





BROCK UNIVERSITY GUIDING VALUES AND PRINCIPLES

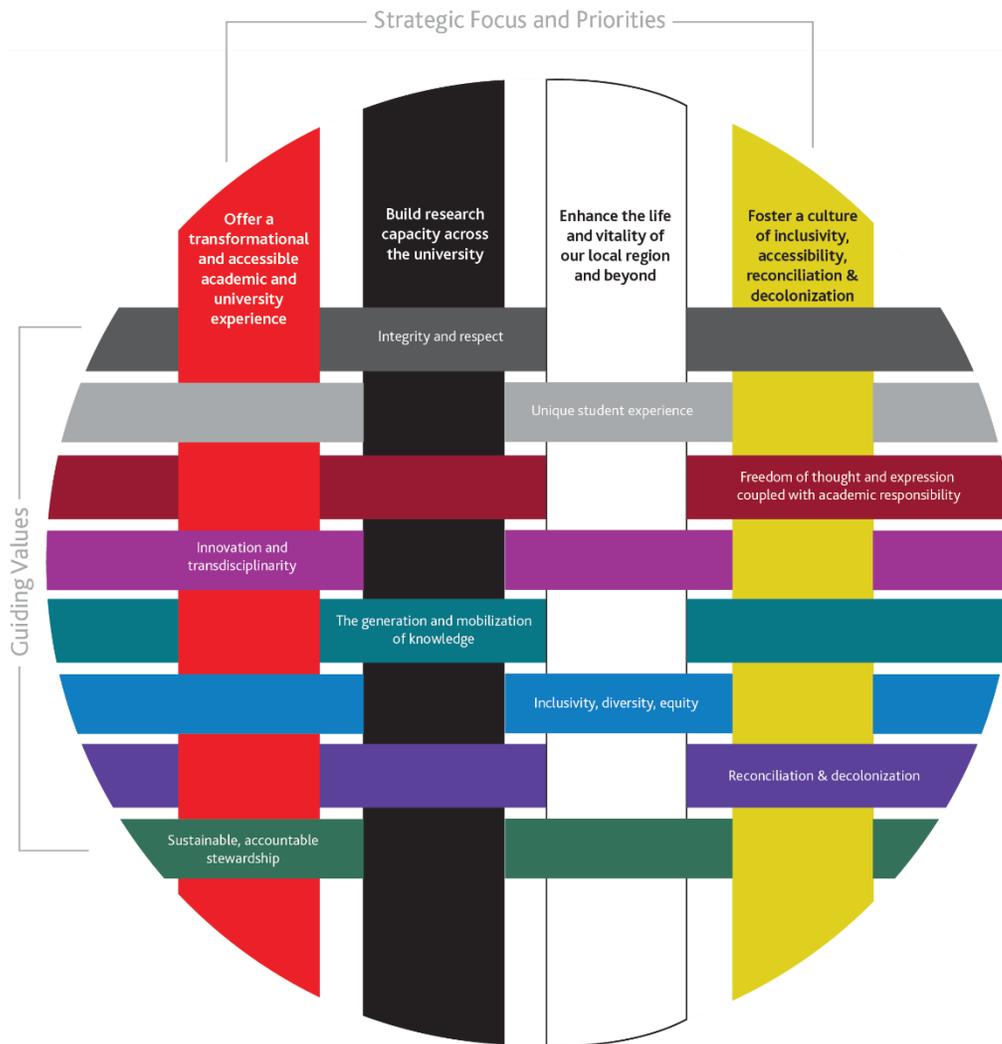


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INTRODUCTION

Located at the centre of campus, the Library has always been at the core of Brock University's academic mission. Brock's first president, Dr. James A. Gibson, often described the Library as being at the academic heart of the University: "No matter how big the university will grow and how many buildings will surround it, the paths of all students and all professors will always lead to the library."ⁱ

The Library is truly a transdisciplinary space devoted to inquiry and learning where students and scholars intersect across the boundaries of academic disciplines. The Library continues to play a critical role in the teaching, learning and research missions of Brock University.

BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

When Brock University opened in 1964, having a suitable library was an essential component for the new institution. The Brock Library first began in a small classroom in the provisional campus at the foot of the Niagara Escarpment. By the fall of 1966, enough of the Schmon Tower was complete for the new Library to move up the hill. Initially the Library occupied only four floors of the tower, but the James A. Gibson Library has grown to encompass seven floors, in addition to the Map, Data, & GIS Library which opened in 1986 in the Mackenzie Chown complex. In 2008, the Matheson Learning Commons opened at the base of the Tower after a major renovation. In the summer of 2019, the Library will expand yet again, this time into the new Rankin Family Pavilion as part of the Brock LINC suite of services in support of innovation and entrepreneurship.

The Brock University Library is comprised of:

- **The James A. Gibson Library** – the Library's central location includes the Matheson Learning Commons, print collections, study spaces, classrooms, and the Ask Us Desk.
- **Archives & Special Collections** – contains rare and unique collections on areas such as the history of the Niagara region, autism, and the Masonic Book Collection. The Archives also houses the University Archives.
- **Map, Data, & GIS Library** – provides collections and services related to geospatial materials and numeric data.
- **Makerspace** – a collaborative learning space in the Rankin Family Pavilion to explore, learn and invent using emerging technologies.
- **Digital Scholarship Lab** – a facility in the Rankin Family Pavilion that fosters creative engagement with digital research methodologies such as data science, research data management, high performance computing, and visualization.

While Brock University has emerged as a comprehensive, research-intensive institution, the Library has co-evolved from a collection primarily supporting undergraduate teaching, to one that also supports research, a growing number of graduate programs, and a student population of roughly 19,000. This development has been accompanied by the transformation of print collections to a primarily electronic information environment. Milestones in this evolution include:

- 1999-2000: Brock Library begins co-operative purchasing of electronic resources through OCUL and CRKN
- 2008: Electronic resource expenditures eclipse print expenditures
- 2009: Brock becomes one of 29 members of the Canadian Association of Research Libraries
- 2014-2018: Brock provides strategic investment in Library acquisitions increasing the materials budget 66% over four years
- 2019: While we continue to develop our print collections, roughly 95% of the Library's acquisitions budget is now spent on electronic content such as e-journals, e-books and data.

The Brock University Library has seen enormous changes. While the pace of change in libraries continues to accelerate, the Library is well positioned to embrace the future. This plan lays the groundwork for the next stages of the evolution of the Library as we extend our role in student success, research lifecycle and community engagement.

ENVIRONMENTAL SCAN

Teaching, Learning & Student Success

- **Changing information seeking behaviour:** The speed, volume, and proliferation of information creates challenges for students navigating the information landscape. The ideological polarization of media, and propagation of misinformation (“fake news”) undermine trust in traditional media making critical thinking skills more crucial.
- **Course resources:** According to the Canadian Federation of Students, textbook costs have risen by 2.4 times the rate of inflation since 2008. In 2015, the Brock University Students’ Union conducted a student survey on the cost of textbooks that showed the average total cost of textbooks was \$811 per student per year. Studies have shown that a significant percentage of students have chosen not to buy a textbook for a course due to the expense.ⁱⁱ The landscape of course resources is ripe for change as institutions promote Open Educational Resources (OER), and textbook publishers employ strategies to retain the textbook market.

- **Mental health/wellness:** Mental health issues are on the rise amongst students. “A fifth of Canadian postsecondary students are depressed and anxious or battling other mental health issues” according to a national survey.ⁱⁱⁱ
- **Non-traditional Teaching Formats:** Teaching and learning metrics in Brock’s 2017-20 Strategic Mandate Agreement identifies a 2% increase to the number of students engaged in co-curricular learning. In addition, the SMA includes metrics for the number of course offered in “non-traditional format” (eg. online, blended, accelerated, Spring-Summer). These alternative curricular formats provide students with greater flexibility in how and when they take their courses.

Research

- **Emerging forms of scholarship and dissemination:** In addition to the growing number of policies requiring open access, funders, publishers, and researchers are coming to expect access to research data for replication or re-use. Such re-use requires that researchers curate and manage their data through its lifecycle. The ability to advise on or provide options for open access publishing and data sharing is a growing opportunity for libraries, in partnership with other campus groups.

Meanwhile, big data, often generated as a by-product of processes and transactions, requires additional capacity for analysis and storage. Data visualization and high-performance computing and other digital tools and techniques are becoming more common across the disciplines. In addition, there are new tools and methods for the analysis of research impact and productivity, and libraries are playing a key role in supporting the collection and analysis of this important institutional data.

- **Evolving pathways to discovery:** While many researchers still use library web sites as their preferred discovery platform, researchers employ a variety of strategies to search and discover research publications. These pathways include seamless (and sometimes invisible) access to library subscriptions from wherever a user is searching (e.g. via embedded links in Google). Other routes may bypass the library all together, such as pirate websites (e.g. SciHub), social media (e.g. Twitter) or academic social networking sites (e.g. ResearchGate). Publishers and libraries continue to experiment with new ways to embed content in the changing discovery pathways of our users.
- **Rising costs restrict access:** Library budgets are increasingly challenged to keep pace with the ever-rising costs of journal subscriptions. Because most publications are purchased in

U.S. currency, Canadian libraries face additional pressures from foreign exchange rates. In response, some libraries are unbundling “big deal” subscription licenses and buying back individual titles. While this strategy may benefit some larger institutions, Brock would face enormous losses in costs and content. Other institutions are boldly moving to cancel their subscriptions to journal packages and/or the entire catalogue of a publisher such as Elsevier. While these cancellations may be driven by financial pressures, they may also reflect libraries’ support for a transition to open platforms and away from closed paywalled publications.

Technology

- **Information security:** Educause has named information security as one of the top technology issues every year since 2016. The number of external threats is growing and universities are frequently the target of hacking.
- **Privacy:** One of the top issues facing institutions, including libraries, is the importance of safeguarding privacy rights and maintaining accountability for protecting all types of restricted data.
- **Digital preservation:** Much of today’s information is created and used in the digital realm with little forethought as to the stewardship of this material. Without a systematic approach to preservation, vast swaths of our cultural heritage are at risk. Format obsolescence and digital degradation are two of the most significant challenges to the preservation of digital content. Digital infrastructure is necessary to ensure sustained access to this content.
- **Cloud computing:** A “cloud first” strategy continues to be a common strategy to decrease costs and offer improved scalability and easier upgrades. “Cloud services may also allow IT professionals to spend less time delivering technology and more time focusing on strategic partnerships with campus functional units.”^{iv}

Economic & Policy Factors

- **Financial:** In 2019, the Ontario government announced significant changes to the funding of higher education in the province, including a 10% reduction in domestic tuition, and changes to student grants and loans. Other financial impacts are possible. While provincial funding policy may change over time, these impacts are structural and have significant long-term consequences.

- **Digital Research Infrastructure:** In the 2018 federal budget, the Government of Canada committed to strengthen support for Canadian researchers conducting digital research. The Government announced an investment of \$572 million over five years, with \$52 million ongoing, to implement a Digital Research Infrastructure (DRI) Strategy. The Government has proposed streamlining advanced research computing, data storage, research data management, and support for research software into a single new organization.
- **Copyright:** In 2018, the Standing Committee on Industry, Science and Technology completed consultations as part of a statutory review of the Copyright Act. At the time of writing, the results of this process had not yet been released. The outcome may have impact on fair dealing, a key provision for the education sector. The review may also have implications for Crown copyright, which is currently a barrier towards digitization of government documents in Canada. Meanwhile, a close eye should be kept on other copyright litigation.
- **AODA Compliance:** By 2021, all web content must conform with WCAG 2.0 level AA. Meeting compliance for captioning of audio-visual content requires collaboration with university partners.

CONSULTATION PROCESS AND FINDINGS

This strategic plan was developed in two phases. From February-September 2017, the Library first developed a “beta” version, with the intent to revisit it once the institutional plan was complete. Following the completion of the University strategic plan in November 2018, the Library Strategic Planning Steering Committee reconvened to revise the “beta” plan and ensure alignment with the new Brock University Strategic Plan.

The Library Strategic Plan is the product of broad consultation and engagement with campus stakeholders and library staff: including a stakeholder survey to key staff, faculty, administrators and student government; four forums open to all library staff. In addition, versions of the “beta” plan were presented to Board of Trustees, Senior Administrative Council, and several Faculties and Senate Committees.

Brock University Library

Mission, Vision and Values

Mission

- We enrich teaching, learning and research in our communities through collaborative expertise, rich content, and inclusive spaces.

Vision

- To be an innovative leader in advancing knowledge and inspiring discovery.

Values

- Innovation – creativity, curiosity
- Integrity – respect, authenticity
- Inspiration – enthusiasm, excellence
- Inclusivity – welcoming, empathetic

Brock University Library

Tomorrow 2019-2025

Strategic Directions



Student Success

- Curriculum integration
- Integrate into online environments
- Improve access to teaching & learning materials
- Enhance accessibility & user experience
- Foster creative use of technology in Brock LINC
- Develop master space plan
- Renew library spaces



Research

- Lead in digital scholarship
- Transform scholarly communication
- Enrich scholarly content
- Celebrate & preserve unique collections
- Enhance information discovery



Engaging our Communities

- Steward Niagara cultural resources
- Cultivate donor relations
- Collaborate in building digital infrastructure
- Develop communication strategy
- Cultivate events & programming in the library
- Foster engagement with Indigenous communities



Strengthening our Capacity

- Initiate organizational renewal
- Foster employee engagement
- Provide development opportunities
- Strengthen internal communication
- Provide resources and technologies
- Improve inclusivity, accessibility, reconciliation and decolonization

A. Student Success

The Library expands its impact on student success by providing the competencies, tools and resources that learners need to excel in a changing environment.

1. Create a sustainable and scalable strategy for integrating information skills and literacies across curriculum.
2. Expand our reach to students by integrating library services, resources, and information skills training into their online environment.
3. Improve access for students to teaching and learning resources.
4. Enhance accessibility and user experience through continuous development and assessment of physical and online services and environments.
5. Offer new and engaging opportunities in Brock LINC to create and discover with technology.
6. Develop a comprehensive space plan that is user-focused, highlights our expertise, and unifies our spaces.
7. Assess and renew spaces to ensure we are meeting students' changing academic and technological needs.

By 2025 we will:

- Be proactively engaged in curricular discussions and integrated strategically into programs and student success courses.
- Be purposefully integrated into students' online environments (esp. the LMS).
- Play a central role on campus in open and affordable course content, including e-reserves.
- Be a respected campus partner in creating accessible spaces and experiences.
- Have a high-profile Makerspace and Digital Scholarship Lab that are magnets for technological innovators and experimenters.
- Have a new master space plan for the Library which provides a compelling vision that is supported by the campus.

B. Research Lifecycle

The Library advances knowledge by active engagement throughout the research lifecycle and by anticipating new and emerging information needs.

1. Take a leadership role in building capacity for digital scholarship by providing relevant expertise and resources.
2. Participate in transforming the mechanisms of scholarly communication and strengthening research dissemination and impact through partnerships at Brock and beyond.
3. Enrich access to scholarly content to support institutional research capacity.
4. Celebrate and preserve our unique collections such as archives, digital records, maps, rare books, and multimedia.
5. Improve discovery of information with robust services and technology.

By 2025 we will:

- Have a Digital Scholarship Lab that is a well-integrated campus hub advancing digital research methodologies and outputs.
- Be central to a robust campus-wide conversation on open scholarship and research impact.
- Provide a rich array of content and platforms supporting knowledge creation in both traditional and emerging disciplines.
- Have enriched our unique collections and expanded our capacity for the stewardship of digital materials.
- Have significantly improved discovery and access of content by implementing a collaborative library service platform (Collaborative Futures).

C. Engaging our Communities

The Library shares, learns and grows through partnerships and collaborations with our communities: within Brock, regionally in Niagara and globally.

1. Partner with regional institutions to steward, preserve, and promote Niagara cultural heritage resources.
2. Pursue new sources of funding, including building and strengthening relationships with alumni as well as current and potential donors.
3. Collaborate with the research library communities at the provincial, national and global levels to build a digital infrastructure that anticipates the changing needs of our users.
4. Develop and sustain a comprehensive communication strategy that demonstrates value, builds awareness, and promotes library services, expertise, resources, and spaces.
5. Cultivate programming and events that foster learning, intellectual curiosity, and wellness through campus collaboration.
6. Foster engagement with Indigenous communities and participate in reconciliation efforts on campus and within library communities

By 2025 we will:

- Have a consistent presence within the Niagara heritage community via exhibits, collaborative programming and other heritage events.
- Have proven success building relationships with alumni, potential donors and funding agencies.
- Have implemented a clear and effective communication plan.
- Be a lively, well-used venue that regularly hosts events which engage our communities.
- Have developed meaningful relationships with indigenous partners to identify and implement decolonization strategies.

D. Strengthening our Capacity

The Library encourages employee engagement, supports continuous learning, provides strong internal communication, and aligns with institutional priorities.

1. Initiate organizational renewal to ensure structure and processes align with departmental, library and university goals.
2. Foster a sense of community and employee engagement within the Library based on a culture of respect and support.
3. Provide development opportunities that cultivate existing strengths, build expertise in emerging areas, and encourage initiative and creativity.
4. Promote effective practices and philosophies that improve inclusivity, accessibility, reconciliation and decolonization.
5. Strengthen and develop methods of internal communication that reflect our openness and transparency and encourage input and participation.
6. Provide the resources and technologies to enable staff to work effectively.

By 2025 we will:

- Have implemented a modern organizational design that helps us achieve our goals.
- Be living our values by purposefully integrating them into our daily work.
- Have resources and processes that provide opportunity and support a culture of growth.
- Have processes and structures that facilitate open communication throughout the Library.
- Have an improved collective understanding of inclusivity, accessibility, reconciliation and decolonization, and have built relevant practices into our daily work.

BROCK AT 60

In 2024, Brock University Library will celebrate its 60th anniversary. The Library Strategic Plan provides a vision of the Library at this important milestone in the University's history. The Library @ 60 will:

- Provide enriched collections that will support Brock's expanded research profile, changing mix of programs, and the continued evolution of research and teaching. The enhancement of the Library's collections will be recognized by metrics such as the Macleans rankings, and our unique archival and special collections will be well known provincially and nationally.
- Be strategically integrated into the curricular offerings of the University as respected partners in teaching and learning. Our rich programming will align with and enhance student competencies.
- Be central to continuously evolving scholarly lifecycle by building capacity for emergent forms of scholarship, and by providing platforms that enable knowledge production, dissemination and preservation. At the same time the Library will continue to support the ongoing transformation of the scholarly communications landscape through advocacy and infrastructure.

- Be a recognized destination on campus for technological experimentation and innovation through programs and facilities that foster curiosity and creative inquiry. The Library will be integral to a mature innovation ecosystem at Brock.
- Be an inviting space of engagement, open and welcoming to the community. We will be home to inclusive programming and events in collaboration with University and community partners.
- The Library will have implemented a new organizational design that facilitates our strategic goals and allows us to live our values of innovation, integrity, inspiration, and inclusivity.

CONCLUSION

The Brock University Library Strategic Plan provides a foundation that supports the mission, vision, and values of the Library, and aligns our work with the priorities of the University. This plan consists of four strategic priorities that will frame the work of the Library as we embrace the future. The Library Strategic Plan will guide our work and be the basis for annual goal setting, reporting, assessment activities.

ⁱ Library Report. (1966, November). Brock University Library.

ⁱⁱ University of Guelph student textbook survey. (2016). University of Guelph Library. Retrieved from: https://www.lib.uoguelph.ca/sites/default/files/uofg_student_textbooksurvey_report.pdf

ⁱⁱⁱ Choise, S. (2016, September 8). Reports of mental health issues rising among postsecondary students: study. Globe & Mail. Retrieved from <https://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/national/education/reports-of-mental-health-issues-rising-among-postsecondary-students-study/article31782301/>

^{iv} Grajek, S. (2016, March 7). Trend Watch 2016: Which IT Trends Is Higher Education Responding To? Educause. Retrieved from: <https://library.educause.edu/-/media/files/library/2016/3/ers1601tr.pdf>