

DRAFT V-Cat Strategic Plan 2025-2028

Mission

V-Cat fosters collaboration and resource sharing among member libraries by providing a shared integrated library system, increased access to library resources, streamlined library operations, and support for member library service to local communities.

Vision

Libraries achieving more together

OR

Collaboration that provides increased access to library resources

Goal 1: Increase Access

Improvr library user access to library resources.

Objectives:

- Expand patron-initiated hold placement
- Improve communication to library users
- Improve catalog interface for library users
- Improve record metadata
- Increase efficiency in filling patron requests

Goal 2: Support Libraries

Maintain technological infrastructure and services while providing support to member libraries.

Objectives:

- Provide responsive support and services to member libraries
- Provide targeted communications to Library users to assist with user support
- Provide staff training and instruction in a variety of formats
- Encourage cooperative V-Cat membership that adheres to V-Cat guidelines
- Recognize diverse needs of V-Cat libraries
- Improve navigability of the V-Cat website

- Participate in product-based user groups

Goal 3: Sustain V-Cat

Increase the efficiency of both member library and WVLS operations, and ensure the best possible value of products and services.

Objectives:

- Prioritize standardization of Sierra settings and record standards
- Prioritize standardization of practices and procedures
- Evaluate contracts and services to achieve the best possible value for V-Cat
- Pursue automation of reporting and record improvements
- Pursue partnerships with library systems across Wisconsin
- Maintain financial stability
- Increase security of the shared V-Cat database

Goal 1 - Increase Access

Expand patron-initiated hold placement

- Allow library users to place hold on high demand items owned by other libraries to be filled when items are no longer considered high demand.
- Develop hold placement tutorial resources for library staff and library users
- Consider expanding in library use of Aspen Discovery Masquerade mode

Increase communication to library users

- Notify library users when their library card is near the expiration date
- Develop Aspen Discovery tutorial resources for library staff and library users
- Provide frequently asked questions and answers for library users

Improve catalog interface for library users

- Review Aspen Discovery improvements and V-Cat sites and ensure compliance with Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) Version 2.1, Level AA by April 24, 2026 and April 26, 2027 compliance dates
- Continue to participate in the Aspen Discovery open source community
- Consider Aspen Discovery adjustments to improve the user experience
- Consider implementing Aspen Discovery LiDA mobile app

Improve record metadata

- Continue to participate in WI bibliographic record standards workgroup
- Develop plans to implement recommended cataloging practices
- Consider special projects to add local subject headings

Increase efficiency in filling patron requests

- Consider Sierra adjustments to fill holds for library users more efficiently within the constraints of physical materials sorting and delivery services

Goal 2 - Support Libraries

Provide responsive support and services to member libraries

- Develop suite of supported products and services
- Automate patron record changes at 18 and 16 years of age
- Automate regular residency code verification
- Pursue requested product developments with vendors

Provide targeted communications to Library users to assist library staff with user support

- Automate circulation notices
- Notify library users when their library card is near the expiration date
- Develop Aspen Discovery tutorial resources for library staff and library users

Encourage member libraries to cooperate and adhere to guidelines

- Implement routine overviews of relevant V-Cat guidelines
- Encourage communication among V-Cat libraries
- Recognize limitations of individual libraries when developing and updating V-Cat guidelines

Provide staff training and instruction in a variety of formats

- Provide training sessions in-person and online
- Provide video and text-based training materials
- Provide multiple levels of training
- Provide cataloging utility training and access for all member libraries

Improve navigability of the V-Cat website

- Revise V-Cat pages of the WVLS website for ease of use and regular updates
- Ensure compliance with Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) Version 2.1, Level AA by the April 24, 2026 compliance date.

Participate in product-based user groups

- Continue to participate in Innovative Users Group
- Continue to participate in the Aspen Discovery open source community
- Continue to partner with other library systems in WI using Sierra and Aspen Discovery

Goal 3 - Sustain V-Cat

Prioritize standardization of Sierra settings and record standards

- Review bibliographic record fields, adjust Sierra settings and record templates
- Continue to develop V-Cat guidelines for record standards
- Continue to review loan rules and adjust as appropriate

Prioritize standardization of practices and procedures

- Continue to develop V-Cat guidelines for best practices and procedures

Evaluate contracts and services to achieve the best possible value

- Complete a process to consider alternative products to Sierra
- Review operating costs and V-Cat needs

Pursue automation of reporting and record improvements

- Automate monthly item reports and additional reports
- Automate reports for preparing the public library annual report to the WI Department of Public Instruction
- Automate bibliographic record review and improvements

Pursue partnerships with library systems across Wisconsin

- Revisit Northern WI Integrated library system Exploration (NICE)
- Participate in statewide integrated library system workgroup
- Participate in collaborative cataloging and record standards workgroup

Maintain financial stability

- Maintain V-Cat reserve funds
- Support library relationships with local representatives and decision makers
- Maintain strong relationships with state legislators and decision makers
- Seek grant opportunities and other funding sources for V-Cat projects

Increase security of the shared V-Cat database

- Manage database password and permission changes for libraries
- Emphasize the importance of patron privacy and confidentiality
- Investigate and implement additional security measures