

National Library of Medicine (NLM) Working Group

BACKGROUND

The National Library of Medicine (NLM) has been a center of information innovation since its founding in 1836. The world's largest biomedical library, the NLM maintains and makes available a vast print collection and produces electronic information resources on a wide range of topics that are searched billions of times each year by millions of people around the globe. It also supports and conducts research, development, and training in biomedical informatics and health information technology. In addition, the NLM coordinates a 6,000-member National Network of Libraries of Medicine that promotes and provides free access to health information in communities across the United States. Notably, the NLM also pioneered free Internet access to PubMed, genetic and genomic data, clinical trial registration and results, and NIH-funded biomedical research as part of the Public Access Policy.

The NLM has been at the forefront of how biomedical and health information is collected, shared, and analyzed. Nevertheless, the NLM's role in executing its mandate to acquire, organize, disseminate, and preserve this information is evolving substantially with the shift of information resources, both raw and curated, from print to digital media and with the transition to a data-intensive era for biology and medicine. The Internet has dramatically changed the environment for information collection and dissemination, and the NLM needs to be well-positioned to continue to meet the challenge of leveraging technological advances in information and data science to facilitate scientific breakthroughs and the better understanding of health and disease by scientists and the public.

CHARGE

The NLM Working Group of the ACD is charged with:

- Reviewing the current mission, organization, and programmatic priorities of the NLM; and
- Articulating a strategic vision for the NLM to ensure that it remains an international leader in biomedical and health information.

In addressing its charge, the Working Group should assess specifically how the NLM should:

- Continue to meet the biomedical community's rapidly evolving scientific and technological needs;
- Lead the development and adoption of information technologies;

- Facilitate the collection, storage, and use of biomedical data by the biomedical and health research communities;
- Continue to lead in promoting open access models for biomedical data and scientific literature;
- Balance computational methods and human-based approaches for indexing;
- Maximize the utilization and cost-efficiency of the NLM's National Network of Libraries of Medicine;
- Maximize the usefulness of the NLM's other outreach and exhibits programs in the context of future opportunities;
- Interface effectively with the broader and expanding NIH efforts in data science; and
- Directly contribute to addressing the major data science challenges facing the biomedical research enterprise.

PROCESS, DELIVERABLES, and TIMEFRAME

The NLM Working Group of the ACD will present a final report for consideration by the ACD at its June 11-12, 2015 meeting.