

The shared automation system, known as V-Cat, is a service of the Wisconsin Valley Library Service (WVLS). As a service of WVLS, V-Cat is established, operated, and maintained under the legal authority of the Wisconsin Valley Library Service Board of Trustees.

V-Cat Council serves a consortium of libraries to provide a shared integrated library automation system to WVLS member public libraries, and such other area libraries as may participate, for the purposes of:

- facilitating resource sharing among system participants and
- increasing the efficiency and effectiveness of participant library operations and services.

# V-Cat Vision

These statements clarify core expectations, which together form a vision of a well-functioning V-Cat Council. They are complimented by the list of broad strategies employed to fulfill the vision.

- **FOCUS ON THE USER** V-Cat focuses on services and technologies that directly benefit member library staff and library users.
- **INNOVATIVE TECHNOLOGIES** V-Cat embraces innovative technologies to empower patron access to information and resources, and increase efficiencies for member libraries.
- **FUNDING** V-Cat operates in the most cost-effective manner and shares the operational costs to provide sustainable and ongoing funding.
- HEALTHY CONSORTIUM V-Cat facilitates strong, collaborative relationships among consortium libraries.
- **EFFECTIVE GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE** V-Cat provides an effective governance structure that allows full participation by all consortium members.

# Strategies to Accomplish the V-Cat Vision

Specific actions to accomplish these strategies are developed by the WVLS staff with input from V-Cat members and the WVLS Board of Trustees. Actions are carried out by WVLS staff and V-Cat member library staff.

#### FOCUS ON THE USER – and improve the user experience

- Expand library user access to the depth and richness of resources available
- Create a responsive environment through a combined suite of services and utilities
- Provide comprehensive discovery of physical materials, digital library resources, and online databases for library users and library staff
- Select and configure Integrated Library System / Library Service Platform and related products to meet library user and staff needs
- Provide responsive training for member libraries
- Provide marketing resources and tutorials for V-Cat members to share with library users
- Collaborate with libraries and their community partners to increase access to library resources
- Assess and evaluate V-Cat from the user's perspective to support continuous improvement

## INNOVATIVE TECHNOLOGIES - manage products and provide support

- Investigate new and emerging products to serve V-Cat libraries
- Facilitate stakeholder-driven discussion and exploration of current technology, emerging services, and best practices
- Implement and configure systems and products that are scalable for V-Cat libraries
- Provide profile customization services upon request

- Support library staff in troubleshooting and resolving service issues
- Assess and evaluate V-Cat libraries' satisfaction with technologies in use

## FUNDING - Monitor V-Cat funding and operations for stability and growth

- Build funding of V-Cat to improve services for library users
- Evaluate operational costs to ensure best possible value for consortium libraries' investment in V-Cat
- Explore opportunities to welcome new V-Cat members
- Maintain strong working relationships with legislators and state-level decision-makers
- Seek grant opportunities and other funding sources for V-Cat projects

# **HEALTHY CONSORTIUM – facilitate collaboration and participation**

- Implement practices that address the diverse needs of V-Cat libraries
- Encourage cooperative V-Cat membership that adheres to V-Cat guidelines and procedures
- Advocate for the consortium and member libraries when interacting with library users
- Communicate proactively and responsively with V-Cat libraries, WVLS staff and stakeholders
- Facilitate active consortium membership that allows library staff to contribute to increasing service to library users and lowering costs for V-Cat members
- Assess and evaluate libraries' satisfaction with collaboration and participation among V-Cat members

#### EFFECTIVE GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE – facilitate thoughtful and efficient decision-making processes

- Provide opportunities for all member libraries to participate in governance
- Engage in stakeholder-driven discussions
- Ensure that consortium members receive information to make informed decisions
- Investigate best practices for ILS consortia governance

# 2021-2023 Priority V-Cat Project Areas:

Collaborate with member libraries to streamline the database for ease of management, training, and consistency for library users.

- Database clean-up project to strive toward standardization of records and record fields.
- Work towards unification of loan rule facets, and support consortium members throughout transition processes.

#### Implement Aspen Discovery and work with member libraries to use the new interface to its full potential.

 Explore patron empowerment technologies for V-Cat libraries to increase patron access to library information and resources.

# Explore other Integrated Library Systems (ILS) / Library Service Platforms (LSP) and their viability for V-Cat.

 Re-evaluate and re-negotiate current contract or negotiate a new service contract with another ILS / LSP and begin migration process, if applicable.

## Refine current processes used to generate reports from Integrated Library System Data

- Public Library Annual Reports
- WVLS Statistics booklet
- WVLS Dashboard
- Automating report generation and data visualizations
- Routine reports that are run on a regular basis