



Value, Influence, Trends and Leadership (VITaL) Task Group

Background

Originally called the CRKN Task Group on Value and Influence, this group was first assembled in November 2007 to advise how CRKN could best measure and communicate its value to members, funders, and other stakeholders. The task group was composed primarily of members from the CRKN Executive Committee, and until June 2008 the task group was chaired by Carolynne Presser, then-Director of Libraries at the University of Manitoba.

As a result of administrative disruptions during 2008-2009 (departure of C. Presser from the Board of Directors, staff medical & maternity leaves and other turnover), the task group was largely inactive for most of the year under review. During this time, progress on the initiative continued through consultations with CRKN members at the 2008 Annual General Meeting and through several individual meetings between university librarians, Board chair David Turpin and Executive Director Deb deBruijn.

In April 2009, the Board of Directors agreed on steps to refocus and revitalize the work of the task group. In June 2009, the Board approved new terms of reference, group composition, and a new task group name to reflect its full objectives and to be compatible with a positive communications effort.

Strictly speaking, this recent work fell outside of the 2008-2009 year under review. However, the following summary is presented in order to update CRKN members and to provide the foundation for subsequent progress reports.

Terms of Reference: “From Vision to Measurement”

The VITaL task group’s objective is to think strategically but with an understanding of what is achievable in practical terms. This will allow CRKN to devise objective measurements of performance and impact, for practical use by the Board, Committees and staff and for use in high-level reporting and communications with members, funders and stakeholders.

VITaL task group goals are:

1. To identify the measures of CRKN performance and impact that are consistent with its mission and strategic objectives, that are important in ensuring proper decision making, continued success and a good corporate profile;

2. To identify measures that will inform CRKN in its interactions with:
 - a. funding partners such as CFI, which must show the effect of their investments;
 - b. member libraries, with attention paid to the diversity of sizes, support structures and contents within the range of our members;
 - c. international partners with which CRKN, on behalf of its members, establishes links;
 - d. the research community, whose success CRKN seeks to support;

... and assist both CRKN and those partners in establishing successful outcomes.
3. To provide the CRKN Board with consistent, reliable and time-stable data on which the Board can base its strategic decisions.

Membership

- Jonathan Blay (chair), Professor of Pharmacology, Pathology and Biology, Dalhousie University, and Scientific Director, Beatrice Hunter Cancer Research Institute
- Ronald Bond, Provost Emeritus, University of Calgary
- François Duchesneau, Professor of Philosophy and History of Science, l'Université de Montréal
- Helen Clarke, Head, Collection Services and Electronic Resources, University of Calgary
- Joyce Garnett, University Librarian, University of Western Ontario
- Katherine Schultz, Vice President Research & Development, University of Prince Edward Island (member of CRKN Advisory Board)

Dyna Vink, CRKN Communications Manager, will serve as staff lead for the task group, and will provide communications expertise as well as administrative support for the group. Deb deBruijn will serve as a further resource to the group as needed.

