

2025 State of the Libraries

April 17, 2025



Overview

1. Evolving & Advancing:

Learning, Discovery & Community

2. Continuous Innovation:

Transforming Culture & Cultivating Talent

3. Internationalization & Global Engagement

4. Storytelling, Stewardship & Impact

5. Behind the Scenes

6. Looking Forward

-  Student Success
-  Healthy & Vibrant Communities
-  Research Discovery

1 / Evolving & Advancing: Learning, Discovery & Community

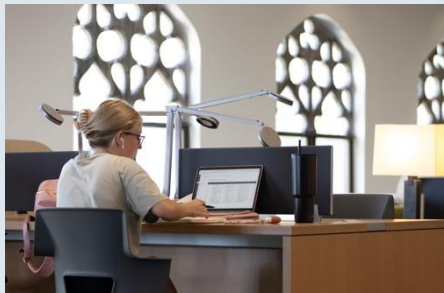
Vibrant & Growing Community Platform



- **6 KU Libraries locations**
 - 2,967 public seats
 - 621,000 visitors in 2024, a 16% increase



- **Anschutz Library**
 - > 500 users at any given moment on 62 different days (2024)
 - Peak: 747 users (5/6/24)



- **Watson Library**
 - 74% increase in usage of 455 conference room & 3 West Reading Room

Vibrant & Growing Community Platform

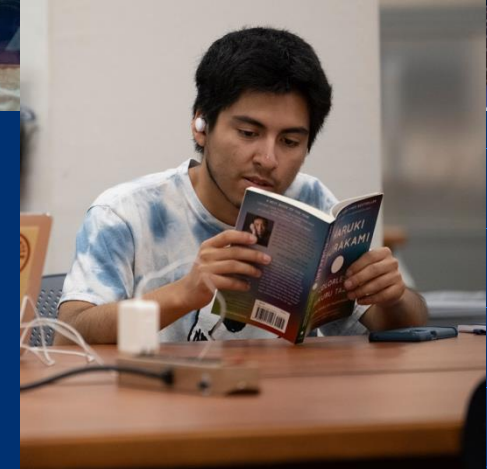


- **Spencer Research Library**
 - **1,159 researcher visits** to Stokstad Reading Room
 - >1/3 KU undergrads
 - **16 class/group visits** (K-12 & non-KU colleges/universities)
 - 280 visitors | 24 hours instruction time
- **65 tours/events** with local, national, and international audiences, reaching **1,741 visitors**
- **59 *Inside Spencer*** blog posts
- **Annex**
 - **166,610 items** accessioned – opening potential for **more user-centered library spaces**



Events & Collections to Build Community

- 30+ library-hosted events
 - 1,000+ attended Watson Centennial celebration events
- Exhibits
- Libby leisure collection of ebooks and audio books (new)





Deep Student Engagement

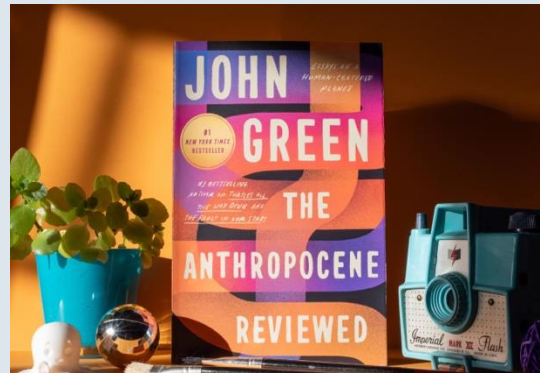
- Student-curated **collections & exhibits** (new!)
- **Sanders Scholars** program
- Deep engagement with **student success & transition** programs





Deep Student Engagement

- **KU Libraries Student Ambassadors (KULSAP)** engagement: Finals Week
- **Makerspace:**
 - *Open houses, plant events, community events, 3D printing*
- **KU Reads: A Common Book Experience**



Research Partners Across Every Stage

- **1,700+** research consultations
- **400+** course instruction sessions
 - Reached 6,000+ students
 - From First Year Writing → graduate seminars
 - Across all KU schools and the College
- **500+** systematic reviews in Covidence



Research Partners Across Every Stage

- Sprints Week projects
- Workshops
 - Digital Jumpstart
 - Carpentries
 - Data management
 - Fridays on Fourth



Digital Humanities

Institute for Digital Research in the Humanities (IDRH)

- 18 IDRH workshops (FY25)
- IDRH Fellows



Publishing, Platforms, & Access

- **Open Journals System:**
 - 6 new journals, 60+ supported
- KU ScholarWorks: nearing **30,000 items**
- **Read & Publish deals** support authors
- Open Access Week **video success stories**
- **OER grant support**
 - With just a \$144K total investment to date, OER's yield **\$1.25 million in student savings annually** - a **9.3:1 return on investment** benefiting over **12,000 students**.



Digitization Initiatives

University Daily Kansan



Even An Agile Campus Purp Finds Ramshackle Wooden Library Steps Are Very Nearly Unsurmountable

A nimble collie dog barely escaped a serious fall yesterday on the hazardous dozen wooden steps leading up to the library.

The dog had gingerly succeeded in reaching the eighth step when his left hind foot missed one of the skeleton steps. He slipped several steps before he caught himself.

When such accidents occur to quadrupeds, it is hard to believe that only five students suffered falls on the risky, ugly makeshift last week.

The steps have been there for 11 years.

A \$6,500 fund for the steps' construction has been successfully piloted through the state legislature by State Senator Dallas Knapp of Coffeyville, but the state architect has not yet given the project any attention.

The architect's time apparently has been taken up too much with other projects for him to consider this needed improvement at the University.

Students were unanimous yesterday afternoon in condemning the steps and expressing the wish that new steps be built. The students were greatly in favor of the Kansans's campaign seeking the improvement.

John Chandler: "It seems to me that inasmuch as funds are now available for the completion of the library steps, there is no excuse for not immediately removing the unsightly and unsafe entrance to the building."

Phil Bramwell: "Since the landscaping has now been finished in the front of the library, new steps are needed to complete the effect."

George Gilmore, c'38—"The appearance of these steps forms an unpleasant contrast to the general appearance of the building and grounds."

Mary Louise Bell, c'39—"The steps are dangerous because they are slippery in wet weather, and they are too shallow."



Endacott Society oral history interviews



Arthur Jellison photograph collection

Watson Centennial photographs

33,000+
digitized
images



2 / *Continuous Innovation: Transforming Culture & Cultivating Talent*



Libraries on the Leading Edge

- AI
 - Working group & innovation pilots
 - *Whisper* for video transcriptions
 - Image description experiments
- Ithaka S+R: AI project partnership
- Interinstitutional data sharing: exploring potential of reference chatbots

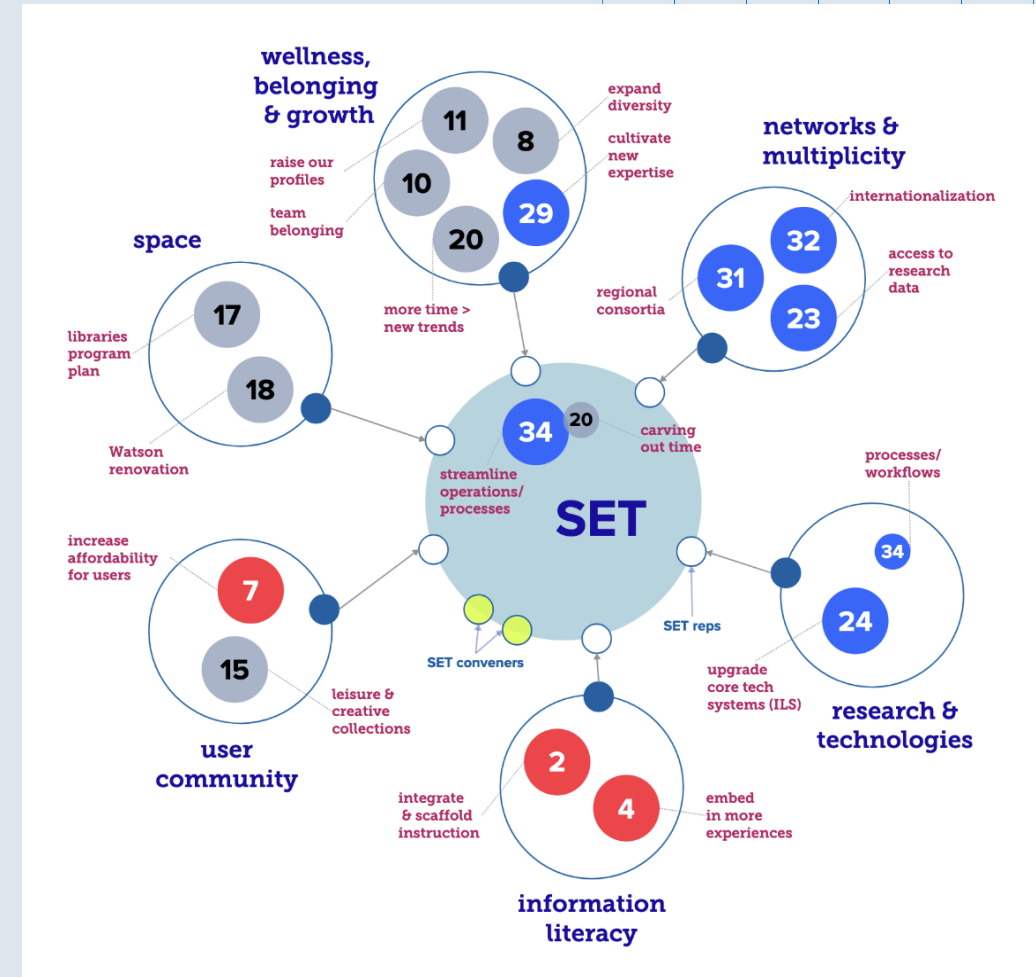
Infrastructure for Innovation & Security

- Platform migrations & upgrades
 - RFP for new ILS nearing completion
 - LibKey upgrades for seamless access
 - Security-minded enhancements
- NSPM-33 team members addressing **Digital Persistent Identifiers (DPIDS)**



Cultivating Talent & Belonging

- Talent Development Pathways
- Individual talent development fund allocations
- Startup research funds for tenure-track faculty
- Strategic Engagement Team (SET) model





Celebrating our People

- Faculty, staff & student awards
- **Notable achievements** across departments



New Library Faculty

RECENT HIRES

Digital Humanities Librarian

Common Book Librarian

ACTIVE SEARCHES

Research Data Librarian (1 of 2)

Curator, Hispanic/LatinX Collections

Curator, Wilcox Collection of Contemp. Political Movements

FORTHCOMING SEARCHES

Digital Archivist

Instructional Design Librarian

ON THE HORIZON

Collections Strategy & Development Librarian

Spencer Community Outreach Librarian

Digital UX Librarian

Research Data Librarian (2 of 2)





3 / Internationalization & Global Engagement

Global Engagement via Collections

- **International Jayhawk Festival**
 - *Name That Language* game
- **Tadoku reading events** in East Asian languages
- **Book displays** from global cultures
- **E-poster conference**
- **Orientation tours for new grad students** in area studies and languages



New: Institute for Globally Engaged Librarianship (IGEL)

- Build **international relationships** between libraries and librarians
- Advance **KU internationalization goals**
- Empower librarians to build **worldwide academic networks**
- Promote **global interdisciplinary academic discovery & exchange**

lib.ku.edu/igel



4 / *Storytelling, Stewardship & Impact*

Watson Centennial

- Engaged entire KU community
- Honored Watson's legacy with rich storytelling
- Nurture donor engagement and recognize lasting support
- Raised profile of KU Libraries



2024 Centennial-inspired Campaign Success

- *One Day, One KU*
- Launch KU
- Board of Advocates gifts
- New planned gifts totaling \$2M+





Outreach Across the Country

- Partnership with **KU Alumni Association**
 - **Traveling exhibit program:**
 - *Highlights by the Hundreds*
 - *Kansas Alumni* magazine
 - President's Club
- **News releases**
- **Digital and print publications**
- **Social media engagement:**
 - Adopted new platforms
 - Focus on video strategy





5 / *Behind the Scenes*

Budget Stewardship

- Talent development **allocation model**
 - Dashboards
- **Innovation funds:**
 - AI & strategic initiatives
- **Startup funds** for tenure-track faculty
- **Dedicated cost centers:**
 - Mission-critical systems and membership



A Nod: The Work You Don't See

- **Collections**

- Engaging with vendors to update approval plans and workflows to ensure timely purchase of materials and stewardship of fiscal resources



- **Spencer**

- Vault inventory / organization
- Creation of sorting room for incoming collections needing review



6 / *Looking Forward*



Renovation & Reimagination

- **Watson Library enhancements** to advance Research & Discovery
- **Strategic partners:** welcoming & strengthening
- Future-forward **design thinking**
- Continued **cross-functional collaboration**



What's Next?

- New roles & strategic hires
- Continued focus on innovation and engagement
- Expanding global partnerships
- KEYS[®] to Creativity & Innovation survey



The background of the slide features a bright blue sky with scattered white clouds. At the bottom, a cityscape is visible, including a prominent tall, thin tower and several other buildings with red roofs, partially obscured by green trees.

Thank you!

Questions?