized and born-digital collections meet current accessibility requirements for web content.

### **Government Publications**

- Provide materials for students, faculty and staff which include diverse perspectives, histories, and experiences by maintaining past government materials for historical perspectives.

### **Instruction**

- Examine LIB course materials with a DEI lens and continue integrating additional diverse perspectives, voices, and experiences into course content that enhances student understanding of the impact of social power structures on information creation, dissemination, and preservation.
- Foster greater inclusivity and sense of belonging in credit-bearing and other Library instruction through contemporary pedagogical strategies and approaches, such as equitable grading practices, collaborative learning, and inquiry-based learning.

### **Library Innovation Labs**

- Provide multiple points of entry to encourage all users to explore library Innovation Labs resources.
- Expand visibility and engagement with the Innovation Lab through targeted outreach, dynamic programming, and collaborative events that invite participation from across the URI community.

### **Metadata and Content Management**

- Create cataloging records for students, faculty, and staff that include diverse perspectives, histories, and experiences, which might include proposing and implementing changes to subject headings and other metadata to enhance the catalog and maintain books, journals, databases and other materials that offer a diverse and unique perspective.
- Ensure national and international cataloging standards are inclusive.

### **University Archives and Special Collections**

- Update collection metadata to conform to current best practices, informed by the principles of reparative description.

- Upgrade UASC web presence (ADA compliance).

## **Priority 4: Power the University of the Future**

### **Access Services/Reserves**

- Ensure operations of the Pell Marine Science Library to support the research needs of the Graduate School of Oceanography.
- Provide additional space for staff. All the Access Service Units (Circulation, Reserves, Interlibrary Loan) should be able to work together near each other to facilitate staff communication and service to our patrons, both here at URI and beyond.
- Renovate the Access Services (Circulation) Desk area to provide a more welcoming space for patrons and appropriate workspace and ergonomics for the staff. The current configuration has poor ergonomics and needs to allow adequate space for staff and processing materials.
- If space allows, provide the Head of Access Services office space near the Access Services area to ensure clear communication with and support for the staff they oversee.

### **Acquisitions**

- Continue to automate workflows whenever possible, freeing staff to focus on higher-level work and increasing accuracy in information discovery and delivery.
- Continue to work to provide seamless access to electronic information sources through the expert management of electronic resource management systems, link resolvers, knowledge bases, and authentication systems.

### **Administration**

- Collaborate with University offices to encourage a smooth transition to the University budget system.
- Provide financial feasibility information in support of library-driven initiatives.

### **Collection Development**

- Continue to employ new technologies to identify new materials for purchase.
- Continue to purchase large packages of electronic materials. This purchasing model greatly increases the amount of content available while reducing the need for shelf space.
- Take advantage of the growing amount of content published via open access, often with financial support from library collections budgets. This will further increase the amount of information available to URI students and researchers.
- Continue to eliminate duplicate materials.

### **Digital Initiatives**

- Greatly improve the efficiency and quality of our digitization program with our Zeutschel OS 12000 A1 book scanner, starting with URI theses & dissertations. Take advantage of the scanner to digitize large format and fragile items for access and preservation.
- Explore new methods and channels to make URI research and scholarship accessible to a global audience.
- Conduct more outreach to the URI community about our available services and solicit feedback.

### **Government Publications**

- Catalog and provide access to born digital, electronic and paper resources.
- Outreach through signage, websites and other campus activities to let our community know we are an active member of the Federal Depository Library Program (FDLP).
- Increase staff training by utilizing the Federal Depository Library Program (FDLP) Academy and Government publications office (GPO) online classes, tutorials, webinars and conferences.
- Continue to switch Federal government publications from paper to online where possible.
- Continuing education and implementation of staff by training with the FDLP Academy and GPO webinars.
- Capture born digital State of Rhode Island publications.

### **Library Innovation Labs**

- Secure sustainable funding through internal support and external grants to ensure the Innovation Lab's long-term viability and capacity for growth.
- Define roles, tools and performance indicators as part of growing student, staff and volunteer teams.

### **Metadata and Content Management**

- Implement a continuing education plan for staff in the following areas: changing metadata standards; artificial Intelligence; MARC; BIBFRAME; coding and machine learning; XML; Python, and MARCedit.
- Continue to automate our workflow as much as possible such as with batch processing large sets of bibliographic data.

### **University Archives and Special Collections**

- Fully implement ArchivesSpace management system for centralized administrative and collection management and explore online access options to collection materials.
- Acquire secure off-site space to quarantine new collection material
- Improve the environmental conditions under which our physical collections are stored.
- Develop an inclusive and sustainable digital preservation program.



**Systems**

- Review library systems for opportunities to increase efficiency, services, and patron satisfaction.
- Partner with other Library units to solve technological issues and expand options.
- Collaborate with internal partners like ITS to unify systems where possible.
- Explore partnerships with groups like the Boston Library Consortium as appropriate.