



Canadian Research
Knowledge Network

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Strategic Plan

2025–2029

Joint Message from CRKN's Executive Director and Chair of the Board

After a year of consultation and planning, we are delighted to share with you the Canadian Research Knowledge Network's (CRKN) Strategic Plan for 2025–2029.

Over the past year, we have been asking our members and stakeholders to reflect on what they think will change and what they think will not change in scholarly communications and the research ecosystem over the next five years and how CRKN can best support our members' needs. Through these conversations, we have heard that CRKN will continue to bring immense value to our members through our collective negotiations that push hard for cost-containment and equitable access. We have heard that in this age of artificial intelligence and rising misinformation, libraries must play an ever more vital role in sharing trusted knowledge. We have heard that we must reach beyond the library community. And we have heard your challenge for CRKN to push even harder for an open and sustainable research ecosystem. We are inspired by the trust that our members have in CRKN and the confidence you have in our ability to collectively fulfill the goals of this ambitious strategic plan.

Reflecting on our 25th anniversary, we are proud of how CRKN has evolved as an organization that truly advances access to knowledge. Through our core licensing program, we will ensure that our member libraries can provide their communities with access to research knowledge from around the world. We will drive a more equitable research landscape through our open access initiatives. The growing collections and evolving infrastructure of Canadiana will provide researchers and the Canadian public with access to vital content and knowledge about Canada's past, while upholding data sovereignty. And finally, the collaborative persistent identifiers (PIDs) program will facilitate better reliability for an open and connected digital research ecosystem. Working with our members to create these pathways, we truly believe that we can empower people with access to trusted knowledge.

The future is always unknown, but as we envision the next five years with this new strategic plan, we know that our member community's spirit of innovation and collaboration has positioned CRKN to make a massive impact on the research ecosystem. We will be bold in creating the changes that we want to see in open research. We will proudly share the immense value that CRKN and our members bring in driving innovation and access to knowledge in Canada and beyond. And we will embrace our greatest strength – collaboration – as we work together creatively to solve the challenges that lie ahead and build a better world empowered by access to trusted knowledge. With these bold new goals, we cannot wait to step into the next five years as a strong and connected network with a shared vision for our future, one that is open, collaborative, and equitable.

Sincerely,



Daniel Jutras, Chair
Chair of CRKN Board
of Directors



Clare Appavoo
Executive Director of CRKN

Vision

**Knowledge is
accessible to all.**

Mission

**Together,
we empower Canada
by creating pathways
to trusted knowledge.**

Commitment

As we expand, advance, transform, preserve, and enrich access to knowledge, CRKN is committed to upholding First Nations, Métis, and Inuit data sovereignty and rights, honouring First Nations, Métis, and Inuit ways of knowing, and respectfully engaging with diverse communities.

Our Values

In consultation with the staff team, CRKN has chosen three values that encapsulate what we strive to embody as we deliver on the goals of this strategic plan and strengthen our relationships within our team, with our members, and with the broader communities that we serve.



Connection

As a national network, connection is at the heart of CRKN and the work that we do. We are a point of connection for libraries across Canada. We enable connections to knowledge through our core programs. We connect with our community to build collective value. We build connections by fostering inclusivity and bringing our authentic selves to our work. And finally, the strength of our staff team is built on feeling connected to each other and to our mission.



Responsibility

As we bring this strategic plan to life, CRKN will foster a culture of responsibility. We have a responsibility to take collective ownership of our mission and to empower each other to drive forward our strategic goals. We have a responsibility to be accountable to our members, who entrust us to represent their best interests, to effectively leverage their investment in CRKN, and to build connections and partnerships. As stewards of heritage collections, we have a responsibility to the communities represented and underrepresented therein to diversify and improve those collections. And finally, we have a responsibility to the broader community and Canadians to provide access to trusted knowledge that can spark innovation and enable a better future.



Agility

To succeed in our ambitious goals, we will need to be agile in our approach and responsive to the changing ecosystem that we are working within. We believe in the work that we are doing to make knowledge accessible, and we know that we need to be innovative and flexible in how we tackle this challenge. We will be curious and ask questions about how we approach our work, and we will be creative and open to new ideas as we serve our member community.

Strategic Plan 2025–2029

CRKN's 2025–2029 Strategic Plan will guide the direction of CRKN over a period of five years as we advance our mission to collectively empower Canada with access to trusted knowledge.

In October 2023, CRKN launched the process of developing this new strategic plan with a consultation session at our Member Summit. We continued member consultations over the following eight months and then worked with the CRKN Board, committees, and members to validate and refine the key ideas for the plan. The findings of this process were used by the CRKN Board to create three core strategic goals to shape our programs, services, and initiatives over the next five years:



Strategic Goals

1. Drive the Evolution of Open Knowledge

The research landscape is rapidly changing. Working with our members as a collective community, we must actively drive these changes to create an open and sustainable research ecosystem that can truly advance equitable access to knowledge. As we drive the evolution of open knowledge, we will:

- Champion sustainable pathways to open access, through partnerships both in Canada and internationally, that achieve widespread access to knowledge.
- Provide CRKN members and the communities they serve with equitable, sustainable access to global knowledge through negotiations with publishers focused on cost-savings and best-practices in licensing.
- Grow and diversify the Canadiana collections and their descriptions to acknowledge Canada's colonial past and surface the full breadth of experiences of people who have lived across these lands now known as Canada.
- Transform the Canadiana platform into world-leading, interoperable, open research infrastructure that facilitates widespread discovery of and access to Canadian content, mobilizes the Canadiana collections for large-scale research, and embeds Indigenous data sovereignty principles at its core.
- Through our collaborative national persistent identifiers (PIDs) strategy, champion the adoption of PIDs in Canada to support the interconnectedness and reliability of research and the systems that produce it.

2. Share our Collective Value

The Canadian library community is strong and determined to build a better future for researchers and the public. We have bold goals and to reach them we will need to advocate effectively for our vision by making our value and impact clear to the research community and beyond. To share our collective value, we will:

- Define and mobilize the “CRKN success story” to broaden our reach, enhance our profile in Canada’s university and policy communities, and champion the vital role of libraries in enabling world-leading research.
- Strengthen CRKN’s position as an infrastructure provider within the national and international community and build partnerships to enhance open research infrastructure.
- Champion the use of data to inform decision-making, resource development, and strategies to drive the evolution of open research.
- Amplify the successes of our members and showcase the impact of CRKN and our members in driving widespread access to research and knowledge.
- Foster relationships with national and international stakeholders to ensure Canada is a leader of key global initiatives in licensing, open access, heritage content access and preservation, open infrastructure, and persistent identifiers.

3. Innovate and Collaborate for a Sustainable Future

As we create pathways to trusted knowledge, we will work together inclusively and creatively to build the empowered future that we believe in – and it must be a future that is sustainable for our member institutions. As we innovate and collaborate for a sustainable future, we will:

- In partnership with members and stakeholders, develop a mechanism to collectively invest in and support community-owned open infrastructure.
- Activate our power as a network to leverage technological advances to expand existing and explore new opportunities for national-scale initiatives.
- Harness and respond to developments in artificial intelligence and new technologies to evolve CRKN’s programs and services and continue to centre the needs of human users of knowledge.
- Foster an inclusive future by encouraging diverse representation and participation in CRKN initiatives and embedding equity, diversity, inclusion, and accessibility principles at the core of CRKN as an organization.
- Build strong, reciprocal relationships with First Nations, Métis, and Inuit organizations and communities across these lands now known as Canada to support, uphold, and integrate truth and reconciliation initiatives through all CRKN activities.
- Uphold and expand upon our collective responsibility to preserve the historic and scholarly record for future generations.



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