NDSR Project Title	Developing and Promoting Policies and Services to Make Digital Assets of Research Libraries Accessible

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Goal Summary

To strengthen and expand a new initiative on digital accessibility in research libraries by incorporating a universal design approach to library collections and services. A suite of solutions, organizational models, and best practices for the research library community will be compiled so that the research library community may collect, produce, curate, preserve, and make available their digital assets in a fully inclusive and accessible way.

Specific Goals / Objectives

- Identify accessibility standards and policies, as well as licensing, reformatting, and procurement requirements for e-texts and other digital assets.
- Document the state of accessibility teaching and research in library and information schools.
- Attend meetings and conferences to learn and network with the accessibility community.
- Receive hands-on technological training (including self-guided) in an accessibility lab.
- Gather and construct building blocks for creating institutional plans for digital accessibility.
- Develop an online digital accessibility toolkit.

Timeframe & Deliverables

Months 1-4: *Immersion and Education*
- Site visits to Maryland and DC ARL libraries and disability services offices.
- Site visit to International Braille and Technology Center for the Blind (IBTC), National Federation of the Blind Headquarters in Baltimore, MD.
- Begin work on online toolkit.

Months 5-6: *Community Engagement*
- Continue work on toolkit.
- Outreach/interviews with library school faculty and deans engaged in accessibility work and research:
    - University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
    - Syracuse University
    - University of Washington
    - Wayne State University
- Propose presentation for CNI Conference.

Months 6-8: *Digital Strategy Toolkit*
- Completion of online toolkit.
- Participation in webinar to ARL community on findings.
- Provide other project briefings as appropriate, e.g., ARL and ALA meetings.

Project Deliverable
The Resident will contribute to a digital accessibility strategy toolkit—an online resource that will include policies, standards, and practices related to digital accessibility for research library assets.

Resources Required

2 Mentors (Prue Adler and Judy Ruttenberg); 1 Resident

ARL will provide workspace and support to the resident in its headquarters in Washington, DC, a collaborative office environment. The topic of accessibility intersects with several of ARL's strategic directions, which will give the resident occasion to work with staff other than the designated

mentors. In addition, ARL will be endeavoring to make its digital products and presence more accessible in the coming year. The Resident will participate in that process.

Context	The growing demand for instructional e-content and burgeoning digital library collections requires greater collaboration amongst all institutional partners, including academic leadership, research libraries, disability services, and information technology services. These partners should share knowledge, define roles, and become knowledgeable about print and other disabilities in order to effectively serve users, to meet the requirements of federal and provincial law, to fulfill their shared mission to serve all constituents equally, and to influence the marketplace to produce accessible digital content and services. Members of the research library community should collaborate within each institution and actively participate in cross-institutional and cross-industry efforts to advance universal design standards for digital information resources, library-mediated or otherwise.
	Within ARL's own office, the Resident will participate in an in-depth and up-close view of ARL's process of developing an accessible website and back file of electronic documents. This transformation will include training in software and authoring tools.
Required Knowledge and Skills for Residents	• Deep interest and/or understanding of accessibility issues • Strong communications and organizational skills • Ability to lead small group discussions • Familiarity with library systems and digital assets
Preferred Knowledge or Experience	• Experience working with accessibility policies and/or requirements