

What progress has ARKLink made?

ARKLink has made great strides in the sharing of library resources across academic libraries in the state. After much hard work by the Resource Sharing Committee, a statewide reciprocal borrowing agreement has been established. Academic libraries taking part in the agreement honor and issue ARKLink cards which grant students, faculty, staff and administrators borrowing privileges at all of the participating academic libraries. The Resource Sharing Committee has also developed a courier service allowing for the safe, cost-efficient and timely transport of resources from one participating library to another.

The Database Purchasing Committee has been very successful in negotiating favorable opportunities for purchases of electronic resources by consortium members. The process permits member libraries to preview resources before deciding whether or not to agree to participate in a purchase of the product. The Database Purchasing Committee recently expanded the scope of electronic resources to include the consortial purchase of e-books.

What are ARKLink's plans for the future?

As ARKLink achieves greater solidarity, it will:

Continue with regular assessments to identify current and future services needed by academic libraries in Arkansas

Identify ways that the consortium can address those needs

Analyze the organization's operational needs and seek funding for such operations

Assess the interest and feasibility of expanding the ARKLink Consortium to include other types of Arkansas libraries.

How does ARKLink support onsite as well as distance learning?

ARKLink members do not distinguish between services and resources needed by different types of students. We believe it is necessary for students who are both on-site and in remote locations to have equal access to resources and services. These resources and services generally fall into the following categories:

Online access to library catalogs, subject databases, electronic full-text journals, newspapers, and basic reference sources, as well as quality academic web sites.

Reference assistance provided over the telephone, or through regular or electronic mail.

Document delivery of items not owned by the host library, but requested by its patrons

Liberal borrowing privileges for off-campus college/university students.

Instruction in the use of library resources.

Cooperative purchasing and service projects.

What types of funds will ARKLink need?

A consortium with broad, comprehensive goals such as these must have adequate funding. To date, ARKLink's accomplishments have been the result of voluntary efforts by its members. Although progress has been notable, it has also been financially limited to pooled resources from existing budgets. To sustain and increase its efforts and impact, ARKLink will need public and private money to establish stable funding for our operations and to begin special projects. Legislative support, as has been achieved in other states, is vital.

ARKLink intends to coordinate its efforts with as many groups as possible to bring the benefits of the consortium to all citizens of the state.

For more information go to:

<http://ARKLinkLibraries.org>



ARKLink Partners in Sharing Library Resources

Information on the

ARKLink
Library Consortium

Prepared by
Arkansas Academic
Librarians

What is ARKLink?

The ARKLink Library Consortium is a 501 (c) (3) non-profit, voluntary association linking together all academic libraries in the state of Arkansas. It includes public and private two- and four-year college and university libraries.

The Consortium was informally established in April 1998. Since that time, the group has held a series of meetings across the state to formalize the existence of the ARKLink Consortium, to establish a vision and direction, and to set priorities and goals for sharing the resources of Arkansas's academic libraries.

On January 14, 1999, ARKLink members adopted the following as their Mission Statement:

"To increase, enhance, and facilitate cooperation among libraries in the state of Arkansas through consortial purchasing of resources, expanding access to resources, and encouraging partnerships between and among libraries."

This Mission Statement was subsequently incorporated into ARKLink Consortium "Memorandum of Understanding" which, by mid-October, 1999, had been signed by the library director or academic administrator of every public and private higher education institution in Arkansas.



How is ARKLink organized?

A five-person Board of Directors helps provide ARKLink's necessary internal structure and facilitates communication throughout the group. The Board is composed of a President, Vice President/President Elect, Secretary, Treasurer and Past President.

ARKLink's Advisory Committee is composed of the Board of Directors, the Chairs of Standing Committees, and at-large members representing two-year institutions, private four-year institutions, and public four-year institutions. Board members may also serve as at-large representatives. There are currently five standing committees, Collection Development, Database Purchasing, Financial Resources, Governance, and Resource Sharing.

The Collection Development Committee investigates methods for libraries to share purchasing responsibilities toward a goal of having more diversified collections throughout the state.

The Database Purchasing Committee gathers information about top-priority databases to purchase jointly, and then negotiates with vendors to garner the most advantageous price for consortium members.

The Financial Resources Committee identifies and researches various funding sources for possible gift/grant applications. This group maintains information on over 40 funding agencies, both public and private, that could be approached for support.

The Governance Committee proposes revisions to the governance documents of the organization and handles matters related to the legal status of ARKLink.

The Resource Sharing Committee gathers input from library participants on various ways that sharing of resources can be accomplished by the use of sharing agreements, a courier service, and a union catalog, etc.

What are ARKLink's primary goals?

Since the inception of ARKLink, the primary goal has been to share library resources so that collections can be made available across geographic and institutional boundaries. This goal has continued to evolve, as can be seen in the number of committees and their various activities. The intangible goal of ARKLink is to maintain a high level of communication among all Arkansas academic library personnel. Specific goals of the consortium are to:

Develop and enhance library collections by cooperatively identifying and acquiring electronic databases and other library resources at discounted, consortial prices for every member's benefit.

Support access to existing library resources by pursuing possibilities to implement common and compatible software platforms to web-accessible catalogs, for common master catalogs for ease of searching and access, for patron-initiated circulation between libraries.

Support and pursue the digitization of Arkansas's historical and cultural materials.

Conduct needs assessments to determine library educational resources and services needed by students.

Support distance education initiatives serving Arkansas students.

Investigate possibilities for library continuing education opportunities.

Support efforts toward accreditation successes for each institution.

