



**STRATEGIC PLAN**

**2021-2025**

# **Library and Information Service**

# INTRODUCTION

The North-West University (NWU) Library and Information Service (LIS) hereby presents its next five year strategic priority areas which are based on the NWU strategy for 2015–2025. This follows the successful execution of the LIS' first integrated strategic plan for 2015 to 2020, as corroborated by a panel of peer reviewers in October 2021.



In line with the University's strategy statement; 'to transform and position the NWU as a unitary institution of superior academic excellence, with a commitment to social justice', the LIS' first integrated strategic plan focused on repositioning the libraries across campuses as high contributors to teaching, learning and research.

The current 2021 - 2025 strategy takes the LIS and the University to the next higher level. Areas of major focus in the current strategy include the enablement and dissemination of the NWU research to the entire world, as well as ensuring that library users at all levels of study and work, are adequately empowered in terms of skills needed to navigate a 21st century library and information service.

Let's walk this journey together.

## OUR STRATEGY STATEMENT

To give effect to the University strategy by positioning the NWU Library and Information Service within the teaching-learning, research and public engagement functions of the University through the provision of access to world-class information resources and services.

## OUR DREAM (vision)

To be distinguished as a leading university library in Africa and beyond, known for commitment to partnership in student success, esteemed open scholarship and research.

## OUR PURPOSE (mission)

The NWU Library and Information Service provides access to cutting-edge and impactful resources and services to fulfil academic expectations of our user communities in a professional, creative and innovative manner.

## OUR VALUES

The LIS embeds the following foundational values, based on the constitutional values of human dignity, equality and freedom, and subscribes to the following client focused values:

**ETHICS IN ALL ENDEAVOURS**

*OPENNESS AND TRANSPARENCY*

**INTEGRITY**

*EMBRACING DIVERSITY*

**ACCOUNTABILITY**

*fairness*



# 1. CONTENT DISCOVERY



The North-West University (NWU) LIS is committed to develop balanced information resources and services to fulfil academic expectations of diverse user communities in discovery of knowledge sources. A good and relevant collection of information resources stimulates success in all endeavours. To keep to this value proposition, the following objectives will be vigorously pursued in the next five years:

## Objective 1: Augment library collections

- Develop and manage physical and digital collections
- Accelerate effective acquisitions sourcing techniques
- Assess and analyse collection strength and gaps
- Improve and expand collections in all formats
- Increase digital content
- Host physical and virtual exhibitions

## Objective 2: Enhance discoverability of collections

- Promote discovery of information resources
- Improve accessibility of library resources
- Accrue new subject areas material for growth and depth
- Frequent review of service supply contracts
- Curate and restore library materials with rich content

## Objective 3: Generate user analytics

- Develop collection measurement metrics, and analyse data for reporting learners use contexts
- Improve understanding and optimise learning environments
- Improve learning and course outcomes
- Develop more engaged and effective teaching and learning techniques

## Objective 4: Provide support for discovery

- Institute training programmes for staff to be well poised to meet demands
- Facilitate project initiatives that enhance library services
- Provide support for metadata creation
- Develop, review and monitor policies
- Conduct frequent quality control

## Objective 5: Explore new revenue generation measures

- Foster equitable resource allocation mechanisms
- Apply innovative budgeting methods
- Optimise bindery services to generate third stream income
- Implement cost effective purchasing mechanisms to meet cost reduction targets



## 2 INNOVATE AND INTEGRATE

The Library and Information Service aims to provide integrated library systems and infrastructure configured for the next generation user preferences to support teaching, learning and research. With this aim in mind, the following objectives shall be advanced:

### Objective 1: Integrate technology for seamless systems operations

- Integrate library resources and services in support of learning, research and outreach
- Investigate, assess and evaluate the next-generation open systems
- Agile response to global and national impacts
- Implement cloud-based technologies
- Enhance multi-media learning through social network platforms
- Make libraries as accessible digitally as it is physically

### Objective 2: Implement intelligent technologies

- Be on the forefront of emerging technologies
- Introduce artificial intelligent technology solutions
- Implement Self-help tools and Robotics
- Develop and implement a new statistical reporting system

### Objective 3: Enhance e-Resources authentication and IT security awareness

- Implement a secure e-resource authentication for seamless access
- Conform and adhere to university IT security policy in relation to enhanced information and resources access.
- Maintain vigilance within the institution by cooperating with the internal (IT) Audit department and information security

### Objective 4: Enhance Discoverability

- Implement integrated Text Finding tools
- Implement Learning Analytics to support engaged, and effective teaching and learning techniques
- Partake in cooperative national-level engagement initiatives
- Provide technical support to staff and students

### Objective 5: Support e-Learning

- Embrace immersive learning with Virtual Reality(VR) and Augmented Reality (AR)
- Promote real time learning via live stream platforms
- Provide seamless access to electronic resources and services
- Support technical scientific e-research user needs
- Provide IT support for initiated projects

### 3. INFORM, EDUCATE AND COMMUNICATE



NWU promotes excellent learning and teaching and reposition the NWU to attain the size and shape required by the market direction decisions (NWU Goal 1) and develops a clearly differentiated student value proposition with a focus on creating an inclusive environment aimed at developing students holistically through structured and unstructured co-curricular programmes which are relevant, desirable, and meet students' needs (NWU Goal 4). The NWU LIS is committed to ensure strategic collaboration, expand and strengthen our support for teaching and learning and to create an environment that connects users with the information they need to build knowledge. In this regard, the LIS seeks to advance the following objectives which will be further articulated in the annual departmental work plan:

#### Objective 1: Provide information literacy

- Instruct users to navigate and use information effectively.
- Evaluate services, learning and information needs.
- Create and integrate an information literacy program.
- Promote embedded librarianship and services.
- Implement information literacy learning outcomes in courses.
- Update online tutorial content addressing curriculum content and critical thinking skills.
- Articulate and promote, within the library and across campus, the library's role in developing student academic literacy.

#### Objective 2: Foster positive experiences for library users

- Foster collaboration with faculty and students.
- Improve user services to ensure satisfaction at all points of contact.
- Improve communication in understanding library services.
- Implement a user-friendly online library experience that promotes learning.
- Communicate to, and support users with new tools and systems implemented by LIS.
- Implement and ensure Digital Citizenship in a 21st century academic library

#### Objective 3: Become a valued partner in the academic environment

Strengthen library faculty collaboration.

- Embed library work in Faculties.
- Implement a pro-active approach to curriculum support.
- Support new forms of teaching, learning and research through technology, services and partnership with faculty and academic support units.
- Collaborate, connect and partner with faculties to enhance LIS impact.
- Support new proposed programs.



## 4. ENABLE AND DISSEMINATE

It is the policy of the NWU that research be conducted in identified Research Entities, which strengthens and promotes research and innovation with strategic focus on impactful globalisation. Therefore, it is imperative that knowledge produced at the University is shared and/or is openly accessible to the local and international communities. Moreover, the University strives to equip its students with the competencies to discover knowledge in order to prepare them to become productive members of their academic and professional communities. The LIS contributes to these endeavours through the following objectives:

### Objective 1: Promote open scholarship

- Enhance the global visibility of NWU's research.
- Provide services to support the full cycle of research.
- Communicate and educate services to researchers such as Open Access, Open Data, OER and Open innovation principles.
- Implementation the Open Access policy.
- Establish open access publishing support fund and transformative agreements.
- Support and guide on publications in nationally and internationally accredited high impact factor, open access, indexed journals.

### Objective 2: Establish a supportive research infrastructure and environment

- Equip research commons with relevant research tools and software.
- Establish a Digital Scholarship Centre in the NWU libraries.
- Digitise valuable and useful institutional non born digital collections in order to improve their usage and impact.
- Develop virtual research services to remote users.
- Optimise and update the institutional repositories (Boloka and DaYta Ya Rona).
- Protect and preserve NWU research output and datasets

### Objective 3: Promote and foster data literacy

- Promote data literacy among researchers and NWU community at large.
- Host webinars, presentations, and other events on topics of interest.
- Support emerging and established researchers with research data services.
- Support scholarly publishing literacy.

### Objective 4: Expand the catalogue of research services

- Support, contribute and maximise e-Research practices.
- Leverage digitisation projects to provide electronic and remote access to special collections.
- Support the embeddedness of librarians throughout the research life cycle.
- Enrich open educational resources.

### Objective 5: Improve LIS reputation and perception

- Collaborate with researchers on key and relevant projects such as improvement of bibliometrics and webometrics
- Get buy-in from the researchers to publish their research output and data.
- Enhance the support for Author' Profiles and ORCID iD.
- Ensure discoverability and accessibility to the global scholarly community.
- Support researchers in creating data management plans.
- Measure and communicate research impact.

## 5 ENCOURAGE AND EMPOWER



The North-West University is committed to providing employees the opportunity to undergo appropriate skills development and formal training to meet the responsibilities of their employment effectively. In pursuit of this strategic area, the NWU Library and Information Service is committed to ensuring that its employees are well developed in order to perform their duties expertly and diligently. It is our realisation that a skilled workforce is the most productive and therefore most relevant to the core business of the parent institution. With this recognition in mind, we shall:

### Objective 1: Develop skills for the digital environment

- Staff profiling with the future in mind.
- Identify areas for development.
- Invest in digital capabilities of staff - reskill and retool.

### Objective 2: Attract, appoint and retain staff with expert skills

- In close liaison with the People & Culture division, identify & hire skilled personnel with relevant skills required in the future.
- Repurpose positions to adapt to changing needs.
- Benchmark staff profiles with other universities of similar size.
- Conduct skills audit to identify areas of need.

### Objective 3: Support online networking

- Identify relevant online workshops and conferences for staff participation.
- Develop staff skills for both virtual & face to face networking and collaboration.

### Objective 4: Provide support for skills transfer

- Identify champions and initiate skills transfer workshops at various work levels.
- Constitute teams to champion change such as Library planning and policy team, 4IR, data metrics and e-Research.
- Attach staff members who have been identified for possible takeover of positions arising from retirements.
- Identify and promote local and international staff exchange initiatives.





## 6. ENGAGE AND POSITION

The North-West University is committed to position itself as a unitary institution of academic excellence, with a commitment to social justice.

In line with this, the Library and Information Service is committed to position itself as a valued and innovative partner, to contribute to academic excellence in providing user-focused library spaces and promote a quality culture of never-ending improvement. In line with this value proposition, the following objectives will guide the library work for the next five years up to 2025:

### Objective 1: Position the LIS within and outside the NWU community

- Be recognised as a major contributor to the university's success.
- Shift the LIS from inward processes to focus on the university's plan.
- Raise the library's profile that the LIS is a sought-after partner in university-wide initiatives.
- Increase visibility and institutional awareness of library's achievements, value and impact.
- Expand engagement with the broader community by implementation of its expertise.
- Join and take active part in local and international library organisations such as LIASA, CHELSA, IATUL and IFLA.
- Form strong partnerships and collaborate with internal stakeholders such as IT, T&L development units, Facilities, Protection services, Student support, SRC and Disability Rights Units.

### Objective 2: Invest in transformational spaces

- Reimagine and repurpose spaces in all libraries to adapt to changing users' needs.
- Invest in physical and virtual spaces that are flexible, innovative and welcoming.
- Develop a long-term strategy for the systematic renewal of all library spaces.
- Ensure that the maximum appropriate use is made of the existing infrastructure.
- Zone the libraries' spaces for social learning, individual study and collaboration.

### Objective 3: Ensure quality assurance

- Promote the development of a culture of quality in all aspects of the LIS.
- Set up a periodic review of assessment procedures and evaluation metrics.
- Comply with quality assurance standards.
- Assist in NWU quality assurance initiatives and activities.
- Conduct self and peer evaluations in order to determine points of strengths and weaknesses.
- Develop improvement plans from survey and reviews and implement them for the benefit of the institution's core business.



<https://library.nwu.ac.za/>