



LIGUE DES BIBLIOTHÈQUES EUROPÉENNES DE RECHERCHE
ASSOCIATION OF EUROPEAN RESEARCH LIBRARIES

Making the case for European research libraries

LIBER Strategic Plan 2009-2012

Final Version – November 2009

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*LIBER is a forum for issues that **really matter** to research
libraries and their parent institutions;
it is a unique network for the **exchange** of professional
expertise and a **strong voice** in the European library landscape*

1. Scope and limitations of this Strategic Plan

This LIBER Strategic Plan 2009-2012 provides a framework for the LIBER Strategy in the coming years. At LIBER Board meetings, progress will be monitored and future actions identified.

The Steering Committees, which the Board will establish, will also set Operational Plans, aligned with the LIBER Strategy. Progress in the Operational Plans will be monitored by the LIBER Board and, when necessary, actions for the future will be identified.

Where appropriate, progress in the LIBER Strategy and Steering Committees' Operational Plans will be monitored by Key Performance Indicators.

2. LIBER's mission

The statutes of the LIBER Foundation give the following mission statement:

The aim of the Foundation is to represent the interests of the research libraries of Europe, their universities and researchers. The Foundation promotes in particular:

- efficient information services;
- access to research information, in any form whatsoever;
- innovation in end-user services provided by research libraries in support of teaching, learning and research;
- preservation of cultural heritage;
- efficient and effective management in research libraries.

In order to fulfil these tasks the Foundation will develop and systematically support:

- the creation and development of a functional network of university libraries, national libraries and other research libraries in Europe;
- goal-oriented collaboration with other organisations in Europe and beyond.

3. Connecting and representing research libraries in Europe

There is a great need for European research libraries to meet and discuss strategic issues. LIBER offers them a **network** to enable this. LIBER wishes to develop this network still further into a forum where the exchange of information, documentation and experience, and professional collaboration are central elements. LIBER will particularly give attention to the involvement of senior and middle managers in its activities.

LIBER focuses on **European co-operation** as a vehicle for service improvement, collection management and the implementation of new developments. It plays a role as initiator and co-ordinator of strategic and innovative European projects. When projects come to an end, LIBER also plays a role in the conversion of projects into sustainable services.

LIBER will maintain and develop its privileged contacts with the European Commission, in order to **give the research libraries a voice** and strengthen their position in Europe.

LIBER has the ambition to represent all the major research libraries in Europe. It will invest in an **enlargement** of the number of institutions participating in LIBER (currently around 385, March 2009). Special attention will be given to the recruitment of new members in Central, Eastern and Southern Europe.

LIBER will actively promote **collaboration** between libraries, archives, galleries, museums and other cultural institutions.

4. Priorities

In 2009-2012 LIBER will give priority to the following areas:

- Scholarly communication
- Digitisation and resource discovery
- Heritage collections and preservation
- Organisation and human resources
- LIBER Services

5. Scholarly communication

The activities of this Steering Committee will focus on the following areas:

5.1 Open Access

LIBER will collaborate with SPARC Europe and DRIVER in such a way that it:

- avoids duplication of effort
- plays to the established strengths of both organisations and their brands
- maximizes the impact of the activities of both organisations

LIBER will undertake with SPARC and DRIVER joint initiatives in the area of Open Access and will support SPARC and DRIVER in their advocacy and lobbying activities.

In OA terms, LIBER will especially promote the **Green Road** (repositories) and will target libraries, the academic community and funding agencies for OA advocacy and education.

LIBER will focus on the following **activities**:

- develop and promote models (best practice) for an OA policy for HE institutions and funding agencies
- promote and develop international co-operation for repositories and their infrastructure
- collect and distribute best practice for repository tools
- promote the awareness and use of OA-friendly licenses, such as the licence to publish and licence to deposit developed by SURF
- continue taking a leading role in the CERN Workshops on Innovations in Scholarly Communication in Geneva

- continue to develop the DART-Europe portal as a principal gateway to European OA research theses

5.2 E-science, primary data, innovative research work flows

LIBER's engagement in e-science will be focused on educational and policy roles, and on strategic partnerships.

LIBER will compose a programme of work for the period 2009-2012.

The programme of work will be presented in a **Workshop** to be organised in 2010. Besides, this workshop should provide answers to the following questions:

- definition of e-science, e-research and other relevant concepts
- description and analysis of trends
- identification of opportunities for research libraries (new products and services): involvement in innovative scholarly communication workflows, creation of discovery and management systems for digital (primary) data, preservation of, permanent access to and sharing of digital (primary) data, and the role for institutional repositories
- description of the skills needed for information professionals and how they can be part of distributed (virtual) research teams
- impact on library infrastructures and resources
- impact on the nature of licensing agreements
- recommendations on strategies for research libraries

6. Digitisation and Resource Discovery

The practical remit of this Steering Committee will encompass the following issues:

- Assist European research libraries in developing a **digitisation strategy** for their collections
- Actively contribute to the digitisation of these collections through sharing of knowledge and best practice
- Involvement in European projects and dissemination of the results
- Promotion of collaboration in this field.

Take a joint lead in the organisation of the **LIBER-EBLIDA Digitisation Workshops**. Work with the LIBER-EBLIDA Joint Expert Group on Digitisation and Online Access to identify and document good practice in digitisation activity for LIBER and EBLIDA members.

Keep oversight for LIBER of externally-funded **digitisation and resource discovery projects** such as Europeana *Travel*, the planned portal whereby the metadata and full-text from LIBER libraries is available to TEL (The European Library) for discovery through Europeana.

Bidding for European monies for project work in the area of digitisation and resource discovery for research resources on behalf of LIBER members.

7. Heritage Collections and Preservation

This Steering Committee will work in two areas:

7.1 Heritage collections

This will be a joint Working Group of LIBER and CERL (Consortium of European Research Libraries). The ambition of this Working Group will be to act as the European grouping which oversees the management and use of heritage collections (e.g. rare books, manuscripts, archives, maps).

The practical remit of this Working Group should be developed further, but as a starting point the following Action Points, which have been described in the Final Report of the former LIBER Working Group on Special Collections (2007), are proposed:

Development of **standards** regarding:

- provenance information
- digital access technology
- union catalogues and federated special catalogues
- digitisation and presentation / the description and promotion of special collections on the web

Collection development

- publication of collection development plans and related activity

Combined **access and preservation issues** (through digitisation):

- initiation of a project similar to the EOD project (Electronic Books on Demand; www.books2ebooks.eu) for Special Collection materials
- initiation of joint digitisation projects and databases
- digitisation of early printed materials
- users and their needs
- cataloguing at collection level
- a Special Collections portal (in co-operation with the CERL Portal for Manuscripts and Early Printed Material)
- detailed cataloguing

Issues regarding **staff training and continuing professional development**

European collaboration issues

- collaborative projects at a European level
- exchange of information (Conferences, Seminars, and Workshops)
- history of collections (in collaboration with CERL)

7.2 Curation

The practical remit of this Working Group will encompass the following issues:

Curation and preservation of

- rare books
- drawings and etchings
- bindings
- photographic materials
- microforms
- audiovisual and video materials

- born-digital and digitised materials

Leadership in Europe in the field of **traditional conservation and preservation**

Advocacy and dissemination on traditional conservation and preservation practices and on the role and requirements of **digital curation** in research and national libraries

Identification of the role and responsibilities for European libraries in terms of collecting, describing, curating and preserving digital materials, especially but not limited to **primary data**

Organisation of the LIBER **Digital Curation Workshops**.

8. Organisation and Human Resources

Human Resources are key for any research library. Institutions need skilled library staff who are user-oriented, understand the research and educational process and are capable of continuously innovating library and information services.

Many libraries have great difficulties in filling vacant management positions, in particular senior management posts. This problem will become even more urgent when a complete generation of library leaders retires in the next five to ten years.

Career development and succession planning are topics that have been discussed at various times in LIBER Conferences. In various countries, leadership development programmes are currently being developed but **not yet** at the European level.

LIBER will take the initiative to organise a joint **Seminar** (round-table Conference) with participation from library organisations of various countries that are already developing or planning leadership development and career development programmes, such as ARL, RLUK and UKB. The goal of such a Seminar will be to exchange information and to identify opportunities for a joint approach.

LIBER's objective will be to **promote European co-operation** in this work. An international focus and international experiences are becoming increasingly important for library leaders, and it is interesting to see that senior positions in various countries are gradually being filled by library staff from other countries.

LIBER aims to develop an ambitious **international leadership development programme** to address leadership development in close co-operation with member libraries and national library organisations. LIBER will co-operate with the Ticer School which has a track record in developing high-level courses in all aspects of the digital library, change management and leadership development, and with other Associations involved in such programmes.

LIBER will investigate the possibility of establishing **accreditation criteria** for research library Directors at a European level, in particular via the analysis of recent job descriptions. The aim is to develop a common definition of competences that will facilitate the ability of staff to work beyond national boundaries.

The LIBER website will be upgraded and will **provide information** on:

- Conferences and Seminars that are relevant for library staff
- Training courses that are relevant for the development of skills and competences needed by library staff
- Resources for finding positions in LIBER libraries. This service will assist member institutions in attracting a qualified, talented, and diverse applicant pool

Quality measurement is increasingly important in terms of assessing the value and impact that libraries make in their institutions, particularly in the context of national and international League Tables and of national assessment activities.

Library services are becoming increasingly complex, and funding bodies are imposing growing demands for audits and accountability. This Steering Committee will cover topics like quality measurement, benchmarking, library statistics and international League Tables.

LIBER will offer support to its member institutions by providing opportunities for **benchmarking** and by offering a range of **tools** for quality assessment, peer review and key performance indicators. LIBER will encourage and facilitate the development of benchmarking in co-operation with other organisations (e.g. SCONUL, CENL), with the aim of identifying measurements independent of local culture, thus allowing for international comparisons.

LIBER will analyse developments in **electronic resources** and will seek to improve measurement of their use and impact amongst the LIBER membership.

LIBER will continue to work with ARL to develop a series of European versions of the **LibQUAL+** suite of services to solicit, track, understand, and act upon users' opinions of service quality. LIBER will pursue the co-operation with ADBU (Association des Directeurs de Bibliothèques Universitaires) and the French consortium of LibQUAL+ users about the progress and results of the online survey.

9. LIBER Services

9.1. Library Architecture

This grouping will continue the work and publications of the former LIBER Architecture Group.

A programme of work will be defined.

9.2. Security Network

LIBER will develop its existing Security Network further as a forum for advice to members on:

- protection against theft
- confidential reporting of both actual theft and suspicious activity
- the public relations aspects of the aftermath of actual theft – how to deal with enquiries from the Press and Government departments
- unsolicited requests for the sale of items from LIBER members' collections

Further enlargement of the Security Network will be studied.

A programme of work will be defined.

9.3. Library Passport

In the context of the Bologna process, LIBER is committed to drawing up a European library Passport, which will aid academic staff and researchers who wish to use a number of European research and national libraries. Modelled closely on the SCONUL framework in the UK, the Passport will deliver important benefits for Europe's researchers and students.

A programme of work will be defined.

10. Communications and Marketing

Excellent marketing and communication strategies are key for an organisation like LIBER, which aims to become the voice of European research libraries. LIBER will therefore invest in an **innovative communication strategy and active marketing campaigns**, with the aims of increasing the size of the LIBER membership (particularly in Central and Eastern Europe and Southern Europe), and of encouraging significantly more interaction and comment between LIBER members.

The LIBER Secretariat will specifically be in charge of the implementation of a communications and marketing strategy, in order to enhance the visibility of the LIBER brand, to increase the size of the LIBER membership and to communicate adequately with current and potential members/sponsors. LIBER will **co-ordinate** its actions in this area with SPARC Europe, CERL and other complementary organisations.

LIBER will develop its **website** into an attractive forum for information exchange with members and corporate partners. Secure pages will be further developed, containing documentation and information and resources, accessible for LIBER members only.

LIBER will set up **communications channels** that address participating institutions and institutions that are not (yet) participating in the LIBER family.

The Steering Committee will be responsible for overseeing LIBER's relationships with European library organisations and will oversee LIBER's work in this area, with the construction of a work programme to support this outreach.

LIBER will produce **promotional material** in languages that can be distributed during events (co-) organized by LIBER, or where LIBER is a guest speaker.

LIBER will systematically **seek input from its members** in order to determine LIBER's strategic directions and to formulate recommendations and position statements in areas of current concern that are generally supported, via prior consultation, by the community of European research libraries and their customers.

LIBER will appoint **ambassadors** in EU member countries to encourage institutions to join LIBER. These ambassadors will receive support from the LIBER Secretariat for the organisation of activities that spread news about LIBER activities and seek to achieve concrete European collaboration.

LIBER will publish its **history**, written by Professor Esko Häkli, former LIBER President.

11. Organisational structure and governance

After a review of LIBER strategy and structures in the course of 2008 and 2009, a new organisational structure will be established which meets the following criteria:

- to support LIBER's new strategy and priorities
- to reflect the totality of LIBER's activities and the dynamism and sense for innovation within these
- to be easy to adapt to a rapidly changing context

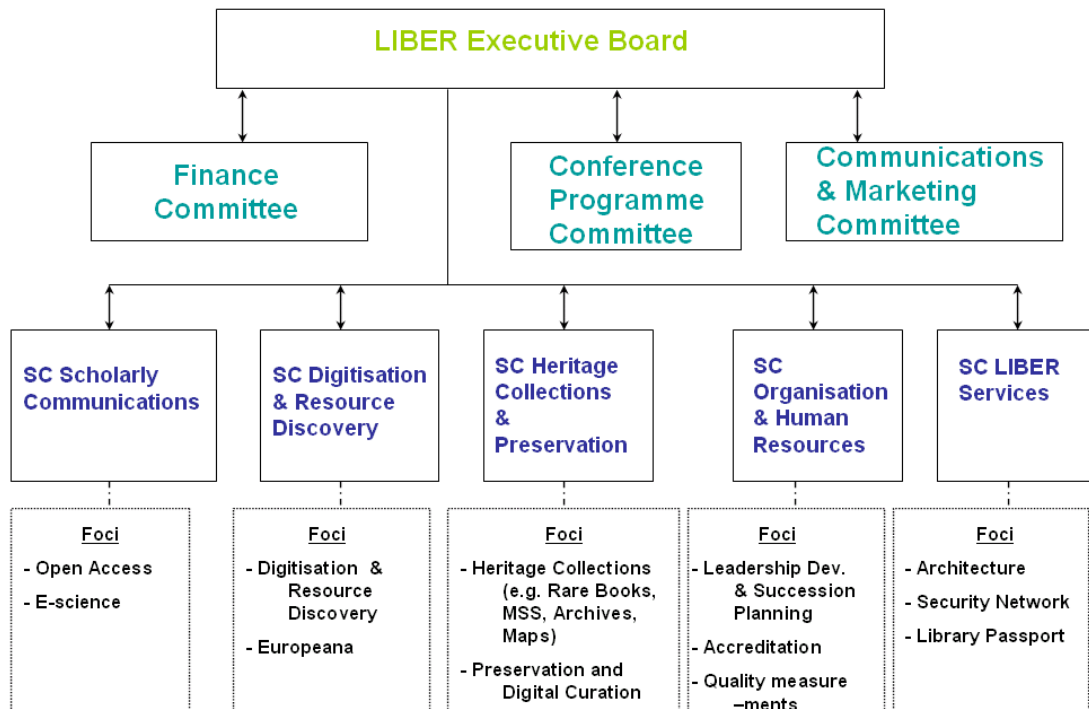
LIBER members will be encouraged to be candidates for appointment to the **Executive Board**, which determines policy and strategic directions for LIBER.

Each **Steering Committee** will have a Chair. The Chair will be appointed from among the members of the LIBER Board. Each Steering Committee will appoint a secretary.

The Steering Committee Chair will report to the Board three times a year in a **written Report** on the activities of his/her Steering Committee.

Any Board member can propose the establishment of a new Steering Committee to the Board. The establishment of these, the appointment of members and the Operational Plan, must be approved by the Board. The Board will ensure that the proposed programme of work fulfils LIBER's priorities.

The following structure will be established:



The role of Steering Committees is fourfold:

- (1) to scan the horizon for developments in their areas of interest and to identify gaps in provision and opportunities for LIBER
- (2) to use LIBER structures to keep in regular contact with LIBER members and to ascertain the latter's needs and preferences
- (3) to oversee the work of any subordinate groups which they may set up to tackle particular issues
- (4) to make **written reports** to the LIBER Board three times a year on the work of their Steering Committee and any subordinate groups the Steering Committee has established

Each Steering Committee will develop a number of foci, in which their work and interests are based. The Chairs of the Steering Committees should decide whether to cover such interests in the main Steering Committee meetings, or to establish a subordinate group of the Steering Committee to oversee such work.

Sub-divisions of a Steering LIBER Committee will comprise Working Groups, which report to the Steering Committee, and (if necessary) Expert Groups, which report to the Working Groups. Sub-divisions of the Steering Committee report to their parent body and, via the Steering Committee, to the LIBER Board. The chair of each Working Group and Expert Group will be a member of the Steering Committee.

The role of Working and Expert Groups is to implement a programme of work in a given area, with agreed deliverables and outcomes, in an agreed timeframe,

which support the remit of the Steering Committee. Each Working and Expert Group will report three times a year to its parent body. Working and Expert Groups will have a lifespan to be agreed by the Steering Committee and the LIBER Board.

The LIBER members and the LIBER Board will also be supported by three Standing Committees:

The **Conference Programme Committee**, chaired by the LIBER Vice-President, will oversee the construction of the academic programme for LIBER Annual Conferences.

The **Finance Committee** will be chaired by the LIBER Treasurer and be responsible for all financial matters pertaining to the operation of LIBER as an organisation, reporting to the Board.

The **Communications and Marketing Committee** will be responsible for PR activities which support the work of LIBER, for LIBER's day-to-day communication with members, including its web presences(s), and for LIBER publications. In terms of marketing, the Committee will be responsible for the recruitment of new members into LIBER and for devising strategies and supporting literature to encourage this growth. LIBER ambassadors, where they are appointed, will report to this Committee.

Each Steering Committee will be expected to bid for funding for **one European project supported by EU funding**. In order to apply for European funding, each Steering Committee should appoint a group of supporters who can oversee the project bid. Such a group **must** include the LIBER President, Vice-President, Treasurer and Director.

12. Corporate sponsorship

Many corporate bodies and corporations, which currently give financial support to LIBER's activities, wish to emphasise the partnership and collaboration which exist between them and LIBER. More and better partnerships (e.g. collaboration in concrete projects) with private companies will also be beneficial for LIBER and its members.

LIBER will establish with its Gold and Silver sponsors a **customized corporate partnership** and make this concrete in programmes of work that will be updated annually. Reports on these activities will be made to each LIBER Board meeting and will be co-ordinated by the LIBER Vice-President in collaboration with the LIBER Director.

LIBER will actively recruit new potential sponsors. LIBER's work in developing corporate partnerships, and in monitoring the resulting programmes of work, will be co-ordinated by the LIBER President and Vice-President, in collaboration with the LIBER Director, and be overseen jointly by the Finance Committee (in terms of levels of sponsorship), the Communications and Marketing Committee (in terms of recruiting new sponsors) and the relevant Steering Committees (in terms of the work programmes).

13. Conferences and Workshops

The organisation of Conferences and Workshops is one of the major services LIBER provides to its members, and to the European research community. These activities will be initiated and overseen by the relevant Steering Committees. In particular, the LIBER Conference Programme Committee will be responsible for the professional and academic programme of the Annual Conference.

14. Collaboration with other Library Organizations

LIBER has established **Memoranda of Understanding** with several library organisations in order to avoid overlap in activities and to support joint working in an efficient way. LIBER will continue working on the basis of these Memoranda of Understanding and deepen them through mutual representation, regular exchange of information and reports, presentations during each other's meetings, the organization of joint Conferences and Workshops, and the sharing of resources. The LIBER Vice-President will oversee and develop the Memoranda of Understanding with library organizations on behalf of LIBER and will report on the achievements of these Memoranda of Understanding to each LIBER Board meeting.

15. LIBER Quarterly

LIBER Quarterly is currently an open access, e-only publication. However, trends in communication and dissemination may mean that *LIBER Quarterly* is not the most appropriate means of dissemination to LIBER members. During the period of this Strategy, the role and purpose of *LIBER Quarterly* will be examined by a Working Group of the Communications and Marketing Committee, reporting to the LIBER Board. The outcome of this piece of work will be the identification of a publications strategy which is most appropriate for LIBER in a Web 2.0 environment.

While *LIBER Quarterly* exists, it will strive to obtain the **SPARC Seal of Open Access**. This Seal implies that *LIBER Quarterly* will use the Creative Commons (CC-BY) licence and will provide metadata for all its articles to the DOAJ (Directory of Open Access Journals), who will then make the metadata OAI-compliant. The CC-BY licence will be included in the instructions for contributors as of January 2009.

The entire LQ **archive** will be brought together on one website, Igitur's, and will be made Open Access.

16. Finances

Investment in staff has been made by LIBER in order to develop **more and better services** for members, with the hope of generating income to support LIBER activities.

Resources will be shared with other complementary library organisations whenever appropriate and useful for LIBER members.

LIBER will establish a **contribution** model which stimulates maximum participation and generates sufficient revenues for the further development of activities and services.

LIBER participants will benefit from a **significantly reduced fee** (min. 25%) for all LIBER activities.

Agreed by the LIBER Executive Board
on 22 October 2009