Western
Libraries

Forward Together

Land Acknowledgement

Western University is located on the territories of the Anishinaabek, Haudenosaunee, Lūnaapéewak and Attawandaron Nations, on lands connected with the London Township and Sombra Treaties of 1796 and the Dish with One Spoon Covenant Wampum. This land continues to be home to diverse Indigenous Peoples (First Nations, Métis, and Inuit) whom we recognize as contemporary stewards of the land and vital contributors of our society.

As knowledge stewards, Western Libraries has a responsibility to reflect Indigenous communities through collections, facilities, and services that acknowledge, represent, and celebrate Indigenous contributions and experiences. Through this strategic plan, developed in consultation with Indigenous community members, we commit to build reciprocal relationships that will guide the fulfilment of the Truth and Reconciliation Commissions' Calls to Action for academic research libraries, to decolonize access and classification schemes, and to integrate Indigenous ways of knowing into library and archives practice. Together as a staff group, we will engage in training and development about the impact of white supremacy and colonialism in libraries, and ethically engage in Indigenization of library practices and policies.

Welcome from Catherine

I am delighted to share Western Libraries 2022-2028 Strategic Plan with the community. Many hands and many minds have contributed to its creation. Thank you to everyone who participated in our survey and stakeholder consultations, and to the Strategic Planning Committee and Project Management Team for your leadership and contribution to these aspirations and strategic directions.

Towards Western at 150 sets forward an inspiring vision of greater impact and growth for the University and positions Western Libraries as foundational for all of Western's research, scholarship and creative activities. Western Libraries is an active agent – a partner in scholarship and research – and a catalyst for learning and knowledge creation.

This plan demonstrates our commitment to equity, diversity, and inclusion and underscores just how integral building and fostering relationships is to all that we do. Collaborative effort in the decolonization and Indigenization of Western Libraries' services and collections continues apace and will be an area of focussed activity for some time to come. We are dedicated to creating accessible services and to creating a safe and welcoming environment where all feel that they belong.

These values infused the dialogue with students, faculty, campus and community partners and library staff and set an intention that is woven throughout the plan.

As we work together and engage as a community to advance student success, enrich the student experience, and stimulate research and creativity, Western Libraries will continue the dialogue and welcome a diversity of perspectives and ideas about how we may best realize these strategies and desired outcomes.

Sincerely,

Catherine Steeves
Vice-Provost and Chief Librarian

The Journey

677 Students

86 Faculty

68 Campus Partners

The strategic planning journey for Western Libraries was launched by Towards Western at 150. The University's strategic plan sets a path for Western of greater impact through: strategic growth; increased reach of research, scholarship, and creative activity; and, through innovative teaching and the development of exceptional students. It commits Western to greater equity, diversity, and inclusion and to fostering community and a sense of belonging. And, it positions Western's place in the world and its commitment to the local and global community as a top priority. Long viewed as the heart of the University, Western Libraries is well-situated to help achieve Western's aspirations.

The development of this new strategic plan was an opportunity to view Western Libraries from a variety of perspectives and to engage in important dialogue and relationship building. The Centre for Organizational Effectiveness (CfOE) and the Strategic Planning Committee (SPC) designed and facilitated an engagement process with key library stakeholders - including students, faculty, University and community partners, and library staff - to identify how we will move forward, together.

The process was anchored in relationship between people, ideas, themes, and systems, and provided opportunities for all voices to be heard. A variety of ways to participate and to gather insights and ideas were used, such as surveys, reflective practice, and focus groups. The CfOE process is grounded in the perspectives of organizational learning, anti-oppression, and decolonization. Throughout, there was an intentional focus on equity, diversity, and inclusion as well as Indigenization.

Three spheres of insight informed the dialogue and discussion:

- Environmental context – an environmental scan was completed to identify major trends impacting academic libraries, higher education, and research institutions

- Internal data – data was compiled and shared to inform data-driven decision making

- Stakeholders perspectives – multimodal consultations for community and campus insight

45 Community Partners

77 Library Staff

75 Summit Participants

All of the research and stakeholder input was brought together in a comprehensive Discovery Report. A Strategic Planning Summit, open to all Western Libraries staff and members of the campus and London community, was held by the SPC to reflect on the Discovery Report. The Summit encouraged curiosity, reflection, conversation, and active listening. Through the Summit dialogue, focus shifted from individual to collective ideas, from the 'I' to the 'we', with the following strategic priorities for the work of the organization emerging.

The process centered the following principles:

- **Diversity of Voices:** In the work with stakeholders, a variety of ways were provided for people to share their perspectives and ideas, and the survey data was disaggregated to ensure that the voices of respondents who identify as Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour or who have disabilities were amplified.

- **Organizational Learning:** Western Libraries staff who participated in this process were encouraged to approach the Discovery Report and other feedback from a place of curiosity, challenging their assumptions and focusing on what could be learned from the information gathered. Throughout the process, participants were invited to reflect on the data, the emerging dialogue, and their own work. The understanding was that the plan would not be perfect but that the process would move us forward as an organization. If Western Libraries continues to foster relationships and to encourage dialogue and community engagement, the plan will evolve and improve as we move forward, together.

After countless hours of gathering and analyzing information, of listening and learning, of holding the tension of complexity and intersectionality, and wrestling with all of the information, ideas, and voices heard, Western Libraries is excited to share the results of our collective work.

1 Catalyze Research, Scholarship, and Creative Activity

Goals

- Build and steward our diverse collections to enable discoveries that address the grand challenges of our time
- Advance the work of research partners throughout the research cycle
- Provide leadership in data management, statistical, and geospatial services
- Create and leverage digital environments to advance knowledge creation and dissemination
- Champion and enable a campus culture of open access for publishing, educational resources, and data

Outcomes

- Students, faculty, and researchers are able to find and access the tools, data, collections, and resources they need to support their scholarship, research, and creative activity
- Researchers have the knowledge and skills they need to advance their research goals
- Researchers value Western Libraries staff as contributing members of the research enterprise
- Researchers consider open access as a valued, sustainable option when engaging in research, scholarship, and teaching

Measures of Success

- Satisfaction with collections and research services
- Usage of physical and digital collections
- Percentage of new ebook acquisitions Digital Rights Management-free and usage of Digital Rights Management-free ebooks
- Number of items hosted in and downloads from Scholarship@Western, and number of open access journals hosted
- Number of research-focused events, programs, and workshops run by Western Libraries and with campus partners. Number of participants reached
- Implementation of campus Research Data Management (RDM) planning strategy
- Students, faculty, and researchers articulate how collections support their scholarship, research, and creative activity
- Students, faculty, and researchers articulate the value of Western Libraries for their research

2 Foster the Development of Library Research Skills, Knowledge, and Values

Goals

- Teach scholars to think critically about the value and limitations of information and data including the inherent biases that exist in the creation and dissemination of knowledge
- Advance and contribute to Western's teaching mission and innovative practices in partnership with the campus community
- Develop innovative pedagogies and instructional programming that challenges racist and colonial beliefs, systems and structures
- Expand outreach and support for diverse learner groups
- Advance faculty and student understanding of the research library including our expertise, collections, and facilities
- Contribute to the University's increased commitment to technology enhanced teaching and learning modalities

Outcomes

- Students will demonstrate the knowledge, skills and values outlined in Western Libraries new learning outcomes
- Faculty value and integrate the new Western Libraries learning outcomes into their curriculum
- Students and faculty use the services and resources available to support them in their teaching and learning
- Diverse communities are involved in and participate in curricular and co-curricular programming
- Students are aware of and pursue experiential learning and student research opportunities available through the Libraries

Measures of Success

- Satisfaction with instruction and reference services
- Number of instruction sessions aligned with the new curriculum
- Number of professional development sessions offered for faculty and graduate students
- Number of faculty members and graduate students engaged through professional development sessions

3 Enhance the Student Experience

Goals

- Create services and learning environments that enable student success
- Partner with students to build programming and services that reflect their diverse needs
- Collaborate with campus partners to enrich the student experience

Outcomes

- Students can articulate the impact Western Libraries has on their success
- Students have confidence in navigating resources and library spaces
- Students feel included as critical partners in the design of spaces, services, and programming

Measures of Success

- Number of events held in library spaces in collaboration with campus partners
- Number of programs and services offered with campus partners
- Number of student participants in student advisory group
- Outreach and engagement strategy complete and implementation proceeding according to timeline
- Students articulate impact of libraries on their success
- Students report feelings of safety and belonging

4 Partner to Create an Inclusive Library That Values Indigenous Peoples, Perspectives, and Ways of Knowing

Goals

- Build reciprocal relationships with Indigenous communities
- Fulfill our responsibilities to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) through the recommendations put forward by the Canadian Federation of Library Associations (CFLA)
- Decolonize collection access and classification by committing to integrate Indigenous ways of knowing

Outcomes

- Indigenous communities are involved in and represented in Western Libraries' work
- Staff understand their role in addressing systemic racism and colonialism in libraries
- Indigenous peoples see themselves accurately represented in the collections
- The community is able to find and access accurate and representative information about Indigenous People and their history

Measures of Success

- Staff participation and learning in training and professional development about the impact of white supremacy and colonialism in libraries and the Indigenization of library practices and policies
- Indigenous partners describe relationships with Western Libraries as respectful and mutual

5 Collaboratively Advance Equity, Inclusion, and Diversity, and Foster Belonging and Community at Western Libraries

Goals

- Enhance relationships with diverse communities that use Western Libraries services
- Co-create inclusive services and spaces
- Foster intentional campus partnerships to help students thrive
- Build and manage inclusive collections
- Foster a healthy organizational culture based in community and shared purpose
- Engage with staff to support their well-being

Outcomes

- Students, faculty, and researchers feel safe and included in library spaces and programming
- Students, faculty, and researchers feel represented by the Libraries' diverse staff complement
- Staff demonstrate cultural competency and incorporate practices of equity, diversity, inclusion, and reconciliation into their work
- Students, faculty, and researchers are able to navigate the library in order to access the spaces, collections, and services they need
- Staff feel engaged, successful, and appreciated in the work that they do
- Staff feel that their well-being is supported by the University and the library
- Staff have opportunities for professional development and growth

Measures of Success

- Satisfaction with collections, services, and resources that encourage diversity and inclusion
- Staff participation and learning in training and professional development on systemic racism and the implementation of anti-racist policies and practices
- Number of equity, diversity, inclusion, decolonization, Indigenization and/or accessibility (EDI-DIA) programs and events offered in collaboration with campus partners
- EDI-DIA self-study completed
- Plan in place for service and workplace initiatives informed by self-study, Western Equity Census, Canadian Association of Research Libraries (CARL) Diversity and Inclusion Study, and work with student, campus, and community partners
- Students, faculty, researchers, and staff report feelings of safety and belonging

6

Expand Our Services and Outreach to Local and Global Communities

Goals

- Build relationships and develop community engagement strategies with the broader London community
- Enhance services and support for faculty, students, and researchers working across Ontario, Canada and abroad
- Promote open scholarship and open science for the benefit of the global research community

Outcomes

- Community members are aware of and engage with library spaces, services, and programming
- Students, faculty, and staff working across Canada and abroad are satisfied with their access to the resources and services they need to support their work
- Global scholars are able to access digital research outputs and digitized unique and special collections

Measures of Success

- Satisfaction with access to online and physical materials
- Usage of Automated Fulfillment Network, Interlibrary Loans, and Pickup Anywhere services by Western researchers
- Usage of Automated Fulfillment Network, Interlibrary Loans and Pickup Anywhere services to share Western Libraries' materials with Ontario researchers
- Pickup Anywhere service in place

7 Foster Environmental Stewardship

Goals

- Support a culture of sustainability by encouraging eco-friendly practices
- Partner to educate on and model campus sustainability

Outcomes

- Library visitors model environmentally sound behaviours in library spaces
- Staff have the tools and support they need to reduce their climate impact
- Staff understand how to implement sustainable practices in their work

Measures of Success

- Alignment with University sustainability initiatives
- University score on Sustainability Tracking, Assessment & Rating System (STARS) self-reported sustainability assessment
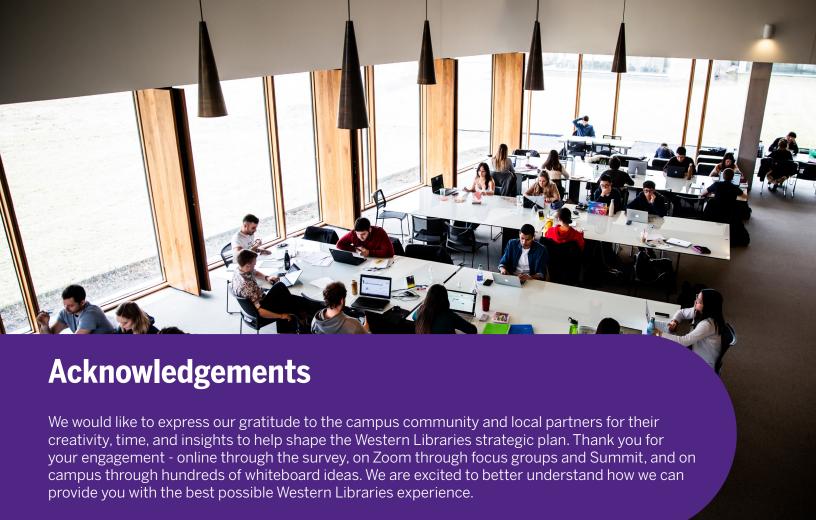
8 Support Western's Strategic Growth

Goals

- Advance the Master Space Plan to create facilities, information technology, and infrastructure that inspire discovery, learning, research and scholarship
- Invest in human resources to align with and advance Western's priorities and maximize impact

Outcomes

- Students, faculty, and researchers are aware of and find a variety of learning and research environments to support independent and collaborative work
- Students, faculty, researchers, and library staff have access to technology and facilities they need to support their work
- Students, faculty, and researchers can access the expertise they need through well-staffed library services
- Staff are able to maintain a sustainable workload while meeting the diverse service, programming, and technology needs of students and faculty

Measures of Success

- Satisfaction with library spaces and role as community hub
- Use of library spaces
- Completion of Weldon Library revitalization according to funding timelines
- Students, faculty, and researchers articulate how they use library spaces for discovery, learning, research, scholarship, creative activity

Acknowledgements

We would like to express our gratitude to the campus community and local partners for their creativity, time, and insights to help shape the Western Libraries strategic plan. Thank you for your engagement - online through the survey, on Zoom through focus groups and Summit, and on campus through hundreds of whiteboard ideas. We are excited to better understand how we can provide you with the best possible Western Libraries experience.

Strategic Planning Committee

We also thank the Strategic Planning Committee for their work to-date on the strategic planning process, and the work yet-to-come to implement the strategic plan.

Western Libraries

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