



The British Library's Strategy 2008 – 2011

Overview

As a great national and research library we have responsibility both for our recorded past and access to present day content for researchers and for future generations. The environment in which we operate has arguably changed more in the past two decades than in the preceding two centuries, driven particularly by technological developments. Such change is gradually transforming traditional scholarly dependency on the physical library as a major source for meeting research needs into a complex network of options, with varying levels of accessibility, authoritativeness and depth.

Across disciplines there remain widely differing expectations of the role of the library but research increasingly functions in a world of e-resources, virtual tools and collaborative communities, and choice of where to work physically. The commercial sector and the web shape expectations for rapid service innovation, access and easy processes. But at its core the British Library aims to provide resources, tools, experts and services to inspire creativity and to support a vibrant and diverse research population.

The British Library's strategy for 2008 – 2011 builds on the foundations we established through our strategy for 2005 – 2008. We will build on existing strengths and seize opportunities to enhance our proposition to researchers and business. We will develop strategic collaborations in those areas of activity likely to benefit most from partnership working.

In addition we intend to continue our distinctive public, educational and cultural programme, delivered both on-site and virtually. We will also lay the groundwork for a new digital research centre and services in support of UK biomedical research.

Over the coming months we will develop a vision for 2020 through which we hope to refresh the public debate on how a great national and research library contributes to the intellectual, social and economic success of the nation as the digital era enters its third decade.

OUR PURPOSE

- Advancing the world's knowledge.

OUR VISION

- We are central to the world of research, providing a trusted source of content that opens minds, solves problems and creates opportunities.
- We provide services to anyone who wants to do research. We aim to provide both physical and digital access to world-class information where and when people need it.
- We inspire people around the world with our outstanding content and expertise and we complement this by engaging the knowledge and expertise of others where it adds to the quality of experience for our users.
- By providing these services effectively, the British Library plays a vital role in society and the economy, both today and for future generations.

DELIVERING OUR STRATEGY

Action Plan for 2009/10

We have an innovative and exciting programme to deliver. These are the highlights for 2009/10. We will report progress and achievements in our Annual Report for 2009/10.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 1

Capture extensively and store UK digital publications

- Continue to work through the Legal Deposit Advisory Panel (LDAP) of which the British Library is a member, to make recommendations to Ministers on how to collect digital publications.
- Continue to collect offline digital items, e-journals and publicly available web content through voluntary schemes.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 3

Transform access and preservation for newspapers

- Continue to implement the plan for a dedicated newspaper storage building at Boston Spa and state of the art digital access to newspapers, working closely with the newspaper industry, at our St Pancras site in London.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 5

Build our digital infrastructure

- Continue to develop the digital library system to provide storage, preservation and long-term access to digital material.
- Continue to lead development of the European Union funded PLANETS Project in which national libraries and other bodies are developing a framework to support the long-term preservation of digital material.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 6

Integrate storage and preservation of physical collections

- Implement the Collection Security Workplan to safeguard and steward the national collection and enhance the security of vulnerable material.
- Begin relocating collection items to the newly built high-density book storage facility at Boston Spa and commence retrieval and delivery services.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 2

Connect our users with content

- Enhance access to the Library's digital material by extending the scope of our resource discovery system to new content including newspapers, journal articles, audio and the web archive.
- Pilot the creation of scanned catalogue data as an alternative to traditional cataloguing.
- Continue to develop an integrated system for the provision of access to the Library's archives and manuscripts.
- Integrate Web 2.0 approaches more deeply into the Library's website and online discovery tools to improve the user experience.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 4

Support UK research with innovative services and integrated processes

- Work in partnership with the Higher Education Funding Council for England and the Higher Education community led by Imperial College London to implement the UK Research Reserve which will secure long-term access to research journals.
- Modernise the search, ordering and delivery mechanism used for the Library's remote document supply services to Higher Education.
- Establish the potential for the development of the land to the North of the St Pancras site and continue to develop the case for the creation of a digital research centre.
- Continue to develop a Research Information Centre in partnership with Microsoft. Launch a full beta service for biomedical researchers.
- Implement the Library's Science Technology and Medicine (STM) content strategy. Assess user needs and behaviour to develop new products and services exploiting STM material. Test the incorporation of datasets as a content type.
- Continue to engage with the World Collections Programme which aims to share British cultural and curatorial expertise with institutions particularly in Africa and Asia.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 7

Develop as an organisation

- Continue to develop and implement an integrated Talent Development and Succession Planning framework.
- Continue to develop and implement the Library's Corporate Social Responsibility Strategy which supports the quality of life of the workforce and impacts positively on the community, wider society and the environment.
- Continue to develop and implement the Library's Diversity Strategy to build a diverse workforce and increase engagement with wider communities.