University Libraries continued its role as a university-wide partner in student success, research excellence, innovation, and the creation and dissemination of knowledge.

University Libraries advanced **Virginia Tech Advantage** by expanding access to learning resources, experiential learning, emerging technologies, research experiences, affordable course materials, distinctive collections, and student-centered spaces and services.

The Libraries advanced **Virginia Tech Global Distinction** by providing research services for points throughout the research lifecycle. It helped increase the visibility and impact of faculty scholarship, support research methods and data, build national and international partnerships, expand open scholarship, and advance computational and AI-enabled research.

Due to budget reductions, uncertainty in federal research funding, accessibility requirements, workforce needs, and increased demand for the library's research and technology services, University Libraries had to **embrace change and adapt to the evolving environment.**

University Libraries is known for its vast collection of informational resources for teaching, learning, and research. Beyond collections, **special areas of emphasis in the library's vastly growing portfolio include research impact and intelligence, evidence synthesis, research data services, publishing services, digital literacy, and emerging technologies, including AI.** These areas of emphasis are described in our FY27 priorities.

I. UNIT PERFORMANCE

During 2025-2026, University Libraries' services reached hundreds of thousands of users while improving efficiency through automation, modernizing infrastructure, expanding capabilities in emerging technologies, and strengthening partnerships within the university and beyond.

Service and program utilization

University Libraries continued to support teaching, learning, research, and scholarship.

Collections and access

Scholarly Communications & Collections reported 10,020,854 total collection uses (4.4% increase). VTechWorks (VT's scholarship repository) recorded 6,803,110 item views, with repository document use increasing by 144%. Other metrics include 15,207 student uses of Virginia Tech OER (e.g., open access textbooks) and 77 OER course adoptions.

Digital collections

Archives & Technology Services documented growth in the use of digital collections. The Digital Library Platform recorded 50,107 views, up 160%, and 3,814 engaged sessions, up 108%. Virginia Tech collections hosted through JSTOR generated 28,700 item views from users in 150 countries.

Distinctive resources

Special Collections and University Archives served 221 in-person researchers, up 27%. Its instruction program reached 1,086 Virginia Tech students through 63 sessions associated with 34 courses, a 62% increase in instruction.

Research data support

Data Services provided 195 data management and geospatial consultations, compared with 200 in 2025, and 153 advanced research consultations, compared with 200 in 2025. It also provided nine metadata consultations while supporting four ongoing long-term metadata projects. Data education delivered more than 50 sessions addressing research data management, open science, Library Carpentry, and related topics. The Virginia Tech Data Repository published 141 datasets compared to 306 in FY25. This past year, the team successfully piloted the publication of a dataset larger than one terabyte in collaboration with Advanced Research Computing.

Research collaboration and engagement

Research Collaboration and Engagement reported approximately 850 consultations, 250 reference assistance interactions, 20 outreach presentations and tours, 20 events, and 50 project or initiative meetings. The team also created 70 scholarly works, received three new funding awards, and one honor.

Evidence synthesis

Evidence Synthesis reported 284 consultations, approximately 35 ongoing partnerships, more than 10 ongoing mentorships, 16 publications, and nine instruction sessions. The team continued to expand its national and international teaching and research partnerships. The second Library Evidence Synthesis Services Symposium attracted 1,507 registrants and 1,066 live attendees worldwide, an increase of approximately 42% since the symposium launched in 2024.

Student learning, technology, and experiential programs

Academic and Creative Engagement supported significant student demand across its studios and learning programs. The Gaming Studio recorded 1,404 bookings and approximately 10,000 walk-in uses during its second full year in existence. Technology Lending Desk completed 12,418 bookings, an 8.2% decrease. The Media Recording Studio completed 379 bookings, and the Prototyping Studio supported 3,585 projects, up 31.4%. The studios also provided 212 consultations, 40 workshops and events, and employed 50-60 students each semester, totaling $250,000 in student wages.

The Digital Literacy and Learning Engagement team delivered 111 foundational instruction sessions, up from 107 in FY25, and expanded AI literacy programming from four to six workshops and events. The team hosted or co-hosted 15 student engagement events, reaching 1,916 attendees, and delivered 26 workshops for graduate and professional students. Website visits to Odyssey, a repository of learning objects and educational resources, including videos, lesson plans, handouts, and infographics created and maintained by the library, increased from 2,800 to 8,800, while pageviews increased from 6,300 to 18,000.

Undergraduate research and experiential learning

The Advanced Research Skills series reached 259 students and awarded 1,396 digital badges. The Undergraduate Research Excellence program awarded graduation cords to 86 students who completed it, and three students received undergraduate research awards. In total, 345 students participated in research events, instruction, and consultations, while 487 undergraduate students participated in four types of library-supported experiential learning experiences. Another 280 students presented at conferences or meetings as a result of a library-led program or mentorship.

Health sciences services

The Health Sciences Libraries expanded student and faculty access to specialized spaces, technologies, instruction, and collections. The Virginia Tech Carilion School of Medicine Library expanded its Butterfly ultrasound collection to five devices, with checkouts increasing 63%. Veterinary Medicine Library added five new guest lectures, and the Fralin Biomedical Research Institute Health Sciences and Technology Library completed a new bookable study space. Health Sciences Libraries also expanded collaborations with the Whole Health Consortium, Virginia Tech Carilion School of Medicine, and Children's National.

Operational effectiveness and efficiency

University Libraries improved operational efficiency while maintaining high service levels amid budget constraints.

Automating routine work

User Services developed bulk-ingest workflows using Alma Analytics and the Courses API to process course-reserve and textbook information more efficiently, reducing manual data entry and ensuring materials were ready before the start of academic terms.

Improving technical and data workflows

Technical Services transferred locally managed electronic resource collections into the Ex Libris Community Zone, reducing the amount of manual maintenance required while preserving staff review and quality control. Data Services also improved the Virginia Tech Data Repository's curation and preservation workflows and made transfers between the data repository and APTrust digital preservation network.

Reducing costs for students

The Scholarly Communications & Collections team helped students avoid $1,333,936 in learning materials costs, including $1,230,385 through OER and $103,551 through perpetual-access titles. The division also maintained 19 read-and-publish agreements and added one new agreement during the year.

Strengthening technology and compliance

IT Operations increased its ISORA risk-assessment compliance score from 64% in 2023 to 86% in 2026. New Windows deployments were moved to Intune and Autopilot, while automated records-retention labels were deployed to production in Microsoft 365 and Google Drive.

Managing resources strategically

Collections returned $341,000 from the materials budget as part of University Libraries' 2.5% budget reduction, while a Critical Needs Request increased the serials base budget by $459,641 to address annual cost increases. University Libraries is committed to protecting high-priority collections and services while responding to fiscal constraints.

Innovation and process improvement

This past year, innovation was concentrated in artificial intelligence, computational scholarship, modern digital infrastructure, and new models for learning and publishing.

Artificial intelligence

AI moved from experimentation to practical application. Archives and Technology Services integrated AI research in text extraction, optical character recognition, metadata generation, digital preservation, and AI-assisted discovery into service development. Data Services and Technical Services began developing and implementing AI-supported workflows, while Evidence Synthesis Services developed an AI-enabled screening workflow and pursued grant support for auditable AI applications.

Computational scholarship and large-scale data

Data Services successfully piloted the publication of a dataset larger than one terabyte, establishing a model for future large-scale data publishing.

Digital collections and discovery

Archives and Technology Services continued to combine digitization with structured metadata, persistent identifiers, rights information, APIs, and support for complex digital objects.

During the first full year since the creation of the Digital Library Platform, the team added 1,296 items across 15 collections and 883 items across five collections to the International Archive of Women in Architecture, while digitizing 1,127 items, 389 bound theses and dissertations, and 23 3D models. The Digital Library Platform's 50,107 views and 6,015 users reflect the growing reach of these resources.

Open scholarship and publishing

Virginia Tech Publishing & Press formally launched as a university press in September 2025. During its first year, it published two books, supported 14 journals, published two OER textbooks, and advanced six additional OER projects. The program also created dedicated editorial, design and production, and digital scholarship teams and established an ethics review committee to address emerging issues such as AI.

Improving recognition and visibility of Virginia Tech scholarship

Research Impact & Intelligence completed validation and merging of all Virginia Tech Scopus IDs, improving the accuracy of institutional citation and research-impact data and enabling SciVal custom groups for all Virginia Tech units. The team also developed the UDC Researcher Metrics Dashboard and partnered with the Office of Research and Innovation to implement the university's ORCID requirement. By July 2026, the faculty target list for ORCID compliance had decreased from 1,757 to approximately 1,400 faculty members, representing roughly a 20% improvement in compliance.

Outcomes directly related to University Libraries' strategic plan

The FY26 results demonstrate progress across several University Libraries' strategic plan priorities.

Provide critical programs, spaces, and technologies for learning

University Libraries expanded high-use learning environments, technology lending, AI literacy, health sciences spaces, digital learning resources, and experiential learning opportunities. Prototyping projects increased by 31.4%. Digital Library Platform use increased by 160%.

Expand research methods and expert support

Data Services, Evidence Synthesis Services, Research Impact & Intelligence, and Undergraduate Research Initiatives collectively broadened support for research methods, data, evidence synthesis, research impact, and student research.

The Data Services team delivered more than 50 data education sessions during FY26, continuing its leadership in Library Carpentry, Open Science, and research data management. The team's 153 research consultations in FY26 span areas including AI, machine learning, statistical analysis, survey methodology, qualitative research, scientific computing, research software development, and data visualization.

Advance affordability and access

OER and perpetual access collections produced $1.33 million in student savings or cost avoidance, while open access and open education programs expanded the availability and reach of scholarship and learning materials.

Foster experiential learning and career readiness

University Libraries supported experiential learning experiences and student assistants across its facilities and programs. Students learn by doing and build skills for what's next. They are designing publications, creating exhibits, conducting research, preserving history, serving as peer mentors in the studios, and experimenting with emerging technologies.

Impact

Across FY25-26, the University Libraries demonstrated measurable growth in reach, effectiveness, and strategic impact while navigating financial, technological, and organizational change.

Expanding access and engagement

Digital collections, instruction, research services, technology lending, studios, and student programs all reached substantial numbers of users, with several areas showing double-digit or triple-digit growth.

Strengthening Virginia Tech's research enterprise

Researchers took greater advantage of their access to library expertise and resources in data management and preservation, evidence synthesis, research intelligence, collections, and digital scholarship services. The completion of Virginia Tech's Scopus ID reconciliation, the expansion of the University Data Commons, the growth of evidence synthesis services, and the development of large-scale data publishing capabilities all strengthen the university's ability to understand, support, communicate, and amplify its research.

Improving the ability to operate and innovate under changing conditions

Automation, infrastructure modernization, AI-enabled workflows, strategic reallocations, strong partnerships, and evidence-based adjustments to programming allowed the library to preserve core services while investing in emerging priorities.

II. STRATEGIC PRIORITIES, INVESTMENTS, AND RESOURCE REALLOCATION

In FY27, University Libraries will focus its resources on four priorities: exploring and enhancing the library's AI capabilities to best contribute to university-wide initiatives; coordinating and expanding research support; AI literacy and emerging technology opportunities; and increasing the visibility, accessibility, and impact of Virginia Tech scholarship and expertise.

These priorities build on areas of demonstrated demand and growth in FY26 while responding to changing research requirements, rapid advances in artificial intelligence, aging infrastructure, fiscal constraints, and evolving expectations for student learning. They also require University Libraries to make deliberate choices about where to invest staff capacity, operating funds, technology, space, and existing positions.

PRIORITY 1: Strengthen institutional decision-making and research infrastructure through coordinated AI strategy and assessment

University alignment: Institutional Excellence, Virginia Tech Global Distinction, and Virginia Tech Advantage

Opportunity and challenge

The recent creation of a new AI Strategy and Planning and Library Assessment Division within the library brings together AI strategy and planning, library assessment and data analytics to strengthen University Libraries' capacity for evidence-informed planning, responsible adoption of emerging technologies, and effective stewardship and use of institutional research information. The next year will focus on establishing structures for these functions while advancing initiatives aligned with the library's and the university's strategic priorities.

For AI, University Libraries needs a coordinated approach that accounts for ethical, functional, and contextual considerations while aligning with Virginia Tech's vision for responsible, ethical and human-centered AI. AI literacy, skills, and use currently vary across University Libraries, creating a need to coordinate activities, share expertise, and develop approaches for evaluating, piloting, and implementing AI.

Planned investments and resource commitments

The assistant dean for the new division will dedicate time to planning, facilitating, and implementing the University Libraries' AI strategy. Other division personnel will contribute, including a faculty member with designated responsibility for AI strategy and Library Assessment and Data Analytics personnel whose responsibilities intersect with AI-assisted assessment. Employees from across the library and external partners and stakeholders will also contribute time to AI planning and coordination.

University Libraries will develop a library-wide planning and assessment framework that connects strategic plan goals to annual unit priorities, projects, measures, evidence, and reporting.

Library Assessment will also pilot AI-supported workflows for data preparation, qualitative analysis, synthesis, reporting, visualization, and exploratory analysis. The unit will document workflows, compare AI-assisted approaches with established methods, and develop standards for responsible AI use in assessment. A strategic investment in this work is a one-year FY27 AI and Library Assessment graduate assistantship.

For Research Information Management, the assistant director for research information management and AI strategy, the Elements team, and university partners will dedicate time to ORCID, Elements, and Virginia Tech Experts initiatives. Library repository personnel will also contribute time to necessary system updates.

Expected outcomes and measures of success

For AI strategy, expected outcomes include establishing a Library AI Advisory and Coordination group and developing and beginning implementation of an initial University Libraries AI strategy and roadmap. Milestones include establishing the group, its charge, and subgroups; increasing awareness of AI expertise across the Libraries; developing a roadmap that addresses near- and mid-term activities, success metrics, and governance requirements; establishing an initial benchmark and a method for tracking AI initiatives; and reporting annual progress and recommendations.

For library assessment, success includes piloting and evaluating a common annual planning process in FY27, documenting measures for major strategic priorities, increasing the percentage of units reporting progress against strategic goals, completing an annual strategic progress/impact report, and demonstrating that assessment findings inform leadership decisions.

For AI-enabled assessment, identified measures include documented pilot projects, reduced staff time for selected workflows, validated improvements in analytical capacity, documented accuracy and reliability testing, reusable prompts and workflows, and adoption of successful practices by library employees.

For research information management, the report identifies continued improvement in faculty compliance with the ORCID requirement, currently at approximately 84% before adding new FY27 faculty. Other potential outcomes include system updates needed for ORCID Write, piloting and potentially implementing ORCID Write, improved user experience, expanded Elements activity types, improved research-information tracking and reporting, improved data quality across Elements, ORCID and Virginia Tech Experts, and decreased administrative burden through connected and automatically updating profiles.

For Virginia Tech Experts, measures include increasing the number of individual profiles above the current 760, increasing group profiles above the current five, and receiving user feedback indicating satisfaction with or benefits from individual and group profiles.

PRIORITY 2: Strengthen and coordinate research services

University alignment: Virginia Tech Global Distinction and Virginia Tech Advantage

Opportunity and challenge

Strengthening Data Management and Curation Services is a strategic priority because services that enable researchers to use, publish, and cite data increase the visibility of Virginia Tech's global brand and contribute directly to Global Distinction.

The movement of DataBridge to the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences creates an opportunity to reallocate positions

and resources. At the same time, changes in the research funding landscape have increased the importance of data management, publishing, and curation as researchers work to comply with changing funder mandates and requirements. A related priority is better coordination of research services. The addition of Research Impact & Intelligence to Data Services creates an opportunity to align Research Impact & Intelligence, Data Management and Curation Services, and Data Education more effectively. These areas provide services and learning opportunities across the grant-funding lifecycle. Better alignment could help researchers move more efficiently through the funded-research process, affecting both learning and Global Distinction.

The challenge is that research services are distributed across colleges, institutes, University Libraries, the Office of Research and Innovation, and the Division of Information Technology. Coordination can be difficult but is important to making research services easier to find and access and, in turn, helping Virginia Tech become more prolific and competitive in securing funding.

Planned investments and resource commitments

Reallocate up to two positions following organizational changes associated with DataBridge to improve service allocation, broaden outreach, improve accessibility, and increase awareness of research data services. The division also plans to invest staff time from research-related services in meeting, sharing information, and determining a path toward better coordination across the Libraries and with other university offices.

University Libraries plans to create the first U.S. based research impact and intelligence professional development committee and begin offering professional development opportunities; work with stakeholders to develop an assessment guide to help evaluate Virginia Tech researchers for award nominations; and conduct studies in research funding, citation impact, research efficiency, and international collaboration to help the Office of Research and Innovation and Provost's Office strategize and implement initiatives to grow Virginia Tech's global brand.

Library evidence synthesis experts are exploring the use of AI applications in evidence synthesis, including an AI-enabled screening workflow that received positive feedback at a conference workshop and contributed to grant proposals.

Expected outcomes

For the reallocation of positions to Data Management and Curation Services, Data Services expected outcomes are:

- Greater attention to outreach and service provision.
- Expanded reach and uptake of research data services.
- Stronger collaborations and partnerships with offices across campus, including ORI and DOIT/Advanced Research Computing.
- Greater opportunity for existing staff to provide momentum around coordination of research-related services across campus.

PRIORITY 3: Expand AI literacy, emerging technologies, experiential learning, and recognition of student learning

University alignment: Virginia Tech Advantage and Virginia Tech Global Distinction

Opportunity and challenge

AI literacy is an essential component of student success and global digital citizenship, and the demand for AI literacy support among students and faculty currently exceeds the available capacity of the library's Digital Literacy and Learning Engagement team.

University Libraries' approach emphasizes ethical decision-making, responsible tool selection and use, critical evaluation of AI outputs, and understanding of broader societal impacts.

The University Libraries Studios Network also has opportunities to expand access to emerging technologies for both research and learning, while Undergraduate Research Initiatives identifies AI fluency and recognition of noncredit learning as areas for continued development.

Planned investments, commitments, and reallocations

University Libraries will reallocate an existing faculty vacancy to establish an AI & Emerging Literacies Librarian position and dedicate a portion of unit operating funds to AI-literacy programming.

After filling the position, the Digital Literacy and Learning Engagement team plans to:

- Expand AI-literacy workshops and course-integrated learning experiences.
- Increase AI-literacy curriculum resources in Odyssey.
- Strengthen partnerships with the Student Success Center, Office of Undergraduate Research, and TLOS.

To meet and expand opportunities for the university community to use emerging technologies in research and learning, the Studio Network will:

- Build out the Virtual Environments Studio in a new space.
- Add technology offerings through a virtual-production stage.
- Increase the use of the Virtual Environments Studio by researchers through student and faculty partnerships.
- Begin operating lending kiosks for the Gaming Studio to extend access beyond normal operating hours, with possible expansion to other Studios.
- Activate AI and Media Workstations on the fourth floor of Newman Library.
- Reallocate space previously dedicated only to media production to support the AI and Media Workstations.
- Begin offering Collaborative Teaching Grants, funded by the Wolfrun Foundation, to engage faculty with the Studios and provide additional hands-on learning opportunities for students.

To continue development in AI fluency and recognize noncredit learning Undergraduate Research Initiatives will:

- Begin development of two undergraduate research training programs on AI fluency.
- Collaborate with Undergraduate Academic Affairs through the iCUE initiative and TLOS to explore comprehensive learner records.
- Implement the Review and Advisory boards for Noncredit Nonclassroom Digital Badging.

The Applied Research in Immersive Experiences and Simulations (ARIES) team plans to focus on activities and partnerships that connect students with authentic work in a global context. It will reallocate resources formerly directed toward equipment and software to provide paid work to as many students as possible. ARIES also plans to build on relationships with the Steger Center and Presidential Global Scholars program to bring course-integrated, community-engaged digital humanities project work to that program.

Expected outcomes

The addition of an AI and Emerging Literacies Librarian will build sustainable capacity for AI literacy and position the University Libraries to play a collaborative leadership role in advancing AI literacy across campus while supporting student success and access to learning.

The Gaming Studio's new lending kiosks will increase student, faculty, and staff access to equipment beyond normal operating hours. If successful, the service may be expanded to other library studios.

The AI and Media Workstations will expand student and faculty access to high-end computing for coursework and research, providing an option between personal computers or cloud-based AI resources and the more advanced ARC environment.

Collaborative Teaching Grants will increase faculty engagement with the Studios and provide more hands-on learning opportunities for students.

PRIORITY 4: Increase access to and visibility of Virginia Tech scholarship, expertise, and learning resources

University alignment: Virginia Tech Global Distinction, Virginia Tech Advantage, and access and affordability

Opportunity and challenge

Several University Libraries programs are focused on increasing access to and visibility of Virginia Tech scholarship, expertise, and learning resources.

Virginia Tech Publishing & Press, the university's digital-first press, publishes books and journals openly for all those with internet access. The library's open education program helps faculty publish freely available textbooks, learning tools and assessments for student use. VTechWorks is the university's scholarly repository that provides free access to Virginia Tech scholarship for visitors worldwide.

The research intelligence team finds connections between Virginia Tech researchers and potential collaborators and promotes and encourages those connections for research and funding opportunities. Elements and the affiliated Virginia Tech Experts is an online platform hosted by the Provost Office and the University Libraries, where faculty can link their research and make their professional profiles public to increase the discoverability of their expertise and encourage collaboration.

University Libraries exhibits program collaborates with researchers, classes, and on-campus offices to visually represent their work in an engaging and interactive way through physical and digital exhibits. Through health sciences engagement events and programs, University Libraries branches in Roanoke collaborate with their health science colleagues to host public lectures and programs.

Virginia Tech Publishing & Press's continued growth as a newly established university press is an important opportunity. However, there is a risk to that growth if the university press does not develop clear acquisition and marketing strategies.

Planned investments, commitments, and reallocations

Virginia Tech Publishing & Press will develop an acquisitions strategy aligned with university goals and brand. The planned investment is hiring an acquisitions editor. The Press will also develop a standard marketing plan. To support that work, it will convert one digital publishing internship into a marketing internship that will work jointly with Virginia Tech Publishing & Press and University Libraries Strategic Communications to develop content such as social media posts and news releases.

Scholarly Communications & Collections will maintain excellence in collections, discovery, the institutional repository, open access, and open education while partnering with offices across campus such as the Graduate School, Undergraduate Academic Affairs, CETL, TLOS, University Legal Counsel, IT Procurement, and IT Security.

The University Libraries' exhibits program will continue placing exhibits showcasing Virginia Tech scholarship in off-campus locations. It is partnering with Virginia Cooperative Extension to identify topics where Virginia Tech experts can provide information to the public, including a water-quality project already initiated for the coming year. The Exhibits TO GO pilot is intended to increase reach without increasing cost. Health Sciences Libraries plans to focus on Roanoke locations and increase health sciences engagement events.

Expected outcomes

The successful hire of an acquisitions editor will increase proposals and publications on a curated list. The addition of a marketing intern and the creation of a marketing plan will result in an increase in awareness of Virginia Tech Publishing & Press.

Exhibits TO GO is intended to increase reach without increasing cost.

III. RISK ASSESSMENT AND ORGANIZATIONAL RESILIENCE

Over the next two to three years, University Libraries faces interconnected risks related to financial constraints and research funding, workforce capacity, rapid technological change, and growing infrastructure and service demands. Divisions are already adapting through resource reallocation, operational changes, funding diversification, workforce development, and service prioritization.

Financial constraints and research funding uncertainty

Continued budget reductions pose the most widespread risk to library services. Studios Network, User Services, Exhibits, ARIES, and the Art & Architecture Library all report that reduced wages or operating funds will affect staffing, service hours, technology availability, programming, and turnaround times. The University Libraries' Equipment Trust Fund allocation was reduced by $100,000 a few years ago.

Federal research funding is also uncertain. Archives & Technology Services has approximately $2.3 million in current and newly awarded research funding from IMLS, following the suspension and subsequent reinstatement of four active grants. Mitigation strategies already identified include reducing staffing at selected times, prioritizing work-study employment, deferring operating expenses, pursuing internal and external awards, and diversifying research funding. ATS plans to continue pursuing IMLS and NEH support while developing proposals for other programs, including NSF.

Workforce capacity and organizational change

Employee burnout and change fatigue, declining morale and engagement, inconsistent supervisory confidence, and difficulty recruiting and retaining employees could affect the University Libraries' ability to sustain operations and advance strategic priorities. These risks are compounded in service areas that depend heavily on student-wage employees or are absorbing additional responsibilities with limited staffing. Mitigation efforts include employee engagement surveys and follow-up actions, the new intranet and Community Circles, expanded supervisor development, strengthening the Supervisors Group, exploring mentoring, improving recruitment and onboarding, conducting a skills-gap analysis, strengthening succession planning, and examining the employee experience across the full employee lifecycle.

Rapid technological change and AI

Rapid changes in AI technologies, university policies, and instructional practices create uncertainty for both services and instruction. Digital Literacy and Learning Engagement is responding by emphasizing transferable competencies such as critical evaluation, ethical decision-making, and responsible use, rather than dependence on specific technologies. Archives & Technology Services (ATS) has invested in faculty expertise and an AI Research Scientist and is beginning to integrate AI-assisted collection-processing workflows into production. As those services move into production, the team plans to establish responsibility for their review, documentation, maintenance, and sustainability.

Infrastructure, collections, and service capacity

The scale and complexity of digital collections are increasing faster than current processing capacity can keep up, while aging platforms consume staff resources and previously digitized materials require additional accessibility and computational-readiness work. ATS is responding through planned replacement storage, network security upgrades, standardized application infrastructure, Digital Library Platform development, AI-assisted processing, and the consolidation of assets currently distributed across multiple systems.

Similar capacity pressures exist in physical services. The Art & Architecture Library, for example, adds 700–1,000 monographs annually, accounts for more than 30% of University Libraries' physical circulation, and faces reduced staffing and decreasing cataloging support. Its report identifies a potential endowment developed with the College of Architecture, Arts, and Design as one approach to supporting collections and cataloging capacity.

Contingency planning

If resources become materially constrained, University Libraries will reduce service hours, prioritize work-study employment, defer expenditures and processing, seek greater partner support, reallocate existing resources, and diversify external funding. Federal funding instability will be addressed through broader grant portfolios and research partnerships, while workforce and technology risks will be addressed through professional development, succession and skills planning, and adaptable service models. Maintaining priorities that are clear yet adaptable as conditions change, and cultivating a culture of agility and responsiveness to external forces is the University Libraries' approach.