

WiLS 2018 ANNUAL REPORT

CONTENTS

Introduction.....	2
WiLS Mission	2
WiLS Organizational Values	3
WiLS Governance.....	3
WiLS Staff and Organizational Structure.....	4
WiLS Strategic Directions in 2018	4
WiLS Services	7
Consortium Management.....	7
Cooperative Purchasing and Projects	9
Consulting	10
Events and Education	12
WiLS Annual Financial Report: 2017-2018.....	13
Looking Forward.....	14
Stay in Touch!	16

INTRODUCTION

WiLS is a non-profit membership organization that facilitates collaborative projects and services to save members time and money and to advance library service, primarily in the state of Wisconsin. While most of WiLS' 586 members are libraries, we also work with cultural institutions, government agencies, and other non-profits to develop partnerships and projects.

This report of activities from January through December 2018 shares WiLS' mission, values, governance structure, strategic directions, services, fiscal year finances, and our 2019 strategic directions.

In addition to updates on our ongoing services, each section provides a highlight of new or especially innovative developments in the last year.

We welcome your [questions and feedback](#).

WiLS MISSION

We believe libraries, cultural institutions, and their partners make the world a better place.

We build relationships and provide services so they can do more with their time and money.

We help our members turn ideas into action.

WILS ORGANIZATIONAL VALUES

We work in the best interest of our members. We take their missions very seriously, we respect and value their time and money, and we do our best to deliver services that are effective, efficient, and affordable.

We are optimistic about the future of our members. Our members have always overcome challenges and we believe that they will continue to do so in the future. We approach our work, despite challenges, with the positive spirit of possibility.

We promote new ideas and experimentation. We encourage our members to try new things, we promote the outcomes of members' experimental endeavors, and we demonstrate this value through our own internal practices.

We are sincere in our purpose. We are honest with ourselves and others. We are reflective about what we do and who we are as an organization, we recognize when we can do better, and we do our best to improve.

We believe that we're all in this together. Our community is an ecosystem that thrives when we recognize our value to one another. We work to connect members and provide opportunities for collaboration in order to grow and strengthen all parts of our ecosystem.

We are committed to equity, diversity, and inclusion. We believe our community is stronger when people with a wide array of experiences and perspectives come together. We strive to create thoughtful and respectful environments where those interactions can take place.

We stand up for our members and their values. We are champions for the founding principles of librarianship and for the well-being of our members.

WiLS GOVERNANCE

WiLS is governed by a [thirteen-member board](#) of representatives from the WiLS membership. Representatives are chosen by represented consortia or by the general membership, depending on the seat. Board members serve three-year terms.

The WiLS Board is advised by an eight person [Finance Committee](#), made up of members of the board, WiLS staff, and citizen members.

WiLS members also have the opportunity to participate on workgroups and committees. The [Cooperative Purchasing Advisory Committee](#) (CooPAC) provides guidance for one of our major service areas. Workgroups are formed to help with various events and with other short-term projects.

WiLS STAFF AND ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

WiLS staff members work in a project-based structure, utilizing staff strengths and capacity according to each project's unique needs, rather than drawing on a previously-established hierarchy. In this way, WiLS can be responsive to project partners and agile enough to accommodate all the projects we work on.

See [our organization chart](#) for a full description of how WiLS works.

WiLS STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS IN 2018

Based on guidance from membership, staff, and the board, WiLS established the following strategic directions for 2018.

Review the internal structure of WiLS

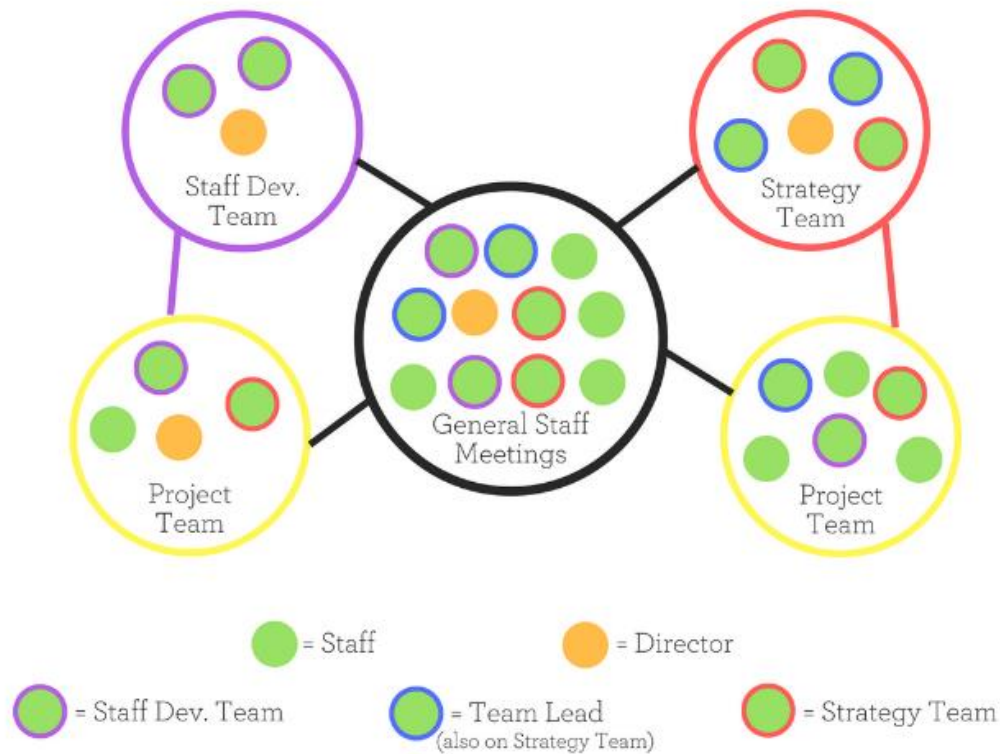
In 2018, we undertook a revision of the structure, with the goal to develop an organizational structure:

- that reflects and supports the dynamic nature of WiLS
- that provides ample support for WiLS staff members
- that gives all WiLS staff members the opportunity to lead and to grow
- that diffuses decision making throughout the organization
- that codifies some of the informal philosophies of how we work as an organization
- that ensures sustainability of the organization, including financial sustainability and how the organization thrives through personnel changes.

The key elements of this new structure are:

- **Staff development group** supports staff by regularly checking in with peers, creating and maintaining lists of expertise among staff members, and identifying areas where staff need training or additional support and assistance. In general, this group works to solve problems that staff members are encountering.
- **Strategy group** assists the director with short- and long-term strategy for WiLS, identifies and evaluates new opportunities, and helps manage future growth.

- **Project teams** are either led by a designated team lead or are more team-guided with the director providing oversight. WiLS already works in a team-based structure, with most staff members participating in multiple teams.
- **General staff meetings:** Staff meetings are the opportunity for all WiLS staff to gather, discuss different topics, plan projects, etc.



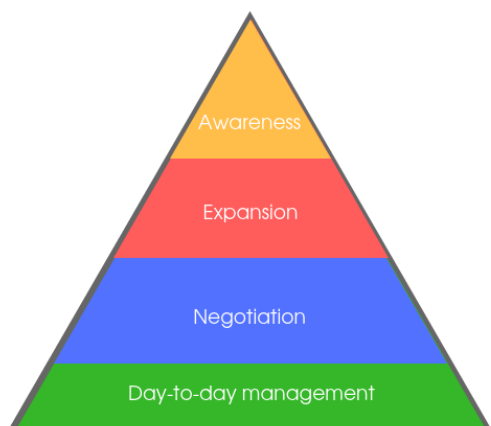
These groups are all interconnected, with staff members overlapping on the various groups and all of the bodies working in concert.

The new structure went into place in July 2018, and we’re finding it reflects who we want to be as an organization. It provides a voice for all staff in decision-making, more support and opportunities for leadership and growth, and the needed flexibility for WiLS to remain nimble and responsive to member needs.

Do a thorough assessment of cooperative purchasing

During WiLS’ reorganization in 2013, we spent time thinking about the best services we could provide in new areas, but we did not change anything with the cooperative purchasing service. It seemed like a good time for us to take the same “fresh eyes” approach to cooperative purchasing, considering both what will allow us to provide the best possible service to our members and also position us for future growth.

More importantly, we undertook this process to improve our service. We know the importance of the cooperative purchasing service to our members, and we wanted to make it better and more valuable to them. So, we researched and learned, through conversations with peer organizations across the country on how they deliver their cooperative purchasing services, and through gathering input from members in focus groups and surveys.



In December 2018, we shared the report of the WiLS Cooperative Purchasing Revamp Process with our members. The process created a vision for the WiLS cooperative purchasing service that includes four primary service areas: day-to-day management, negotiation, expansion, and awareness.

This vision is not a complete departure from the work WiLS has been doing in the past. It refines and streamlines the existing service to better meet the needs of our members. Some key elements are:

- Narrowing the base of day-to-day management to free up staff time for negotiation, expansion, and awareness activities.
- Improving response time through new tools and workflows.
- Providing new ways of letting members know what is available to them, including product-based webinars and more opportunities for information exchange through virtual meetings and email lists.
- Expanding offerings in a thoughtful manner, with careful consideration of the value of any partner or product we add and elimination of vendors who are not providing services our members need.
- Gathering more feedback for group renewals and creating a longer timeline to allow for more robust negotiations.

The report contains more specifics about our plans in each of these service areas and is not the end of the process, but the beginning. We'll continue to talk with our members about the new directions and regularly evaluate how things are going to make sure we are headed in the best possible direction.

WiLS SERVICES

WiLS supports its mission to serve members through four core services: Consortium Management, Consulting, Cooperative Purchasing and Projects, and Events and Education. See each section below for details of each service in 2018 along with some new and interesting developments that have come about in the last year.



CONSORTIUM MANAGEMENT

Part of WiLS' mission is to build relationships so our members can do more with their time and money. One way we achieve this goal is through consortium management. While forming a consortium is a great way for libraries and organizations to work together to provide ongoing services and resources to their members and communities, the reality of needing to manage the day-to-day business and operations of the consortium can be overwhelming. Often, the partners involved in a consortium don't have the staff time to do this management work, and this is where we help.

WiLS currently provides consortium management services to the Wisconsin Public Library Consortium (WPLC), WISPALS, the Wisconsin Schools Digital Library Consortium (WSDLC), and Recollection Wisconsin.

Wisconsin Public Library Consortium (WPLC)

WiLS helps WPLC with project and committee management, fiscal agency, collection development and assessment, and vendor liaising. In 2018, we managed the Wisconsin Public Library Consortium through a series of changes. In April, WiLS helped WPLC launch a suite of new products and services from BiblioLabs, including BiblioBoard Library, Pressbooks Public, SELF-e, and the Wisconsin Author Project. This year brought the first restructuring of the WPLC Selection Committee, which adopted new selection guidelines for both the Consortium and individual public library system advantage accounts. WiLS implemented the guideline changes and continues to manage and evaluate the new selection process. WiLS helped support the WPLC community as circulation for Wisconsin's Digital Library increased 20%, largely due to new users and the popularity of Libby, OverDrive's new mobile application. WiLS also actively worked with OverDrive to pursue better data reporting functionality in order to assess progress made on reducing patron wait time for titles in the OverDrive collection.

WISPALS

In the last year, WiLS has helped WISPALS with their ongoing work, including ILS administration and maintenance, cooperative purchasing management, fiscal sponsorship, strategic initiatives development, drafting and publishing their annual report, managing and facilitating communications, and meeting support for subcommittees and the Executive Committee. Notably, in the last year, WiLS has supported an authority

record clean-up and maintenance plan, developing a shared resource repository, exploring open educational resources, cultivating a partnership with the Wisconsin Technical College System, researching the UW System's "One Library" approach to collaboration, and developing more and better documentation.

Wisconsin Schools Digital Library Consortium (WSDLC)

The WSDLC launched its shared collection in January 2018 and at years' end, 109 members representing 131,884 students were sharing a collection of 4,203 titles. WiLS helped WSDLC with the following developments in 2018:

- Overseeing the development of an opening day collection and ongoing collection development
- Seating and administering the permanent board
- Creating a new web presence for the consortium
- Expanding the collection by adding audiobooks in December 2018

Recollection Wisconsin

Recollection Wisconsin, our state's Service Hub for the Digital Public Library of American (DPLA), aggregates and shares metadata records describing over [half a million digital cultural heritage resources](#) from Wisconsin libraries, archives, and museums. In 2018, Recollection Wisconsin added more than 33,000 records to DPLA from both new and continuing Content Partners. In addition, Recollection Wisconsin managed the following projects:

- [Listening to War: Digitizing Wisconsin's Wartime Oral Histories](#), funded by the National Endowment for the Humanities, supports the digitization and preservation of oral history interviews from 25 Wisconsin libraries, archives, museums, and veterans' organizations.
- [Curating Community Digital Collections \(CCDC\)](#), funded by the

Institute of Museum and Library Services, matches graduate students in library school with small cultural heritage institutions throughout Wisconsin to complete digital preservation projects.

"Going into the workshop, and throughout the entire summer, I was blown away by the professionalism and how prepared CCDC was. CCDC set the students up for success (especially in comparison to other practicum placements). I really can't think of anything different to improve upon the experience."

Participants received training and assistance from WiLS staff and mentoring from Wisconsin-based information professionals.

You can read more about our [Consortium Management Service on the WiLS website](#).



COOPERATIVE PURCHASING AND PROJECTS

WiLS believes in our members and their missions. We know that they do good work and can do even more of it with more time and money. [WiLS Cooperative Purchasing](#) service provides negotiated discount prices on electronic resources and other library products for our members. WiLS works with vendor partners to establish advantageous pricing for members and manages the entire e-resource purchasing process from trials to invoicing. Every dollar or minute saved by taking advantage of this WiLS service can be used to provide more and better services for a library's patrons.

In fiscal year 2017-2018, WiLS grew participation in its Cooperative Purchasing Service from both members and vendors:

	New	Total
Member Organizations	12	432
Subscriptions	249	2864
Vendor Partners	6	118
Databases	49	886

In 2018, in addition to the work of the service revamp described above in the 2018 Strategic Directions, the WiLS Cooperative Purchasing team developed a streamlined process for regular updates

"I like that our power in numbers helps us get common invoicing and good deals."

from vendor partners, including updates to signed agreements, contacts, website pages, and more. This process helps us achieve our goal of reducing the day-to-day management of the cooperative purchasing service by establishing a predictable workflow for our vendor partnership management.

WiLS also worked with OverDrive over the last year to develop an offer for a shared ebook collection for academic libraries. The member response was very positive and in January of 2019, the Wisconsin Shared Collection for Academic Libraries (WISCAL) launched with eight participating libraries. The participating libraries have committed to three years of contributions to the shared collection, which is comprised of a mix

of both scholarly and popular ebooks. The group's next steps include creating guidelines for collection development.

Looking ahead to 2019, the WiLS Cooperative Purchasing team will undertake a new approach to some of our largest group subscriptions in order to get the best renewal rates possible for our members. We will request pricing from vendors earlier than in the past in order to facilitate more negotiation. We'll be soliciting feedback from members about the products or vendors in question, arranging trials for similar resources, and talking with other consortia about their agreements with those vendors.

In addition to WiLS Cooperative Purchasing services, we are also part of a number of cooperative projects with partners from Wisconsin and beyond, providing management, coordination, training, and even funding.

In 2018, WiLS launched its inaugural year of the Ideas to Action Fund, a grant program which awarded a total of \$23,750 to six innovative and collaborative projects from across the state to tackle such issues as digital citizenship, games in libraries, outreach to Latinx communities, entrepreneurship and maker support, and open educational resources. The funds, which will increase for 2019, help our members reach their goals and have a positive impact on the Wisconsin library ecosystem.

WiLS also began work on [Mukurtu Hubs and Spokes](#), a national initiative funded by IMLS and led by Washington State University with partners at the Alaska Native Language Archives, University of Hawaii, University of Oregon, Yale, UW-Madison, and WiLS, continues to develop and enhance Mukurtu CMS with new features and provide training and outreach to existing and new communities.



CONSULTING

A key piece of our mission is that we help our members turn ideas into action. One way we do this is through our consulting services. When a member expresses a need for help, we work with them to get a clear understanding of their goals and to develop processes and a plan. We are involved in the project as much as the member wants us to be, providing project management and expertise as needed to achieve the best possible outcome, ranging from supporting large statewide collaborative efforts to providing one-on-one consulting with libraries to help them chart their future and improve services to their community.

In 2018, the consulting services team had the pleasure to work with 14 libraries and one public library system to develop and execute strategic plans.

WiLS Strategic Plan Services in 2018		
Completed	In Progress	Plan refreshing / prioritizing
Waukesha Public Library Horicon Public Library Fitchburg Public Library Shorewood Public Library Jack Russell Memorial Library (Hartford)	Manitowoc Public Library Baraboo Public Library Franklin Public Library Irvin L. Young Memorial Library (Whitewater) Wauwatosa Public Library Monona Public Library Middleton Public Library Milwaukee County Federated Library System	Sun Prairie Public Library La Crosse Public Library

The consulting services team also worked with members on numerous projects, presentations, and workshops:

- Completed project management for the Public Library System Redesign (PLSR) workgroups and continued support for the PLSR Steering Committee.
- Performed a process management study of the Cataloging, Continuing Education, and Integrated Library System (ILS) services for the Southwest Wisconsin Library System.
- Delivered a Service Configuration Recommendations Report for Viterbo University, in partnership with an expert from one of our member libraries.
- Provided strategic planning instruction for the Wisconsin Library Association (WLA) Leadership Development Institute.
- Developed and presented “Data Driven Libraries” for the Lakeshores Library System Annual Dinner for trustees and member libraries.

“Facilitation of community conversations and making sense of data from those and the survey. We could not have done that with as much impartiality and experience as our WiLS consultants brought to the table, and that data was and will be incredibly helpful.”

We look forward to further developing our consulting services in 2019 by:

- Bringing together a cohort of small libraries to train library staff in strategic planning and facilitate the development of their own strategic plans and offer this cohort opportunity to more participants in 2019.
- Developing a plan to implement a marketing and communications service.

- Exploring a “Flipped Classroom Approach” for strategic planning to maximize meeting time and allow for deeper conversation and assessment.
- Continuing to make more use of Tableau to provide more enhanced and dynamic analysis of data.



EVENTS AND EDUCATION

In support of our mission to serve members, and to drive the library field forward, WiLS hosts professional development events to connect and educate members of the community, build relationships, foster collaboration, solve problems, and discover innovative ideas.

WiLS draws on a variety of expertise to plan and produce these events. Planning workgroups are made up of WiLS members and meeting or session topics

“WiLSWorld made me excited again for my profession and all the amazing work libraries do. Thank you.”

are driven by member input whenever possible. Programs and workshops are led by experts from the WiLS team, our member community, and professionals from business, technology, education, and the broader library world. Read more about [our events on the WiLS website](#), including upcoming learning opportunities.

In 2018, WiLS held its Annual Membership Meeting, three WiLSWorld Shorts, Peer Council, WiLSWorld, Camp WiLS (our WLA exhibit booth), two GoodWiLS Ambassador presentations, and provided many virtual trainings on CONTENTdm and WorldShare ILL for OCLC. WiLS also presented at a number of conferences, including the “E”ffordability Summit, the Midwest Archives Conference, the DPLA Members Meeting, WAAL, WAPL, Tech Days, the WLA Annual Conference, the Southwest Wisconsin Association of Libraries (SWAL) annual meeting, Creating Community through Digital Futures, and more!

In 2018, we made a number of changes to how we approach our events, including a growing focus on online events such as WiLSWorld Shorts and changing the venue for Peer Council from the Pyle Center to the downtown Madison Public Library. WiLS did not host the Fall Classic event at the WLA conference or regional meetings, choosing instead to focus attention on the exhibit booth at WLA and other more impactful educational and outreach methods.

WILS ANNUAL FINANCIAL REPORT: 2017-2018

REVENUE

Cooperative purchasing sales	\$9,192,753.27
Cooperative purchasing member fees	\$83,312.00
Interest/Amex reimbursement	\$152,491.97
Event revenue	\$12,822.50
Consortium management	\$252,664.08
Consulting services	\$216,329.87
Cooperative projects	\$30,960.33
Total	\$9,941,334.02

EXPENSES

Cooperative purchasing materials	\$8,870,990.67
Staff (with travel / CE)	\$859,932.60
Event expenses	\$13,535.31
Project expenses	\$62,540.77
Other expenses	\$84,303.55
Total	\$9,891,302.90

NET INCOME **\$50,031.12**

LOOKING FORWARD

Each year, WiLS undertakes a member-focused planning process to identify strategic directions for the upcoming year. For 2019, WiLS staff and board will focus on the following organizational initiatives:

Continue implementation of changes to our cooperative purchasing service.

Our 2018 initiative to revamp our cooperative purchasing service resulted in a report with suggested improvements to the service. We will continue to implement these changes according to a timeline adopted by CoOPAC and the Board.

Develop a unified strategy to communicate the value of WiLS as a cornerstone organization for library service in the state.

While many in the Wisconsin library community recognize the importance of WiLS to the library ecosystem, others don't understand the role of WiLS or think of us as "just another vendor." We'd like to undertake a strategic initiative to change that perception by engaging a marketing professional to develop a unified marketing and communications strategy, taking into account our mission, values, ownership of our members, and the work that we do. Our hope is that this strategy would not only communicate the value of WiLS as a whole, but would provide us with a framework to illustrate the value of individual services provided by WiLS.

While the primary goal of this initiative would be to develop a strategy to improve awareness of WiLS and its role in the state, this initiative has another desired outcome: *to educate WiLS staff on marketing and communication.*

Specific WiLS staff members will be identified to work with the marketing professional on the creation of this strategy. Our hope is that these individuals would learn more about marketing and how to implement the strategy created through this initiative and would be able to apply this knowledge both to WiLS and to assisting our members. The marketing professional could be called upon to review materials and help staff with implementation of the strategy as part of this learning and education process.

Develop outcome measures to assess and communicate the value of our services.

Alongside the development of a strategy to communicate the overall value of WiLS, we would like to develop appropriate assessment and outcome measures to illustrate the value and impact of the services we provide, including strategies for capturing user stories and data. In order to better illustrate the impact

of our services for our members and partners, we would engage an assessment professional to help develop these measures.

Like the communication initiative above, we believe this initiative will also educate WiLS staff on outcome-based assessment. Specific staff members will be identified to work with the hired professional on the creation of these outcome measures.

We also expect this initiative to help clarify WiLS' role in helping our members with their need for better ways to assess and communicate their value, which was one of the areas of need identified at the 2018 Board retreat.

Formalize WiLS' role in educating and creating conversations around big-picture and future-facing topics of importance to the Wisconsin library community.

WiLS has helped to educate the community about big-picture and future-facing topics through opportunities like WiLSWorld and WiLSWorld Shorts. We have also occasionally convened "think tanks" to discuss topics such as digital preservation. This year, we would like to develop an action plan to formalize our role in moving the community forward around important topics. The plan would include specific ways that WiLS will regularly convene the community around topics of interest, how those topics will be identified, and activities WiLS staff will undertake to educate themselves and to take part in national conversations around important topics for the community.

Develop an infrastructure for connecting, storing, and sharing among members.

As we talk with members, we often hear the desire to learn from one another and work together. This desire may be simply to exchange information with other libraries in a geographic area or of a particular type, or it may be working toward a common goal with other institutions.

WiLS is in a strong position to assist with this need. We have a large number of multitype members, we have experience in helping libraries to work together through our consortium management service, and we act as a connector in the community. In this initiative, we would work with pilot groups to determine what assistance is needed to help libraries successfully work together and learn from one another, and, through that experience, develop an "infrastructure" for connecting, storing, and sharing. This infrastructure could include repositories for information, policies for retention and sharing, and services that would allow groups of members to accomplish their goals together.

STAY IN TOUCH!

We welcome the opportunity to hear what you're doing, share what we're doing, and pass along information from the community that serves your efforts. You can stay in touch with WiLS through these channels:

- [Subscribe to our weekly newsletter](#), This Week at WiLS, to hear updates on our work and from the community, and musings on the world at large. Or, you can read the [archives](#).
- [Subscribe to the WiLS Community Chronicle](#), which shares WiLS news, our monthly interviews with staff and members, upcoming funding and learning opportunities, member news, and more.
- Check out our [website and blog](#) for all things WiLS.
- Follow us on [Facebook](#).
- [Contact us](#) directly. We'd love to hear from you.

WiLS deeply appreciates the hard work and input of its staff, board, committees, and members.

Thank you for being part of our community!