Progress Report

VCU Libraries
Strategic Action Plan

2023-2028

VCU Libraries

Table of Contents   Page

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

Date of Report	Progress
8/1/2024	No update for FY24
8/1/2025	No update for FY25

Friends of VCU Libraries Scholarship

Required, Development Priority Goal (2/3)
<u>Alignment</u>: 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

Date of Report	Progress
8/1/2024	No update for FY24
8/1/2025	No update for FY25

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 James Branch Cabell Library various renovations and progress on 1st and 3rd floor refresh completed.
- Health Sciences Library with plans for a new location.
- Use tools to assess employee physical environment and use collaborative planning for updating employee workspaces.

Timeline

Target Date	Goal
FY24	● Reflection Room and Preservation enhancements - *complete*
FY25	● Workshop ventilation enhancements - *in progress* ● Improve processes for updating digital and physical signage and wayfinding materials - *in progress* ● Investigate Cabell Garden Level Data Visualization Wall and supporting programming - *in progress*
FY26	● Off-site storage completed, winter 2025 or Spring 2026 (15-18 month construction timeline as of Fall 2024) - *in progress* ● JBC Sensory Room opened in partnership with SAEO - *in progress* ● Engagement in assessment related to employee spaces.
FY27	● Materials from HSL, JBC, and 500 AC moved to off-site storage.

FY28	● Materials available from off-site storage. ● Plans and progress for renovations and reconfigurations of JBC and HSL completed.

Progress Highlights

Date of Report	Progress
8/1/2024	In fall 2023, we completed the Reflection Room, 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 has 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 has begun for the move of some physical materials to off-site storage; bibliographers have 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.

External Funding Activity

: 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

Target Date	Goal(s)
FY24	Generate expectations for funding and develop infrastructure for a sustainable grantseeking process - *in progress*
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

Date of Report	Progress
8/1/2024	The focus of FY2024's work was to build infrastructure for a sustainable grantseeking process. The fiscal operations team have 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 has been charged and begun 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.

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

Target Date	Goal(s)
FY23	● Join AP Trust - *complete* ● Explore future library authentication systems - *complete* ● Determine replacement platform for Islandora - *complete*
FY24	● Determine renewal strategy for Scholars Compass - *complete*

	● Evaluate the future of sharing and delivery platforms - *complete*
FY25	● Determine research data curation and storage directions, including needed systems and personnel - *complete* ● Establish Ad Hoc Inclusive and Reparative Metadata Work Group - *complete* ● Establish a standing Alma/Primo Advisory Committee - *complete* ● Establish Ad Hoc Library Website Redesign Workgroup - *complete* ● 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) - *complete*
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

Date of Report	*Progress*
8/1/2024	A key priority for us is to review and implement sustainable solutions for digital collections, systems, and resource sharing. A subcommittee of the Resource Access Policies Committee has investigated the platform and processes we currently use to manage holds and document delivery. Based on their report of recommendations, a new subcommittee has been charged to explore resource sharing platforms for interlibrary loan operations, and potentially for document delivery. Their final report will be completed by September 1, 2024.
8/1/2025	Administrative Council has charged the Ad Hoc Inclusive and Reparative Metadata Work Group, the standing Alma/Primo Advisory Committee, and the Ad Hoc Library Website Redesign Workgroup; all three groups have begun their work. The Data Services Workgroup has 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 has completed their work, and the new Rapido system went live on July 1, 2025.

Transformative Learning Experiences and Internships

: 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

Target Date	Goal(s)
FY25	● Begin to establish guidelines for internships and residencies within VCUL - *complete*
FY28	● Use student/hourly, grant or development funds to support Transformative Learning Experiences or internship positions - *in progress* ● Develop and promote a central web resource (libguide) to promote library support of transformational learning projects housed in other units - *complete* ● 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

Date of Report	Progress
8/1/2024	This year we committed to developing a LibGuide to promote library support of transformational learning projects housed in other units. Scholarly Communications Librarian Hillary Miller has completed the LibGuide, and work is ongoing to refine the guide and plan to manage, update, and promote it. Organizational Development plans to make additional progress on the development of transformative learning and internships later this year, after the HR Director position is filled.
8/1/2025	Guidelines for internships and residencies have been drafted and are under review.

Advance Student Holistic Well-Being

: 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 - *complete for FY25* - Maintain average attendance at StudyWell events (10-15 people per event) - *complete for FY25*
FY24	- Refine StudyWell portfolio of events to advance student well-being based on student feedback - *complete* - Define priority groups for enhanced outreach and services - *in progress*
FY26	- Create briefs describing outreach strategies and initiatives devoted to prioritized groups. - Strengthen partnerships with campus groups also focused on advancing student well-being to enhance programming and services. - Develop and integrate teaching techniques that offer multiple ways for students to communicate and participate in classes.
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.

Progress Highlights

Date of Report	*Progress*
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. We 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, we 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. We 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 have been 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 has completed their work; their report is under review and decisions will be made in the coming year about implementation.

External Community Engagement

: 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

Target Date	Goal(s)
FY23	● Convene/Charge VCU Libraries Events Programming Committee - *complete* ● ~~Develop experience survey for use at VCU Libraries sponsored lecture series~~ - *goal updated, see below*
FY24	● Identify opportunities for VCU Libraries' to partner with

	university-community engagement - *in progress* ● Develop an exhibition and programming model in Special Collections and Archives and work with key stakeholders to finalize processes and pilot the model - *complete*
FY25	● ~~Launch VCU Libraries sponsored lecture series focus group to understand lecture series impact and interest better~~ - *goal updated, see below* ● Assess the impact and attendee interest in the VCU Libraries sponsored lecture series to inform future programming - *in progress* ● Align VCU Libraries high school outreach program with Richmond Talent Pathway Program - *complete*
FY28	● Assess sustainability and reach of Special Collections and Archives exhibitions and programs, make adjustments, and fully implement the program. ● Increase grant funding for Health and Wellness Library community engagement efforts with an external group.

Progress Highlights

Date of Report	*Progress*
8/1/2024	One of our 2024 goals was to develop an exhibition and programming model in Special Collections and Archives. SCA has created a new internal working group to coordinate, contribute, and plan outreach. They are 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 has 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 have been 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.

Foster a Healthy and Successful Learning Organization

: 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

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

Progress Highlights

Date of Report	Progress
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 has 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 have 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.

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

*Language revised to reflect August 2025 updated VCU Quest 2028 goals

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