

FY26 Progress Report

VCU Libraries Strategic Action Plan

2023-2028

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Progress Reporting Process

This report, updated annually after the end of the fiscal year, provides a high-level overview of work completed toward the Strategic Action Plan. Initiatives are prioritized internally on an annual basis; therefore, not every goal will receive a progress update every year.

The Strategic Action Plan is updated on an annual basis to reflect emergent priorities and changes to target timelines.

For questions about the prioritization of goals or changes that have been made to the plan, please contact VCU Libraries Administrative Council.

Open and Affordable Course Content Funding

Required, Development Priority Goal (1/3)

[Alignment](#): Q1, Q2; S1, S2, S3, S4, S5, S6, S7

Desired Outcome

Total donation of \$500,000 to begin an endowment to ensure continued and sustainable efforts to assist faculty in transitioning to open or free course content.

Realization

- Endowment funds to support the initiative, including staffing (e.g., student workers), maintenance of existing open educational resources (OER), and administration of annual Affordable Course Content Awards.

Timeline

Target Date	Goal
FY28	• Funding vested.

Progress Highlights

<i>Date of Report</i>	<i>Progress</i>
8/1/2024	<i>No update for FY24</i>
8/1/2025	<i>No update for FY25</i>
8/1/2026	Open & Affordable Course Content Funding total value of \$212,064

Friends of VCU Libraries Scholarship

Required, Development Priority Goal (2/3)

[Alignment](#): Q1, Q2, Q3; S1, S3, S4, S5, S7

Desired Outcome

Support students through annual scholarships, and provide opportunities for increased donor involvement.

Realization

- Growing the scholarship fund to the \$500,000 level.
- Ability to offer at least two scholarships annually, one for the MP Campus and one for the MCV Campus.
- Donor participation on the scholarship review committee.

Timeline

Target Date	Goal
FY28	• Funding goal met.

Progress Highlights

<i>Date of Report</i>	<i>Progress</i>
8/1/2024	<i>No update for FY24</i>
8/1/2025	<i>No update for FY25</i>
8/1/2026	FOL Scholarship has a total value of \$238,749

Transformational Spaces

Required, Development Priority Goal (3/3)

[Alignment](#): Q1, Q2, Q3, Q4; S1, S2, S3, S4, S5, S7

Desired Outcome

Create inclusive and welcoming spaces that promote collaboration, innovation, knowledge synthesis, and creation while also encouraging holistic well-being for library users and employees.

Realization

- Reflection Room, Preservation enhancements, Workshop ventilation completed.
- Off-site storage facility construction complete.
- Materials relocated to off-site storage and available.
- Plans for various renovations on Cabell's first and third floors are fully considered and/or completed.
- Plans for a new Health Sciences Library in place.
- Use tools to assess employee physical environment and use collaborative planning for updating employee workspaces.

Timeline

<i>Target Date</i>	<i>Goal</i>
FY24	● Reflection Room and Preservation enhancements - <i>complete</i>
FY26	● JBC Sensory Room completion in partnership with SAEO, with target opening date of FY26 - <i>complete</i> ● Consider future directions for digital and physical signage and wayfinding materials - <i>complete</i> ● Install Cabell Garden Level Data Visualization Wall and develop supporting programming - <i>complete</i> ● Workshop Ventilation System - <i>in progress</i> ● Improve first floor study rooms in order to improve ambiance for study and research, and install reservation touchscreens to enhance student's experience reserving and accessing the rooms - <i>in progress</i> ● Continue preparing collections housed at Cabell, Health Sciences, and

	500 Academic Centre for relocation after the completion of off-site storage (target date of 2027) - <i>in progress</i> • Complete identification and deaccessioning of microforms (serials and monographs) from the collection - <i>complete</i> • Complete identification and deaccessioning of reference and literary sets from the collection - <i>complete</i> • Continue identification of items in JBC general collection for deaccessioning or relocation to off-site storage with a goal of 75% completion by the end of FY26 - <i>complete</i> • Engage in the planning process for a new health sciences library - <i>in progress</i>
FY27	• Off-site storage completed, Winter 2026 (15-18 month construction timeline as of Spring 2025) • Materials from HSL, JBC, and 500 Academic Centre moved to off-site storage
FY28	• Materials available from off-site storage • Plans and progress for renovations and reconfigurations of JBC and HSL completed • Engagement in assessment related to employee spaces

Progress Highlights

<i>Date of Report</i>	<i>Progress</i>
8/1/2024	In fall 2023, the Reflection Room in Cabell Library was completed. It provides a dedicated space in Cabell Library for quiet reflection, meditation, contemplation, or prayer. Work is ongoing for other space updates, including the ventilation in the Workshop and a Sensory Room.
8/1/2025	Work is ongoing for a variety of space improvements, including the ventilation of the Workshop and the installation of the Cabell Garden Level Data Visualization Wall. Renovations are underway for the Sensory Room for an anticipated opening in fall 2025. The Learning Spaces Subgroup of the Student Holistic Wellbeing Working Group developed a workflow for reporting emergent wayfinding and signage needs, including a new internal form for VCU Libraries employees that will be implemented in early fall 2025. Preparatory work began for the move of some physical materials to off-site storage; bibliographers identified materials that have not circulated for 10 years to move off-site, and deaccessioning of items in the basement of JBC and microforms on the third floor of JBC is ongoing.
8/1/2026	FY26 was dominated by a group of interrelated collections and facilities projects, including moving collections to offsite storage, expanding Special

	Collections and Archives at JBC, relocating HSL to a temporary location, planning for a new permanent HSL location, and making improvements to JBC roofing and HVAC. These projects will continue for several years, building on FY26's important progress. Progress this year included duplicate barcoding materials that will be moved to storage and deaccessioning microform and reference materials. The design of HSL's new temporary home in Hunton Hall is nearly complete. In addition to these interrelated projects, the JBC Sensory Room was opened in August 2025, and the Cabell Garden Level Data Visualization Wall was installed in December 2025. The JBC study room refresh is underway, and systems are expected to be operational in August 2026. Work is ongoing for the Workshop ventilation update. Signage templates and protocols were developed for temporary signage. Because of the increased need for temporary signage due to the interrelated projects, additional signage review will be deferred until the conclusion of these projects in 2028.
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External Funding Activity

[Alignment](#): Q3; S1, S2, S3, S4, S6, S7

Desired Outcome

Further innovate and advance VCU Libraries' standing as a teaching and research partner within the university and research library landscape by increasing externally funded research activity and partnerships:

Increase the number of grant applications and foundation asks, with a corresponding increase in the number of awards.

Continue working with VIVA to support Open and Affordable Course Content

Realization

- Establish clear expectations by library administration for external funding.
- Develop infrastructure for a sustainable grantseeking process.
- Increase total grant and foundation applications to at least 10 each year.
- Generate \$200,000 in VIVA external funding to support Open and Affordable Course Content.

Timeline

<i>Target Date</i>	<i>Goal(s)</i>
FY24	• Generate expectations for funding and develop infrastructure for a sustainable grantseeking process - <i>complete</i>
FY26	• Determine progress toward FY27-28 goals - <i>complete</i> • Strategically evaluate recommendations from External Funding Workgroup - <i>complete</i>
FY28	• Increase total grant and foundation applications to 10 per year. • Generate \$200,000 in VIVA external funding to support open and affordable course content (\$40,000/year over 5 years).

Progress Highlights

<i>Date of Report</i>	<i>Progress</i>
8/1/2024	The focus of FY2024's work was to build infrastructure for a sustainable grantseeking process. The fiscal operations team launched a new Grants and Sponsorships Expression of Interest form that will help them connect with employees with grantseeking projects and provide their expertise from the beginning of the process. An External Funding Working Group was charged and began work on a report of recommendations for developing infrastructure for sustainable external funding success.
8/1/2025	The External Funding Working Group has completed their work and submitted their recommendations to Administrative Council. Administrative Council will identify next steps.
8/1/2026	Administrative Council held ongoing conversations about the recommendations of the External Funding Working Group, and will discuss the report and findings with the new Dean when they arrive. Due to very successful fundraising in FY26, VCU Libraries is on track to meet fundraising goals for open and affordable course content.

Advance Research through Equitable Discovery, Diverse Collections, and Sustainable Infrastructure

Alignment: Q1, Q2, Q3, Q4; S1, S2, S3, S4, S5, S6, S7

Desired Outcome

Provide and maintain diverse research-level collections that support the University's academic programs, research agenda, health care, and outreach efforts. Support equitable discovery and access to all of our resources. Supply stable and sustainable infrastructure to support VCU Libraries and its communities.

Realization

- Benchmark holdings against Virginia R1 institutions and document the growth of content in the collection created by and representative of individuals of different cultural backgrounds, identities, abilities, and life experiences.
- Review and implement sustainable solutions for digital collections, systems, and resource sharing.
- Explore and outline a plan for VCU Libraries Research Data curation program, including personnel, systems, and storage offerings.
- Endorse the Cataloging Code of Ethics and incorporate it into performance goals and project management.
- Appraise, revise, and implement reparative and ethical resource description guidelines and frameworks for archival holdings.

Timeline

<i>Target Date</i>	<i>Goal(s)</i>
FY23	• Join AP Trust - <i>complete</i> • Explore future library authentication systems - <i>complete</i> • Determine replacement platform for Islandora - <i>complete</i>
FY24	• Determine renewal strategy for Scholars Compass - <i>complete</i>

	Evaluate the future of sharing and delivery platforms - <i>complete</i>
FY25	- Determine research data curation and storage directions, including needed systems and personnel - <i>complete</i> - Establish Ad Hoc Inclusive and Reparative Metadata Work Group - <i>complete</i> - Establish a standing Alma/Primo Advisory Committee - <i>complete</i> - Establish Ad Hoc Library Website Redesign Workgroup - <i>complete</i> - Determine if and when to implement a new resource sharing and delivery platform based on recommendations from the Resource Sharing Platform Investigation Work Group (RSPIWG) - <i>complete</i>
FY26	- Evaluate final report of the Process for Inclusive and Reparative Description Work Group and determine pathways for operationalizing best practices within departments - <i>complete</i> - ADA Title II: Continue with decentralized audits by departments and groups responsible for content - <i>in progress</i> - Complete implementation of Rapido and Alma holds; refine processes as appropriate after implementation - <i>complete</i> - Strategically evaluate recommendations from Research Data Workgroup regarding data curation and storage - <i>complete</i> - Develop and deliver a new VCU Libraries homepage by May 12, 2026 - <i>complete</i>
FY28	Realize at least 2% year over year growth in monographic collections (FY21 to FY28) created by and representative of individuals of different cultural backgrounds, identities, abilities, and life experiences.

Progress Highlights

<i>Date of Report</i>	<i>Progress</i>
8/1/2024	A key priority for VCU Libraries is to review and implement sustainable solutions for digital collections, systems, and resource sharing. A subcommittee of the Resource Access Policies Committee investigated the platform and processes currently used to manage holds and document delivery. Based on their report of recommendations, a new subcommittee was charged to explore resource sharing platforms for interlibrary loan operations, and potentially for document delivery. The final report will be completed by September 1, 2024.
8/1/2025	Administrative Council charged the Ad Hoc Inclusive and Reparative Metadata Work Group, the standing Alma/Primo Advisory Committee, and the Homepage Redesign Workgroup; all three groups have begun their work.

	The Data Services Workgroup completed their analysis of the data curation landscape and submitted their report and recommendations to Administrative Council. The Resource Sharing Platform Investigation Work Group recommended migration to the Rapido platform; the Resource Sharing Migration Work Group completed their work, and the new Rapido system went live on July 1, 2025.
8/1/2026	The Homepage Website Redesign Workgroup completed their work, and the new Libraries homepage launched in May 2026. Units across the Libraries have been working to ensure that all library materials are compliant with the new ADA II accessibility requirements. Administrative Council will discuss the reports and findings of the Process for Inclusive and Reparative Description Workgroup and the Research Data Workgroup with the new Dean when they arrive.

Transformative Learning Experiences and Internships

Alignment: Q1, Q2, Q4; S4, S6, S7

Desired Outcome

Provide and support engagement in a variety of experiential learning opportunities for VCU students that foster their career readiness and sense of belonging in the VCU and Richmond communities.

Realization

- Provide transformative learning experiences or internships that are paid or receive class credit.
- Actively reach out to transformational learning programs across VCU including vertically integrated projects such that they are able to amplify the success of their programs by including library resources and expertise.
- Ensure that this program is sustainable for VCU Libraries employees.

Timeline

<i>Target Date</i>	<i>Goal(s)</i>
FY25	• Establish guidelines for internships and residencies within VCUL - <i>complete</i>
FY28	• Use student/hourly, grant or development funds to support Transformative Learning Experiences or internship positions - <i>in progress</i> • Develop and promote a central web resource (libguide) to promote library support of transformational learning projects housed in other units - <i>complete</i> • Develop planning and tools to create sustainable opportunities in Transformative Learning Experiences or internships. • Sustain and/or grow Transformative Learning Experiences or internship positions annually.

Progress Highlights

<i>Date of Report</i>	<i>Progress</i>
8/1/2024	This year the Libraries committed to developing a LibGuide to promote library support of transformational learning projects housed in other units. A LibGuide promoting library support of transformational learning projects hosted by other units was completed. The LibGuide will be maintained and promoted. Organizational Development plans additional work on developing transformative learning and internships for the Libraries after the HR Director position is filled.
8/1/2025	Guidelines for internships and residencies were drafted and are under review.
8/1/2026	Goals related to internships and transformative learning experiences are currently on hold due to the high workload of the interrelated projects. Work toward this strategic priority will resume in future years.

Advance Student Holistic Well-Being

[Alignment](#): Q1, Q2, Q4; S1, S4,

Desired Outcome

Support VCU students' physical, emotional, social, and financial wellness to position them for academic success. This outcome is inclusive of all students--undergraduate, graduate, and professional students.

Realization

- Sustain funding for the StudyWell initiative, meeting or exceeding \$5,000 annually, to support student-focused events.
- Maintain average attendance at StudyWell events (10-15 people per event).
- Evolve outreach strategies, services, and teaching techniques for differently abled students and/or those who identify as part of traditionally marginalized groups.

Timeline

Target Date	Goal(s)
Sustained	• Maintain funding for the StudyWell initiative, meeting or exceeding \$5,000 annually - <i>complete for FY26</i> • Maintain average attendance at StudyWell events (10-15 people per event) - <i>complete for FY26</i>
FY24	• Refine StudyWell portfolio of events to advance student well-being based on student feedback - <i>complete</i> • Define priority groups for enhanced outreach and services - <i>in progress</i>
FY26	• Create briefs describing outreach strategies and initiatives devoted to prioritized groups - <i>deferred to FY27</i> • Strengthen partnerships with campus groups also focused on advancing student well-being to enhance programming and services - <i>complete</i> • Develop and integrate teaching techniques that offer multiple ways for students to communicate and participate in classes - <i>deferred to FY27</i>
FY28	• Continue to evolve library spaces to support student well-being (i.e., completion of Reflection Room, replacement of dated/uncomfortable furniture as part of Refresh project).

	• Qualitative and quantitative feedback from students indicating positive perception/impact of programming and services as contributors to well-being and belonging.
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Progress Highlights

<i>Date of Report</i>	<i>Progress</i>
8/1/2024	The StudyWell initiative, one of the core programs for this goal, hosted 404 events with more than 8500 attendees with an average attendance of 21 attendees per event. Since StudyWell's first full year (2021-2022), this represents 80% growth in number of events, 210% growth in number of attendees, and 75% growth in average attendees per event. The Libraries also exceeded our goal of having 10-15 average attendees per event. The StudyWell initiative was supported by a \$5,000 grant from the VCU Foundation, bringing the total budget including VCUL funds to \$10,000 for the year, exceeding the goal to maintain or exceed funding of \$5,000 annually. In Fall 2023, The Libraries completed the Reflection Room, a dedicated space in Cabell Library for quiet reflection, meditation, contemplation, or prayer, as well as a refresh of outdated furniture on the first floor of Cabell. The Libraries are in the planning stages of a Sensory Room that will support students who need low-stimulus or high-stimulus spaces. That space should be available sometime in Fall 2024. The charge and membership was finalized for the VCU Libraries Student Holistic Wellbeing Work Group, which will be tasked with implementing the goals of the SAP.
8/1/2025	StudyWell held 432 events with 10,807 total attendees, an average attendance of 25 attendees per event, and maintained its funding goal of \$5,000. Based on student feedback and engagement, StudyWell will refine its events portfolio starting in fall 2025, including increasing the number and variety of food giveaways and reducing the relative number of events that require staffing. The Identifying Priority Populations subgroup of the Student Holistic Wellbeing Working Group completed their work; their report is under review and decisions will be made in the coming year about implementation.
8/1/2026	StudyWell continued to grow, with event engagement increasing from an average of 25 attendees per event in FY25 to 38 attendees per event in FY26. This is an overall increase of 60% in terms of engagement per event since FY22.

	The Student Holistic Wellbeing Working Group completed an inventory of library partnerships with other campus groups focused on student well-being. The inventory will support ongoing efforts to enhance library programming. Goals to create outreach strategy briefs and to develop teaching techniques supporting multiple means of engagement for students were deferred to FY27 to prioritize other strategic initiatives.
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External Community Engagement

[Alignment](#): Q4; S3, S4, S5, S7

Desired Outcome

Provide engaging programming and access to resources and information that fosters community connections and learning.

*For this goal, we are using the definition of community engagement from the Carnegie Elective Classification for Community Engagement:

"Community engagement describes collaboration between institutions of higher education and their larger communities (local, regional/state, national, global) for the mutually beneficial exchange of knowledge and resources in a context of partnership and reciprocity." VCU received the Carnegie Foundation Community Engagement Classification in 2015.

Realization

- Grow and sustain attendance at VCU Libraries sponsored lecture series with speakers giving valuable and engaging talks.
- Collaborate with non-profit organizations and groups external to VCU, including public libraries, health departments or other community groups, to promote health and wellness information access.
- Create a sustainable exhibitions and programming model in Special Collections and Archives that enhances awareness of, access to, and highlights our unique and distinctive collections.

Timeline

<i>Target Date</i>	<i>Goal(s)</i>
FY23	• Convene/Charge VCU Libraries Events Programming Committee - <i>complete</i>
FY24	• Identify opportunities for VCU Libraries' to partner with university-community engagement - <i>ongoing through life of plan</i> • Develop an exhibition and programming model in Special Collections

	and Archives and work with key stakeholders to finalize processes and pilot the model - <i>complete</i>
FY25	• Survey attendees of VCU Libraries sponsored lecture series to better understand the lecture series' impact and interest - <i>completed</i> • Align VCU Libraries high school outreach program with Richmond Talent Pathway Program - <i>complete</i>
FY27-FY28	• Assess sustainability and reach of Special Collections and Archives exhibitions and programs, make adjustments, and fully implement the program
FY28	• Increase grant funding for Health and Wellness Library community engagement efforts with an external group.

Progress Highlights

<i>Date of Report</i>	<i>Progress</i>
8/1/2024	A 2024 goal was to develop an exhibition and programming model in Special Collections and Archives. SCA created a new internal working group to coordinate, contribute, and plan outreach. The working group is in the process of analyzing the results and impact of SCA's FY24 exhibit and outreach initiatives, which engaged with over 2500 attendees, and will soon complete plans for the FY25 year. Work is underway to more routinely deploy surveys to assess the VCU Libraries sponsored lecture series.
8/1/2025	Special Collections and Archives completed the design of their new exhibition and programming model, in collaboration with key stakeholders. Assessment of the sustainability and reach of the model will continue through FY28. Goals to survey and hold focus groups of lecture series attendees was combined to better reflect assessment plans. The Events Programming Committee is in the process of designing a survey of past registrants, which is planned for fall 2025. A high school outreach plan has been developed that prioritizes Richmond Talent Pathway schools; implementation in coordination with participating schools is in progress.
8/1/2026	A survey of past lecture series attendees was distributed in February 2026. Results will be used to inform future programming.

	Based on the high school outreach plan, 10 metro-area schools were contacted with 4 responding, and 1 ultimately scheduling a visit. The Student Success department will continue to reach out to schools in upcoming years. As the final implementation piece, a VCUL Services for Local High Schools procedures document has been created to help Access Services colleagues respond to requests.
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Foster a Healthy and Successful Learning Organization

[Alignment](#): Q1, Q4; S1, S5, S6

Desired Outcome

Foster a successful learning organization that prepares all employees to meet the challenges of the academic library of today and for the future while also maintaining employee health and well-being.

Realization

- Utilize principles of shared governance to encourage employee engagement for professional development and service opportunities.
- Explore assessment options that provide insights into the status of employee health and well-being and use results to implement opportunities to advance employee well-being.

Timeline

<i>Target Date</i>	<i>Goal(s)</i>
FY23	• Formation of a Staff Organization using principles of shared governance - <i>complete</i> • Develop career pathing opportunities for UAP staff within the library - <i>complete</i>
FY24	• Provide training and support for managers to advance career development as well as advance their own careers through skills development - <i>in progress</i> • Implement staff career pathing opportunities to be included in annual performance management plans - <i>complete</i>
FY25	• Administer ClimateQual to gauge employee health and wellbeing; explore the results and operationalize findings as appropriate - <i>complete</i> • Explore the results of ClimateQual to gauge employee health and wellbeing and operationalize findings as appropriate - <i>in progress</i> • Implement and sustain Career Pathing for UAP staff employees - <i>complete</i>
FY26	• Develop a training calendar for employees - <i>complete</i>

Progress Highlights

<i>Date of Report</i>	<i>Progress</i>
8/1/2024	Organizational Development and the Staff Organization are working to revitalize Staff Development Day, a day-long professional development conference that was put on hold during the COVID-19 closure. The Staff Organization has surveyed staff to identify areas of interest for programming, and planning is underway for an October 2024 conference.
8/1/2025	Central HR approved Career Plans developed by Organizational Development, and implementation of Career Pathing is ongoing. The ClimateQUAL survey was administered October 15 - November 5, 2024, and the ClimateQUAL 2024 Recommendations Task Force completed their work of interpreting the data, identifying key findings, and making recommendations. Discussions about the report and how to operationalize findings will continue throughout FY26.
8/1/2026	<i>No update for FY26</i>

Strategic Alignment Key

Alignment with the VCU Quest 2028 Strategic Plan and VCU Libraries Strategic Framework 2028 is provided for each Strategic Action Plan Goal using the following abbreviations:

VCU Quest 2028

Q1	Diversity Drives Excellence
Q2	Student Success
Q3	Research and Innovation to Address Societal Challenges
Q4	Thriving Communities

VCU Libraries Strategic Framework 2028

S1	Promote Learning and Teaching Success
S2	Advance Research, Collaboration and Discovery
S3	Foster Scholarly and Creative Expression
S4	Invigorate Collaboration and Intellectual Pursuit
S5	Improve Health and Well-Being
S6	Develop VCU Libraries Staff
S7	Steward our Assets Strategically