



جامعة الملك عبد الله
للعلوم والتقنية
King Abdullah University of
Science and Technology

University
Library

STRATEGIC PLAN, 2016—2021

Submitted on behalf of all University Library Staff by

Molly Tamarkin

Library Director

September 2016



جامعة الملك عبد الله
للعلوم والتقنية
King Abdullah University of
Science and Technology

University Library

Table of Contents

Introduction	3
Mission	3
Vision & Values	3
Our Environment.....	4
Long-term Goals	5
Short-term Goals: 2016-17.....	6
Process & Assessment	6

Introduction

The KAUST University Library's Strategic Plan is designed to be a working document updated annually at our planning retreat. The first edition began with the October 2014 Library Staff Retreat. This is our third iteration and results from our July 2016 Retreat.

The objective of our strategic plan is to gather our mission, vision, values, goals, and challenges into one reference to guide our future development. Our plan is our roadmap that shows us where we are going (vision) and how we will get there (values and goals). It identifies financial and environmental challenges and suggests strategies for success. The plan places our ongoing operational work and our strategic projects into a shared context, so that we can all participate in developing the Library.

Mission

The University Library builds on foundational research in information management to lead the development of methods and services to support the KAUST scientific community's advancement of knowledge. We provide services to share our scientific knowledge broadly to support its benevolent application. We preserve our knowledge to serve as a beacon for future generations.

Vision & Values

The University Library aspires to be one of the world's great libraries in the field of scientific research and to provide access to outstanding scientific accomplishments. We intend to create an enduring model for scientific libraries and to bridge peoples and cultures for the welfare of all.

We act according to KAUST's values: to advance science for the public good; to create an environment where inquiry can take place with purpose, passion, and respect; and to uphold academic and professional best practices that support transparency, meritocracy, and which embrace global benchmarks. However, given our vision for excellence and our role in the community as a service provider, we believe that the above values do not suffice. We think that, given where we are currently, achieving our mission will rely on the following particular approaches:

- Creating a culture of excellence and leadership which supports achievement, passion, inspiration, diversity, integrity, and citizenship
- Benchmarking our collections and services against global peers to assure adherence to the highest standards of our profession to exemplify the best in our domain
- Supporting openness by having as much transparency around decisions and priorities as possible and by becoming comfortable giving feedback and sharing ideas

Our Environment

This section identifies our current state: our most significant strengths and weaknesses. Attaining our vision may require developing new strengths while resolving current challenges.

Strengths

- Opportunities for learning and development
- Staff diversity in cultural heritage, professional experience, age and educational status
- Service orientation, team spirit and co-operation amongst staff
- Our physical space is inspirational and greatly appreciated by faculty and students
- Strong and specialized collection is resourced to meet evolving user needs
- Strong direct publisher relations and recognized excellence in contributions to major library associations (both regionally and internationally)

Weaknesses

- Library staff are highly specialized making cross training and backup support more challenging. Overall we have a small team which is impacted heavily by staff turnover.
- Across KAUST, administrative processes can be unclear and appear to change often. They seem to require a number of authorizations which appear to duplicate the accountability already present in our PMP process.
- Remaining current with technology and service changes can be difficult given our location in Saudi Arabia. Also, most if not all, area libraries do not use English as their language of work, making it difficult to engage locally
- Library staff have noted challenges in project and time management as well as in setting priorities
- Across KAUST, lack of a shared understanding of customer service norms results in delays in making progress, general misunderstandings, and multiple rework. This lack reduces the quality of our services and costs us all time, money and good will.

Opportunities

- Library engagement in the Gulf has established our position as a regional leader
- Vacancy at the Director level affords an opportunity to raise the visibility of the Library
- Library staff can often adopt new technologies quicker than our peers given that we are unencumbered by traditional approaches and legacy operations

Threats:

- Our location in Saudi Arabia and the Middle East affords an external environment which seems uncertain and politically volatile. This notably impacts recruitment.
- Difficulty in navigating a culture that is risk averse and tends more towards blame, rather than accepting failure as a necessary part of evolution and innovation
- Creating opportunities for 'courageous conversations' in a broader culture that does not seem to reward speaking up

Long-term Goals

Our goals were influenced by the American Library Association site “Center for the Future of Libraries” at <http://www.ala.org/transforminglibraries/future/trends>.

Themes of particular relevance to the University Library are:

- **Data management**, which impacts staff skill development, library services, and technology <http://www.ala.org/transforminglibraries/future/trends/data>
- **Resilience**, given our location in a regional environment of political uncertainty and change <http://www.ala.org/transforminglibraries/future/trends/resilience>
- **Gamification**, which is likely to have a long term impact on teaching and learning, but with as yet unclear ramifications <http://www.ala.org/transforminglibraries/future/trends/gamification>
- **Collective impact**, which relates to our need for partnerships and collaborations, for shared agendas can have a larger impact if developed together <http://www.ala.org/transforminglibraries/future/trends/collectiveimpact>

We blended the above themes with our mission and vision to produce these goals:

- To provide effective access to information and resources to support the KAUST community’s pursuit and advancement of scientific knowledge
- To enable the sharing of KAUST research broadly to support its benevolent application
- To preserve KAUST research and activities to serve as a beacon for future generations
- To develop and improve our services and facilities to provide an enduring model for scientific libraries
- To serve as leaders to libraries in the Kingdom and elsewhere to share information to everyone’s benefit

We can combine these goals into four areas:

- **Preservation**
 - to preserve our scientific output, institutional records and our unique culture
- **Service**
 - to steward resources thoughtfully
 - to provide information to support the advancement of scientific knowledge and to foster multidisciplinary collaboration
- **Process**
 - to evolve our workflows continually to be as effective and efficient as possible
 - to ensure our succession plans supports business continuity in a time of staff turnover
- **Outreach**
 - to expand open access to share KAUST’s research broadly and to diverse audiences
 - to communicate our successes and failures to the extent helpful

By 2021, the University Library will be able to demonstrate that the above goals have been accomplished or transformed into new operations or strategies.

Short-term Goals: 2016-17

While the University Library has many short-term goals, we prioritize those goals which advance the long-term vision and objectives described above. Below are goals for 2016-17 which advance these priorities. They are grouped in the same areas as above, although most meet more than one objective. A number has been added to each goal to assist tracking through the Library project management system.

- **Preservation goals**
 - Develop a preservation roadmap for research and administrative assets (P1)
 - Expand our role as the comprehensive institutional resource for information on KAUST faculty publishing and scholarly publications (P2)

- **Service goals**
 - Develop a process for benchmarking usage and services to ensure our collections meet the highest standards and satisfy community needs (S1)
 - Improve our resource discovery tools to provide better access for our community
 - Implement EZProxy (S2)
 - Deploy a library events management mechanism (S3)
 - Improve the user experience by streamlining our patron load process (S4)
 - Evaluate options to improve our repository platform (S5)
 - Pilot a natural-language discovery service (S6)

- **Process goals**
 - Monitor and continuously improve technical service workflow to ensure our procurement to shelf process is as efficient as possible (T1)
 - Assess effectiveness of a single-source material supplier (T2)
 - Strengthen metadata services and assess shelf-ready cataloging services (T3)

- **Outreach goals**
 - Expand our Saudi library outreach program beyond the University of Business and Technology to involve multiple collaborations with Saudi research libraries to the extent mutually beneficial (O1)
 - Align our professional activities with those organizations which are leaders in the library and information domains (O2)

Process & Assessment

Our goals will be achieved through departmental planning and through the PMP process to ensure individual goals cohere to support departmental and institutional goals. We evaluate our progress regularly and will revise this plan next year in our July 2017 Retreat.