FY18-FY21 NILRC Strategic Plan
Executive Summary

As part of the 2016-17 NILRC Board Planning meeting in July 2016, the NILRC Board collectively determined that the organization was long overdue for an assessment of our Mission and Vision. NILRC had not evaluated or altered its mission since its founding in 1975. The NILRC Board determined that a Strategic Plan for NILRC should be developed to properly assess our needs and move forward accordingly.

At the July 2016 meeting, the NILRC board formed the Strategic Planning Work Group (SPWG) to be chaired by Cate Kaufman of Illinois Central College.

After the conclusion of the Allerton session, the SPWG determined that a survey would be sent out with the same questions to the membership to ensure that we received feedback from all member institutions and so additional feedback could be brought to our attention. This survey was sent out to membership in October 2016 and results were gathered and placed into a Trello Board (https://trello.com/b/5r2xjqz4) to analyze in November 2016.

The SPWG continued to meet online throughout the winter months to distill the responses into a set of common member priorities. Although members gave a variety of responses to the questions, nearly all of them fit within at least one of the following priorities.

Common Member Priorities:

- Professional development
- Networking
- Group buys
- Best practices
- Collaboration
- Community college focus
Mission & Values

The following mission statement is meant to give the NILRC organization something to which it can aspire and to continue to encourage its members through the support they receive.

**Mission Statement:**

NILRC connects, advances, and advocates for community college libraries.

Throughout the strategic planning process, members continually voiced the importance of NILRC in terms of what it means to them at their institutions. Based on member feedback, the following values emerged:

**Values:**

- Support
- Access to resources and information
- Networking
- Cost-effectiveness
Strategic Goals & Objectives

Strategic Goal 1: Benchmarks, best practices, and metrics

Objective: Strengthen the position of libraries within their institutions by identifying benchmarks, best practices, and metrics which align with accrediting standards (HLC, ICCB, etc.).

Strategies:

- Create assessment and metrics repository
- Share data and best practices amongst member institutions
- Develop recommendations for minimum standards for library operations

Strategic Goal 2: Professional development

Objective: Provide a wide-range of professional development opportunities in a variety of modalities.

Strategies:

- Maintain two in-person conferences each year
- Conduct two online/multimedia learning opportunities each year
- Provide professional development activities on emerging and member-requested topics

Strategic Goal 3: Networking and collaboration

Objective: Provide opportunities for networking and collaboration.

Strategies:

- Explore deeper partnerships with other organizations such as ICCCA and ILCCO
• Establish a plan for long-term listserv maintenance and development to potentially include lists for specific job categories at member institutions
• Investigate partnerships in contiguous states to identify additional institutions who may benefit from participation in NILRC

Objective: Engage staff at member institutions.

Strategies:

• Share information through in-person opportunities such as through regional meetings which could engage staff at all levels of member institutions
• Communicate opportunities for networking and collaboration through multiple channels to increase staff awareness of NILRC events
• Develop a new staff program to inform them of NILRC’s offerings and provide a platform for connections to colleagues at member institutions
• Craft a plan to continually maintain and develop the overall usefulness of the NILRC website for members
• Support staff attendance at events through scholarship opportunities

Strategic Goal 4: Innovation

Objective: Seek out innovative initiatives to advance services.

Strategies:

• Lead the development of the library’s role in Open Educational Resources (OER) within Illinois community colleges
• Investigate and communicate information regarding cutting edge technologies
• Provide group buy opportunities for emerging technologies
• Encourage member-driven ideas through feedback opportunities such as surveys, open online forums, informal networking opportunities at existing conferences, and a dedicated rotating Board agenda item for member institutions
• Expand innovation beyond technology to leverage our combined resources effectively
Implementation & Continuation of Strategic Plan

In order to have a successful strategic planning process, the work outlined within it must be delegated to the appropriate working groups. It is the recommendation of the SPWG that the NILRC Board establishes a plan to address the ongoing work associated with the strategic plan. As part of moving forward to accomplish the work laid out in this document, the SPWG recommends instituting a basic continual improvement process for the implementation of the plan.

Within each of the stages in the process pictured above, the Board would need to guide the work to be done. Below are some recommendations for the type of guidance the Board may want to provide:

**Identify:**
This stage would include determining how many strategies or activities will be undertaken and selecting specific strategies on which to focus. Any budget needs associated with chosen strategies would need to be addressed at this time. Timing of this stage is recommended to be prior to the beginning of the next fiscal year, such as at the annual May meeting.
Plan:
Laying out who will be doing the work (including the possible formation of new working groups), the reporting process by which they will inform the Board of their activities, and the timeline for completion are embedded in this segment. Measures for successful completion of the work to be done is critical for the individuals doing the work. The SPWG recommends that this structure is in place as soon as possible after the new Board chair begins (perhaps accomplished at the July Board meeting). The timely completion of this stage is critical to the success of the chosen strategies.

Execute:
At this point in the process, leadership roles would need to be assigned to those who are tasked with accomplishing strategies. Working groups would need to have been defined as well. The SPWG recommends that communication with working group leaders has taken place in order to prepare them for success, including the articulation of measures or assessments they will be asked to provide to the Board. While the work of this stage will go on throughout the fiscal year, it is the recommendation of the SPWG for the initial set up to be done by late July-early August.

Review:
Throughout the fiscal year, any working groups assigned strategic plan initiatives would be communicating with the Board regarding their progress for monitoring and support purposes. However, the SPWG recommends that if the timeline for completion was set for the end of the fiscal year, a final reporting mechanism should be in place. Additional communication to the membership regarding the year’s activities may also need to happen at this stage, or possibly during the execution stage.

Once the work of the strategic plan begins to unfold, it will be incumbent upon the Board to begin creating a strategic plan for FY22 and beyond. As the FY18-FY21 strategic plan required nearly a year to complete, the SPWG recommends that work for the plan which would begin in FY22 starts by the beginning of FY21.