



MISSION, THEMES, AND STRATEGIES

MISSION STATEMENT

- The mission of the Coalition for Networked Information is to promote the creation of and access to information resources in networked environments in order to enrich scholarship and to enhance intellectual productivity.
- The Coalition pursues its mission by seeking to realize the information distribution and access potential of existing and proposed high performance computers and networks that support the research and educational activities of a wide variety of institutions and organizations.
- The Coalition accomplishes this realization by undertaking activities, on its own and in partnership with others, that formulate, promulgate, evaluate, and promote policies and protocols that enable powerful, flexible, and universal access to networked information resources.
- The Coalition directs the combined intellectual, technological, professional, and financial resources of its members according to a shared vision of how the nature of information management is changing and will continue to change through the end of the 20th Century and into the beginning of the 21st.

ORGANIZATIONAL STRATEGY

- The Association of Research Libraries (ARL), CAUSE, and EDUCOM comprise the Coalition which functions as an activity of ARL that takes direction from CAUSE and EDUCOM through their chief executives.
- The Coalition carries out its work through a Task Force of institutions and organizations that pay its assessed dues, actively engage in its program of work, and are governed by its leadership.
- The Coalition Task Force is composed of the senior administrator of libraries and the senior administrator of information technologies of higher education member institutions and comparable leaders and officers from other member institutions and organizations.
- The positions assumed and activities undertaken by the Coalition and its Task Force are coordinated by a nine person Steering Committee appointed by the chief executives of ARL, CAUSE, and EDUCOM with each executive naming three members.

MISSION, THEMES, AND STRATEGIES

PROGRAM THEMES

- *Incentives and disincentives in research and educational communication*

A complex system of incentives and disincentives both enables and constrains existing research and educational communication processes. Examples include promotion, tenure, and other peer review processes, certification and accreditation proceedings, patent, trademark, copyright, and other intellectual property policies, and costs, revenues, and other economic structures and dynamics. The Coalition elucidates and analyzes this system and formulates and investigates alternative systems that foster the creation of and access to networked information resources.

- *Architectures of and infrastructures for networked information services*

Cost-effective interoperation of distributed digital libraries that house rich collections of research and educational information depends upon shared networked information service architectures and infrastructures. Examples include models of and standards, protocols, and guidelines for collaborative transaction processing and the storage, retrieval, and display of multimedia objects in heterogeneous network environments. The Coalition conceptualizes these architectures and facilitates the implementation of these infrastructures.

- *Information exchange among projects seeking to advance the state of the art*

Progressive advancement of the state of the art in the application of networked information resources to research and educational processes relies upon information about experiments and demonstration projects that is made available in a uniform, timely, and reliable fashion. Examples of such projects include those that are concerned with remote access to online library information systems, digital information conversion of library collections, and network-based journals, monographs, databases, and multimedia presentations. The Coalition collects, organizes, and distributes a coordinated set of descriptive, technical, and documentary information about these sorts of projects whether they are undertaken by its members or by other institutions and organizations.

- *Environments for testing and evaluating service and product innovations*

Change agents and risk takers who research, develop, and promote service and product innovations require access to environments where their innovations can be tested and evaluated. Examples of such innovations are those that are concerned with increasing the scope, power, and accessibility of networked information resources or with the role of such resources in the redefinition of the relationship between authors, readers, and intermediaries in research and educational communication processes. The Coalition orchestrates the identification and management of suitable testing and evaluation environments for those innovations that are ready to be subjected to the rigors of field conditions.

- *Codes, policies, and practices that clarify rights and duties*

Open and reliable access to networked information resources and full and equitable participation in research and educational communication processes which depend upon such resources are insured by a variety of personal, institutional, professional, and governmental codes, policies, and practices that clarify both rights and duties. Examples of the issues at stake include free speech, privacy, confidentiality, privatization, commercialization, and resource and asset sharing. The Coalition gives voice to and represents the interests of authors, readers, and intermediaries in the formulation and promulgation of these codes, policies, and practices.

MISSION, THEMES, AND STRATEGIES

- *Professional and user education for effective access to and management of networked information*

A variety of new skills are essential to effective access to and management of networked information resources and these skills will evolve rapidly for the rest of the 20th Century and well into the 21st. Examples include configuration and operation of personal computers, workstations, and local area networks, design and specification of databases and database services, visualization of and navigation in complex information networks, and planning, budgeting, and managing projects with significant capital as well as labor components. The Coalition identifies, categorizes, and develops the content and process components of these skills and provides educational and training opportunities appropriate to the needs of the professional and user communities of its member institutions and organizations.

INVESTMENT STRATEGY

- *Secretariat*

The Coalition supports a full time program officer at the senior technical management level and one-half of a technically-skilled administrative support person. These staff direct the affairs of the Coalition by articulating and advocating its mission, themes, and strategies, by orchestrating its planning and consensus building, and by managing and representing its program and assets.

- *Technology*

The Coalition supports a networked information server plus associated communications and support hardware and software. This server enables the Coalition to pursue its mission and to manage its program in a manner that is consistent with the vision that inspires its members and to provide access to the products and services that result from its activities.

- *Information dissemination*

The Coalition supports information dissemination activities that are primarily network-based but which utilize print media whenever a given target audience is best served by so doing. These activities insure that information about the Coalition and information compiled by the Coalition is delivered to the target audiences involved in as timely, accurate, comprehensive, and cost-effective a fashion as is technologically feasible.

- *Meeting facilities and amenities*

The Coalition supports the facility, meal, and refreshment expenses that result from its Steering Committee, Task Force, and other meetings. Travel and housing expenses that result from such meetings are generally covered by the member institution or organization with which a given individual is associated.

- *Travel and housing expenses and honoraria*

The Coalition supports the travel and housing expenses of experts and other parties invited to its meetings and activities in those cases in which such support is necessary to secure the participation of a key individual. The Coalition also provides honoraria to those invited experts and other parties who are not associated with a member institution or organization and who make significant contributions of time and effort.