

# **Oberlin Group of Libraries: Vision, Mission, Values, and Strategic Directions**

*Approved May 2020*

## **Vision**

A nationally recognized, forward-thinking community that articulates and shares inclusive and inspiring models to advance the critical role of libraries in transformative liberal arts education.

## **Mission**

The Oberlin Group leverages our diversity as a community, our commitment to continuous evolution as an organization, and our collective wisdom to enable the building of effective and sustainable library programs. As advocates for the role of libraries in transforming teaching, learning, and research, we anticipate and address evolving challenges and opportunities in support of our liberal arts institutions.

## **Shared Values**

- Commits to the values and intentional practices of enhancing diversity, equity, and inclusion.
- Cultivates a collegial spirit and works to foster an atmosphere of mutual respect, open-mindedness, and reflection through open communication and continuous learning.
- Recognizes participation as an essential responsibility of all its members and that shared governance involves inclusive, participatory processes, and transparent decision making.
- Balances thoughtful consideration of important questions with efficient decision-making to enable forward motion on shared initiatives.

## **Strategic Directions**

### **Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion**

Support member libraries engaging around the issues of diversity, equity, and inclusion to advance their goals.

- Develop members' cultural competence to help the Oberlin group deliver on its mission for equitable and inclusive excellence, leveraging diversity as a strategic strength and asset.
- Collaborate across member libraries to develop equitable and inclusive services, spaces, collections, and resources to better serve the teaching, learning, and research of our increasingly diverse campuses.
- Partner within the Oberlin Group and with other national library organizations to create cross-institutional career exploration and advancement structures for underrepresented groups in academic libraries.
- Work together across institutions to ensure that our liberal arts college library organizations are structured around diversity as a strategic asset to be developed and nurtured.

### **Strengthen Our Community**

Focusing together on our core mission as liberal arts college library leaders, enhance opportunities to share ideas and perspectives, effective practices, and mutual support as we lead our organizations and advance liberal arts education.

- Build into all of our Oberlin Group programs a recognition that all bring significant and diverse forms of experience, context, and expertise to our shared endeavors as an organization.
- Experiment with structures to sustain and connect the Oberlin Group members, enhancing past practices of orientation for new Oberlin Group directors, peer mentorship program, annual meeting, and email communications and building on new practices such as virtual meet-ups, web conferences on topics of shared interest, and development of shared statements to address issues of common concern at the national level.
- Leverage the diverse forms of expertise within our organizations and creating professional development opportunities by enabling our staff to share best practices, explore innovation, and learn together from successes and failures across institutions.
- Expand the capabilities of the group by developing new avenues for collaboration and leadership. Foster innovative practices by creating structures that support cross-institutional exploration of new technologies, policies, organizational practices, or possible new directions for our libraries.

## **Universal Access to Scholarship**

Oberlin Group members share a belief that scholarship and data should be universally accessible and equally available to scholars and readers worldwide. As leaders we are committed to working towards this goal through a range of actions, in order to make resources as open as possible and facilitate scholarship, teaching and learning both within and outside of our group.

- Communicate, as a group or individually, commitments or statements in support of projects that advance open access, open data, open educational resources, and open publishing.
- Contribute our unique liberal arts academic library perspective as a group or individually to national organizations or projects that are working towards these goals.
- Provide a forum for our members to discuss and initiate new projects in support of openness, recognizing that not all of our members may be able to provide financial support to such projects.
- Initiate and host discussions for our member libraries so that we can share institution-specific ways that we are individually supporting universal access to scholarship.