

Reaching Across Illinois Library System (RAILS) 2022-2025 Strategic Plan

Vision Statement

Thriving libraries are essential to all who learn, live, or work in Illinois.

Mission Statement

We Connect Libraries.

Strategic Goal 1

RAILS provides leadership in ensuring sustainable, equitable resource sharing for all member libraries.

- *Objective 1:* Enhance the sharing of knowledge and best practices through member networking and communications between all types of libraries.
- *Objective 2:* Leverage economies of scale to provide greater purchasing power for member libraries so they can offer more resources to their users than libraries would be able to afford on their own.
- *Objective 3:* RAILS will continue to seek greater efficiencies, innovations, and enhancements to delivery services
- *Objective 4:* Work collaboratively with members, the Illinois Heartland Library System, and the Illinois State Library to identify and support appropriate and affordable shared catalog solutions and expand resource sharing to all libraries and residents.

Strategic Goal 2

RAILS models best practices in equity, diversity, accessibility, and inclusion.

- *Objective 1:* RAILS will provide leadership in developing and providing resources that will support member libraries' efforts to provide equitable, diverse, and inclusive services.
- *Objective 2:* Examine all aspects of RAILS policies, procedures, and core services through an equity lens and make needed improvements.
- *Objective 3:* Work with RAILS members of all types to identify and implement ways to diversify library governing bodies and staff to increase representation and better reflect the communities they serve.

Strategic Goal 3

RAILS assists member libraries in preparing for the future.

- *Objective 1:* Leveraging RAILS' power and influence in the Illinois library community, work collaboratively for additional funding for all types of libraries to ensure that

libraries have the staffing, technology, and infrastructure needed to offer essential and cutting-edge services to their communities.

- *Objective 2:* Help member libraries of all types and sizes demonstrate their value to their different stakeholders.
- *Objective 3:* Professional development and member engagement efforts are future-focused, crossing library types and specific to individual library type needs.

Strategic Goal 4

RAILS leads alongside member libraries to develop and strengthen the Illinois library community and expand services to all.

- *Objective 1:* RAILS will continue to strengthen collaborative relationships with partner library organizations, including the Association of Illinois School Library Educators, the Chicago Public Library, the Consortium of Academic and Research Libraries in Illinois, the Illinois Association of College & Research Libraries, the Illinois Heartland Library System, the Illinois Library Association, the Illinois State Library, and the Special Libraries Association – Illinois chapter.
- *Objective 2:* RAILS will continually seek to understand member perceptions of inequities in system services to better support academic, school, and specialized libraries, as well as public libraries of all sizes.
- *Objective 3:* Continuously evaluate RAILS programs and services to ensure that they are having an impact and are helping to create the best possible future for all member libraries.
- *Objective 4:* Collaborate with the Illinois State Library, the Illinois Heartland Library System, and other partners to develop a plan and timeline for achieving universal service.

Approved by the RAILS Board on January 28, 2022