

INDIANA COOPERATIVE LIBRARY SERVICES AUTHORITY

**STRATEGIC PLAN  
2001-2006**

***“Libraries Doing Together What None Can Do Alone”***

March 2001

## **Executive Summary**

In early 2000, INCOLSA's Executive Committee authorized a participative planning process to create a strategic plan. A Steering Committee representing INCOLSA's Executive Committee, members and staff met four times to draft a plan and to review comments at several stages from members, staff and the Indiana library community.

Following a preface by Executive Director Millard Johnson, the overview section briefly discusses key issues such as the strategic plan's companion document, the annual action plan initiative. Prepared by the Executive Director and approved by the Executive Committee, each annual action plan will provide the "what, when, who, how much" that will carry out strategic plan goals and objectives.

A vision statement is an image of a desired reality. INCOLSA's draft vision statement: "INCOLSA supports Indiana libraries as the trusted guide to information for today and for the future they seek."

The draft plan's mission and seven values are set forth. Goals and objectives are presented in these areas:

- Goal One. Services, programs and products
- Goal Two. Advocacy
- Goal Three. Organizational vitality
- Goal Four. Leadership.

Evaluation of progress towards the strategic plan will be described in the annual State of the Network report prepared by the Executive Director.

The draft document concludes with four appendices:

- A. INCOLSA Strategic Planning Steering Committee
- B. Glossary
- C. Background and methodology
- D. INCOLSA governance chart

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## PREFACE

Access to information by the citizenry has been a central feature of American society from constitutional times onward. Benjamin Franklin's library became one of the earliest free, public libraries in America. Thomas Jefferson willed his personal library to the nation and it became the world's largest library: The Library of Congress. Today, free access to public, school and academic libraries is taken for granted, and Indiana's libraries are among the best in the nation. If Franklin and Jefferson were alive today they would count America's library systems among the most valued fruits of the seeds they planted more than 200 years ago.

Ironically, at this time of libraries' greatest success, the future of free public access to essential information through libraries is at risk. It is clear that the library, as an institution for acquiring, indexing, and loaning printed books, and disseminating information in print format has evolved into a remarkably effective and efficient system. But it is equally clear that our client's preferences as well as the very form and format of information itself is on the threshold of revolutionary change.

Information is increasingly taking new forms. Our clients are consuming more of their information in electronic format. The Internet and other electronic media are changing their expectations of libraries — not only in the delivery of electronic format, but in their managing of traditional services. Citizens in need of information for their studies, businesses, and personal development are turning to digital information resources as their first source of information at a remarkable and growing rate. The systems we have pioneered for handling printed materials are not applicable in the electronic environment. Libraries are struggling to manage electronic information resources, but the rate of change and cost of the technology to cope with electronic access is a huge and growing challenge.

A challenge of equal magnitude arises in the question of the theft of intellectual property in electronic format. This is a national strategic problem. It is possible that in solving the problem of the author's right to intellectual property we may lose the concept of the public's right to free access to the same information through libraries.

The challenge to libraries is great — but not insurmountable. Harnessing their collective strengths — in part through organizations like INCOLSA — libraries can preserve their historic role as society's portal to information essential to the growth and prosperity of their citizen clients. But to succeed, libraries must select wisely among alternatives for investing their limited resources. They must focus their resources on those problems where their effort can have greatest impact. They must measure their human, technological and capital resources exactly and apply those resources judiciously.

This strategic plan is a statement of our vision of the challenges addressing libraries and our strategy of addressing those challenges. The plan was developed by a representative strategic planning committee with widespread input from the Indiana library community throughout the process. Ellen Miller served as facilitator to the strategic planning committee. This plan is an essential tool to ensure that Indiana's libraries will be as vital and effective in the year 2200 as they are today.

Millard Johnson  
Executive Director, INCOLSA

## OVERVIEW

INCOLSA, like the Indiana libraries it serves, faces challenges related to emerging technologies of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Strategic planning has proved to be a process that helps organizations focus resources, adapt to a changing environment, and capitalize on the benefits of emerging technology. This strategic plan is a written, but living, guide to the future.

When properly authenticated by INCOLSA's governance structure, with periodic review and modification, the plan will help the organization select objectives that will bring the greatest benefit to INCOLSA and its member libraries, insuring their vitality into the next decade.

The process to develop a written strategic plan permits measured discussion about demands, priorities and resources that often cannot happen in the rush of daily events. It brings together stakeholders from diverse areas into common discourse about the desired future that will benefit all.

INCOLSA's strategic plan has five elements: Vision, mission, values, goals and objectives. It is like an unfurnished house, awaiting furniture and for the utilities to be turned on. INCOLSA's strategic plan comes to life through annual action plan initiatives.

Companion documents. Annual action plan initiatives, prepared by the Executive Director and approved by the Executive Committee, implement the strategic plan. They include specific services/programs and their relevant goals/objectives, who is responsible, due dates, budgets, etc. It is expected that the first annual action plan initiatives covering 2001-02 will be presented to the Executive Committee during the summer, 2001.

Evaluation. Evaluation helps organizations measure the gap between their intentions and the value of their actions to constituents. While evaluation too often receives lip service during a strategic planning process, INCOLSA takes it very seriously.

A report evaluating the year just completed will be prepared annually for the Executive Committee. It will rely on a variety of evaluation methods such as regional and other regular meetings, discussions when member liaisons visit a member's site, and surveys.

The outcomes could range from minor fine-tuning of current activities to major revisions of the strategic plan. The Executive Committee may re-examine any goal, objective, etc. during the five years of this plan.

Participative process. For public entities, especially libraries, it is essential to utilize a highly participative planning process. Why? So that stakeholders have as many opportunities as possible to make comments on draft documents at several stages. Appendix C details INCOLSA's process.

Governance. With a board of more than 800 members representing each of its academic, school, public and special library members, it is not surprising that INCOLSA has a complex governance structure. Busy INCOLSA board members, to say nothing of other staff in their respective organizations, may forget how the several groups relate to one another. Appendix D shows the INCOLSA governance structure.

## **VISION**

“INCOLSA supports Indiana libraries as the trusted guide to information for today and for the future they seek.”

## **MISSION**

“Libraries promote economic vitality, quality of life and lifelong learning. The mission of INCOLSA is to consolidate the strengths of its diverse membership through cooperative action to provide superior service to member libraries, residents of Indiana on behalf of libraries, and other entities as directed by the Board.”

## **VALUES**

INCOLSA's board is committed to the organization:

1. Respecting the diversity of all members.
2. Serving one another well and on time.
3. Practicing responsible stewardship of public and financial resources.
4. Investing in INCOLSA's staff via professional development and in member library staff via enhanced services, programs and products.
5. Collaborating with one another, other agencies and libraries.
6. Promoting standards, best practices, and vendor and technology independence.
7. Supporting a culture that values creativity, innovation, risk-taking and intellectual freedom in order to improve service.

## GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

### Goal One. Services, programs and products.

INCOLSA will deliver and market high-quality traditional and technology services, programs and products.

- Objective 1.1 Support members in their daily provision of services.
- Objective 1.2 Provide training to members in a variety of formats and locations.
- Objective 1.3 Provide guidance and support to members so they fully utilize their resources.
- Objective 1.4 Help members save time and/or money.

### Goal Two. Advocacy.

INCOLSA, with its partners, will advocate on behalf of members with various entities such as funders, elected officials and the media.

- Objective 2.1 Assist libraries to be the trusted guide to information in all formats.
- Objective 2.2 Within legal constraints, help members obtain more funding.
- Objective 2.3 Help raise the profile of Indiana's libraries.
- Objective 2.4 Reinforce government's responsibility to provide free public access to information.

### Goal Three. Organizational vitality.

INCOLSA will ensure continuity of service to its members through sound management, financial security and effective governance.

- Objective 3.1 Encourage and serve membership diversity.
- Objective 3.2 Operate an effective governance structure that sets policies and assesses implementation of plans.
- Objective 3.3 Assure the relevance of INCOLSA's services, programs and products to members.
- Objective 3.4 Attract, develop and retain qualified, committed employees.

### Goal Four. Leadership. INCOLSA will lead a diverse membership in creating services appropriate to a changing environment.

- Objective 4.1 Carry out research and investigations according to INCOLSA's strategic plan to help members make informed decisions about services and technology.
- Objective 4.2 Provide the opportunity for local/regional cooperative, collaborative efforts by members.
- Objective 4.3 Be a model of best network practices.

## **EVALUATION**

The annual State of the Network will be framed in reference to our strategic plan and the action plan from the previous year. The evaluation (State of the Network report) will be prepared in May for delivery to the Executive committee and membership in June. The Action Plan will be prepared in June for review and approval by the Executive Committee in July.



Appendix A  
INCOLSA Strategic Planning Steering Committee

Kathryn Carpenter, (academic libraries, Member Advisory Council)  
Purdue University-Calumet

Ellen Crosby (Executive Committee, special libraries)  
Indiana Historical Society

Ray Ewick (State Library, Indiana State Library and Historical Board)  
State Library

Peg Harmon (Executive Committee, public libraries)  
Kokomo-Howard County Public Library

Millard Johnson  
INCOLSA Executive Director

Debbie Long (INCOLSA staff, member liaisons, reference services, field offices)  
INCOLSA Mishawaka

Vince Lucas  
INCOLSA Director of Systems

Mary Anne Parks (school libraries, Member Advisory Council)  
MSD Washington Township

Martha Roblee (alternate for Ray Ewick)  
State Library

Bill Rosier  
INCOLSA Chief Financial Officer

Dea Szatkowski  
INCOLSA Director of Member Services

Jos Holman  
President, INCOLSA Executive Committee (“as available” basis)

Ellen G. Miller, Ellen Miller Group, facilitator

## Appendix B. Glossary

**Best practices:** most efficient, effective (cost and personnel) process for completing an application/operation/function.

**Resources:** the available means of supply and/or support, including but not limited to money, staff, facilities and time.

**Standards:** cooperatively established guidelines, practices or applications recognized by appropriate agencies to be widely available, implemented and providing for permanent quality. Such standards could include the MARC format, the Library Automation Standards for Indiana, applicable NISO standards.

## Appendix C

### Background and methodology

Early in 2000, the Executive Committee of the Indiana Cooperative Library Services Authority (INCOLSA) authorized undertaking a participative process to create a new strategic plan. Ellen Miller, a library trustee and consultant, was selected to facilitate the planning process.

Document review. Work commenced with a review of key documents including:

- "INCOLSA annual report 1998"
- Issues of "INCOLSA News"
- The Website
- "Network operating budget plan, January - December 2001"
- "Evaluation of INCOLSA: Indiana's statewide library and information network," June 1998
- "Toward the integration of Indiana's statewide library and information network: A final report and plan," September 1994
- "Organization chart" as of 9/8/00
- "INCOLSA funding initiative" packet

Steering committee selected. An 11-person planning team consisting of staff, Executive Committee members and others was selected (see Appendix A for list).

First planning session. Prior to the first planning session on August 18, 2000, confidential telephone interviews were held with all members of the steering committee. That meeting's agenda included:

- ü Review of planning process elements
- ü INCOLSA's planning process
- ü Emerging themes from the confidential telephone interviews
- ü Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) analysis. This is a proven technique that permitted participants to examine the internal environment for Strengths and Weaknesses and the external environment for Opportunities and Threats concerning PPL.

Staff input. From the outset, staff input was a high priority. INCOLSA's staff have four major opportunities for input:

1. Having four employees on the steering committee in addition to INCOLSA's Executive Director.
2. Confidential e-mail input to the consultant concerning current and possible future customer services.
3. A full-day planning session held in Indianapolis on September 13, 2000.
4. Input concerning all drafts of the plan via the new "Strategic planning forum" on INCOLSA's Website.

Staff meeting. This session was held on September 13, 2000. In order to maximize attendance, all INCOLSA offices were closed for the day. About 60 persons attended. The agenda included:

1. Brief review of the planning process.
2. Emerging themes from confidential staff e-mails about customer service.
3. Draft environmental scan of external issues affecting INCOLSA's planning, (see INCOLSA's Website for News, then Strategic Planning Forum for "Influential forces in libraries" posted 9/20/00).
4. Brainstorming by work units about possible steps that might help (1) small and (2) midsize/larger libraries.
5. SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats) analysis.
6. Review of upcoming planning process steps.

Second planning session. The second meeting of the steering committee was held on October 9, 2000. The agenda included

- ü Brief review of the two SWOT analyses (steering committee and staff)
- ü Final environmental scan of external issues affecting INCOLSA's planning
- ü Deciding the planning period: Five years
- ü Discussion and first draft of the vision, values and goal areas

Strategic planning Web forum (the Forum). To maximize input by all stakeholders, the Forum was added to INCOLSA's Website in August.

Issues were posted and comments invited. The issues included "Libraries and the Internet," "Library networks in the new millennium," "Electronic publications in libraries," "Distance education," and "Technology training." Comments were summarized as part of the environmental scan reported at the 9/13 staff meeting and at the 10/9 planning session.

The Forum will be used to post drafts of the strategic plan as well as input templates.

Fall Board meeting. On November 8<sup>th</sup>, the afternoon session of Fall 2000 INCOLSA Board meeting was devoted to discussing the draft partial plan. About 64 persons working in small groups discussed the "pluses," "minuses" and "interesting, need more information" concerning the draft vision, values and four goal areas. The groups then reported out one or two items to all.

Comments received. The Fall Board Meeting, e-mails via the Forum and mail generated 313 comments. They were reviewed individually. Many changes were made to the draft plan for the Steering Committee's third meeting on December 7, 2000.

Third planning session. The steering committee's third meeting was held on December 7, 2000. The agenda concentrated on reviewing the 313 comments received so far and in revising the draft partial plan.

Fourth and final planning session. On January 8, 2001, the steering committee discussed the draft plan in detail, making several changes. It was decided that the next version reflecting those changes would be widely disseminated. Methods to be used include INCOLSA's website and listserv, the 1/30/2001 Member Advisory Council meeting and its packet, the State Library's listserv, and a postcard sent to all 800+ board members. Comments received by the Director of Member Services by 2/28/01 will be reviewed. Per INCOLSA's bylaws, the final document must be mailed by 3/8/01 for the Spring Board Meeting.

May 1, 2001	Plan must be completed
June-July, 2001	The first of five annual action plans (budget, staff and other resource allocations) is prepared by INCOLSA's management for EC approval
Periodically	The Executive Committee reviews implementation of the strategic plan and the annual action plan
As needed	The Executive Committee may re-examine any goal, objective, etc. during the five years of this plan

#### Major milestones:

Mid-October, 2000	Post draft vision, values and goal areas on the Forum for comment
Mid-October, 2000	Invite those unable to attend the 11/8 Fall Board meeting to send comments via the Forum or mail
November 8, 2000	INCOLSA Fall meeting. Breakout groups discuss draft vision, values and goal areas
December 7, 2000	Steering committee meets to review all input, revise as needed and continue discussions on goals and objectives
January, 8, 2001	Steering committee final meeting to review entire draft plan
January 30, 2001	Member Advisory Council discusses draft plan, forwarding comments to INCOLSA
February 2001	Regional meetings discuss draft plan, forwarding comments to INCOLSA
February 2001	All comments are reviewed; draft plan is revised
March 2001	"Next to final" draft plan goes to steering committee for revisions as needed
March 8, 2001	Final plan goes to members for approval
April 10, 2001	Spring Board Meeting — Present final plan for approval