

CARL Executive Director's Report

Tabled at the CARL Board Meeting, September 12, 2025

The following provides an overview of selected activities undertaken or supported by the CARL Office since the May 26, 2025, report to the Board. All past reports are available on the CARL website's [Publications page](#).

Policy and Public Affairs

Federal Government Context

Canada's federal election on April 28th led to another Liberal Party win under the leadership of Mark Carney. It is a minority government with the Conservative Party as the official opposition. Prime Minister Carney appointed his Cabinet on May 13th and relevant to us were: Steven Guilbeault, Minister of Canadian Identity and Culture and Minister responsible for Official Languages; Mélanie Joly, Minister of Industry and Minister responsible for Canada Economic Development for Quebec Regions; and Evan Solomon as Minister of the newly created Ministry of Artificial Intelligence and Digital Innovation. Parliament returned on May 26th which was quickly followed by the Throne Speech delivered by King Charles on May 27th. The last time the Monarchy gave the speech from the Throne was in 1977.

Breaking with tradition established under the Trudeau government, PM Carney released a [single mandate letter](#) publicly for his entire cabinet that primarily focused on high-level concerns, including housing affordability and Canada's relationship with the United States. As a result of this consolidated approach, we have less insight into the priorities of individual ministers at this time.

Activities at the Federal level have been relatively quiet over the summer as the Carney government was focused on trade relations both within and outside of Canada, as well as working to staff up ministerial offices.

Federal Government Activities

CARL sent letters of congratulations to select newly appointed Liberal cabinet ministers along with the appointed Conservative Shadow Minister for each Ministry which highlighted our advocacy interests in research funding structures and programs, digital research infrastructure, digital and AI literacy, accessibility, and copyright.

CARL submitted [a brief](#) to Global Affairs Canada's consultation on developing a possible [Canada-European Union digital trade agreement](#). In its memo to the government CARL highlights the need for Canada to strengthen its digital trade and data governance by ensuring robust infrastructure for cross-border data movement, secure local storage, and protection of sensitive and Indigenous data, which can be informed by the work of the Digital Research Alliance. It also suggests that aligning with the European Union's GDPR framework could modernize Canada's privacy laws by providing stronger protections, clearer consent requirements, enforcement mechanisms, and recognition of rights like data erasure. At the same time, noting that advancing digital inclusion through affordable internet, digital literacy, accessibility, and safeguarding principles such as net neutrality and freedom of expression is essential to an equitable digital ecosystem.

CARL submitted the same brief to both the [Federal Government Department of Finance](#) and the [House of Commons Standing Committee on Finance](#) in advance of a proposed fall 2025 Budget, the first budget under Prime Minister Carney. The brief urges the federal government to strengthen Canada's research and knowledge ecosystem by making targeted, modest investments in open science, accessible publishing, and optimizing digital capacity at Library and Archives Canada. Coordinated national support for open science and accessibility would align Canada with international best practices, improve equity of access, and accelerate innovation and economic growth. Sustained investment in these areas will ensure that Canada's research, publishing, and documentary heritage systems remain efficient, inclusive, and globally competitive.

CARL also submitted [a brief](#) to Canadian Heritage's External Advisory Group on the [Creation and Dissemination of Scientific Information in French](#) highlighting the essential role university libraries play in the creation and dissemination of scientific information, noting that science in French remains weakened by a lack of content and discoverability. This is a situation that creates a gap between anglophone and francophone research communities, increasing the isolation of francophone researchers, particularly in minority communities. CARL advised that an ambitious and inclusive national strategy is needed to ensure bilingual infrastructure and position science in French as a pillar of the Canadian identity.

Artificial Intelligence

Members of six Quebec unions representing more than 25,000 artists, creators, performers, craftspeople, and technicians in the audiovisual and music industries came together to release their "[Manifesto for the Protection of Authentic Creation](#)." The statement outlines the core principles they believe must guide the responsible and cautious development of AI tools, along with their demands and recommendations, including that the government assert that AI

cannot be deemed a creator under the Copyright Act, and that an exception not be made for text and data mining.

The 2025 G7 Leaders' Summit was held in Kananaskis, Alberta, from June 15 to 17, 2025. While much of the Summit was focused on global security concerns and trade talks, AI was also a focus area and resulted in the [G7 Leaders' Statement on AI for Prosperity](#), which focused on collective governance and signaled ongoing support for AI adoption across the public and private sectors.

Management, Advancement and Assessment of Research Libraries

CARL Research in Librarianship Grant

The call for the 2025 cycle of the grant closed on August 15 and the application review panel met on September 2. Recipients will be announced shortly.

Evidence Synthesis Institute Canada (ESI)

CARL is partnering with Université Laval to offer a French version of the institute, which will run virtually November 24-27. The call for participants and learning facilitators closed on September 5 and instructors have been meeting monthly leading up to the institute.

FLOURISH: BPOC Academic Library Leadership Program

The first of two in-person workshops will take place November 6th and 7th at the University of Toronto. Four virtual sessions have been scheduled between December 2025 and April 2026. The final and second in-person workshop will take place in St. John's, NL, coinciding with the CARL Spring Meeting in the week of May 25, 2026. 14 participants have been accepted into the program.

Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Working Group

Under the leadership of Selinda Berg (Windsor), the working group is organizing a fourth webinar in the Inclusive Collections webinar series, following a meeting hiatus over the summer months.

Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Community of Practice

In its first year the EDI CoP's held four gatherings centered around readings and breakout discussions. The next community gathering will take place on October 22. The meeting will include a round-up from the past year, a look at what's ahead, interactive activities such as a "human library" breakout, and opportunities for members to shape future topics and communication tool

Communications Officers Community of Practice [“CommUNITY”]

The Communications CoP Steering Committee met twice over the summer to plan upcoming activities. This fall, they are planning a community event in October on University of Victoria Library’s new website and an informal Communi-tea chat in November (topic TBD). Looking ahead, they are preparing a half-day online library communications symposium for February 2026. The Steering Committee is currently piloting Discord as a potential communication platform for the CoP.

Finance Officers Community of Practice

The Finance CoP planning group met a few times over the summer to prepare for the August community gathering, which was focused on AI.

Assessment Community of Practice

The Assessment CoP planning group took a break over the summer. Giovanna Badia (McGill) has stepped forward as the new chair of the planning group and two events are scheduled this Fall which will focus on user satisfaction surveys.

CARL Impact and Assessment Continuing Education Working Group

CARL’s Continuing Education Working Group, chaired by Shahira Khair (UVic), has continued to oversee the work of the 2025 Canadian Library Assessment Workshop (CLAW) programming committee and the Canadian Assessment CoP planning group. Registration for CLAW closes September 26.

CARL Statistics Program

The CARL Statistics Working Group took a break over the summer and has resumed meeting every two weeks to review the existing questionnaire and refine survey definitions. The goal is to make the completion process more efficient and timelier and to provide clarity and consistency for the data being collected. The 2024-2025 stats cycle was launched on August 12 with a deadline of October 30.

Support to Research Production, Preservation and Dissemination

Open Access - Shared Repositories Infrastructure

CARL continues its involvement with Scholaris, the National Shared Repository Infrastructure Service. Participation in the Early Adopter Program continues to grow: Université de Sherbrooke, University of Windsor, University of Western Ontario, Memorial University, Bishop’s University and University of Regina have all gone live in recent months, bringing the total to 18 institutions on Scholaris instances.

The Scholaris team is working on PIDs and DOI registration via the optional DataCite API integration, enabling automated updates between DSpace and DataCite. The integration is in place at three institutions, with more — including the University of Toronto, Université de Montréal, Memorial, Windsor, and Western — joining soon, with several newly affiliated with DataCite.

Gabriela Mircea (VPO for Metadata Strategies and Scholaris) continues to lead the Scholaris Expert groups. The Scholaris Expert Group Recommendations, released in May in English, have been translated to French and made available on TSpace. The Digital Preservation Expert Group (S-DPEG), together with the Scholaris team, presented “Building a Digital Preservation Service Model for Canadian Institutional Repositories Through Community Engagement” at Open Repositories 2025 in June. The expert groups paused their meetings over the summer and will reconvene in September.

SRIAC met in June and is revising its terms of reference to reflect its governance mandate and role as an advisory group for the coming year. SRIAC will report jointly to the CARL Advancing Research Committee and to Scholars Portal Operations and Development Committee (OCUL-SPOD).

Preservation

In June, the Digital Preservation Working Group, chaired by Geoff Harder (Alberta) issued a call for new members, following a recommendation from the @Risk North 3 Summit Report to include representation from smaller and/or non-CARL institutions. The response was enthusiastic, and seven new members have joined DPWG, bringing membership to 19.

Sarah Lake (VPO Digital Preservation) hosted French and English community calls in June to discuss @Risk North 3 Summit Report recommendations and to share progress made since the summit. Participants agreed that major events like @Risk North should recur every 2–3 years and expressed interest in smaller regional or virtual gatherings to maintain engagement; training needs were also highlighted. The DPWG is proceeding with the national benchmarking exercise using the Digital Preservation Coalition’s Rapid Assessment Model (DPC RAM). Plans have been laid for a pilot phase for CARL institutions to begin this fall; multiple information sessions have been scheduled for October. Sarah is also moving ahead with an initiative to map digital preservation efforts across Canada to identify overlaps, fill gaps, and align initiatives more strategically.

Bibliometrics and Research Impact Community of Practice (BRI CoP)

The Bibliometrics and Research Impact Community of Practice showcased a promotional poster at the BRIC Conference in Montreal in June to help expand and strengthen its membership. Later that month, it hosted an event on DORA research assessment, which drew 62 participants and has since received 45 views on YouTube. Following a summer hiatus, the group is resuming activities with a series of fall community calls, including an October

workshop on McMaster's API project and Jupyter Notebooks, along with monthly Article Club meetings running from August through December.

Canadian Repositories Community of Practice

The Canadian Repositories Community of Practice remained active over the summer, hosting two well-attended events. In July, four community members who had participated in the Open Repositories 2025 Conference shared highlights and insights from the event with 52 attendees. In August, the group launched its new Article Release Party series, featuring a discussion on community-based research and its integration into institutional repositories, which drew 45 participants and is now available on YouTube. Looking ahead, the CoP is planning a fall event on AI bots harvesting repositories and preparing to launch the second cohort of its Mentorship Program in January.

Library Publishing Community Engagement Team

The Library Publishing Community Engagement Team has started a listserv to better reach members of the community. The Documentation sub-group has built a Zenodo repository to house library publishing resources, and is working on a communications strategy to inform the community about it. The Library Publishing Primer sub-group is updating the Primer to include testimonials about its impact and has developed an open licence slide deck based on the Primer for use by colleagues in the field. Mark Swartz, LPCET co-chair and VPO for Open Science, spoke at the Canadian Association of Learned Journals (CALJ) meeting in Toronto (June 1-2) as part of a panel on Advances in Scholarly Publishing. Two well-attended community calls, one in English and one in French, took place in July, where representatives from SSHRC presented on changes to the Aid to Scholarly Journals program and how to support journal editors applying for support.

Open Science/Open Access Policy and Infrastructure Support

CARL continues its active engagement with the revised Tri-Agency Open Access (OA) Policy on Publications and is in regular communication with the Tri-Agencies and with library stakeholders. On July 17, Susan and Kathleen Shearer (and Mark Swartz virtually) attended a meeting in Ottawa with representatives from the Tri-Agencies, Scholars Portal/University of Toronto Libraries (Larry Alford and Kate Davis), and CRKN. In August, CARL provided the Tri-Agencies with a revised proposal for repository readiness and library support for implementation of the new policy. This plan was developed in collaboration with the ad hoc group CARL assembled to develop and cost a green OA/repository deposit scenario.

National PIDS Strategy

In her role as chair of CPIDAC, Susan worked with John Aspler, PIDS Community Manager at CRKN and others over the summer on the drafting of three documents related to the national PIDS Strategy (a strategy overview, a checklist for institutions, and a 1-pager on key stakeholder actions).

Research Data and the Digital Alliance of Canada

Susan continues to engage with the Alliance with respect to its 2025-30 funding strategy and to be a member of its Program Activity Advisory Table. She met twice (in July and August) with the two Interim VPs and two directors to inform them of learnings relevant to their mandate from the CARL study tour meetings in France and at the EU. There is no word yet on its major new AI funding proposal to ISED, but its RDM and PIDs infrastructure investments are stable. In terms of governance, the Alliance is poised to name new members to its board and has just named a new CEO.

Support to Teaching and Learning

Advancing Teaching and Learning Committee (ATLC)

Following the successful completion of its early initiatives, ATLC has been considering new areas of focus. To this end, committee members are participating in a SWOT Analysis of the Library's Role in Advancing Teaching & Learning to better understand the activities and needs of the teaching and learning teams in their libraries.

Janice Kung (VPO for AI and Library Services) has continued her engagement with professionals in the library field who are working with AI, including with her counterparts at OCUL and ARL. She has spearheaded several initiatives, including a forthcoming topical AI Digest email series for CARL directors, and an AI Communications Guide for Librarians.

Open Education

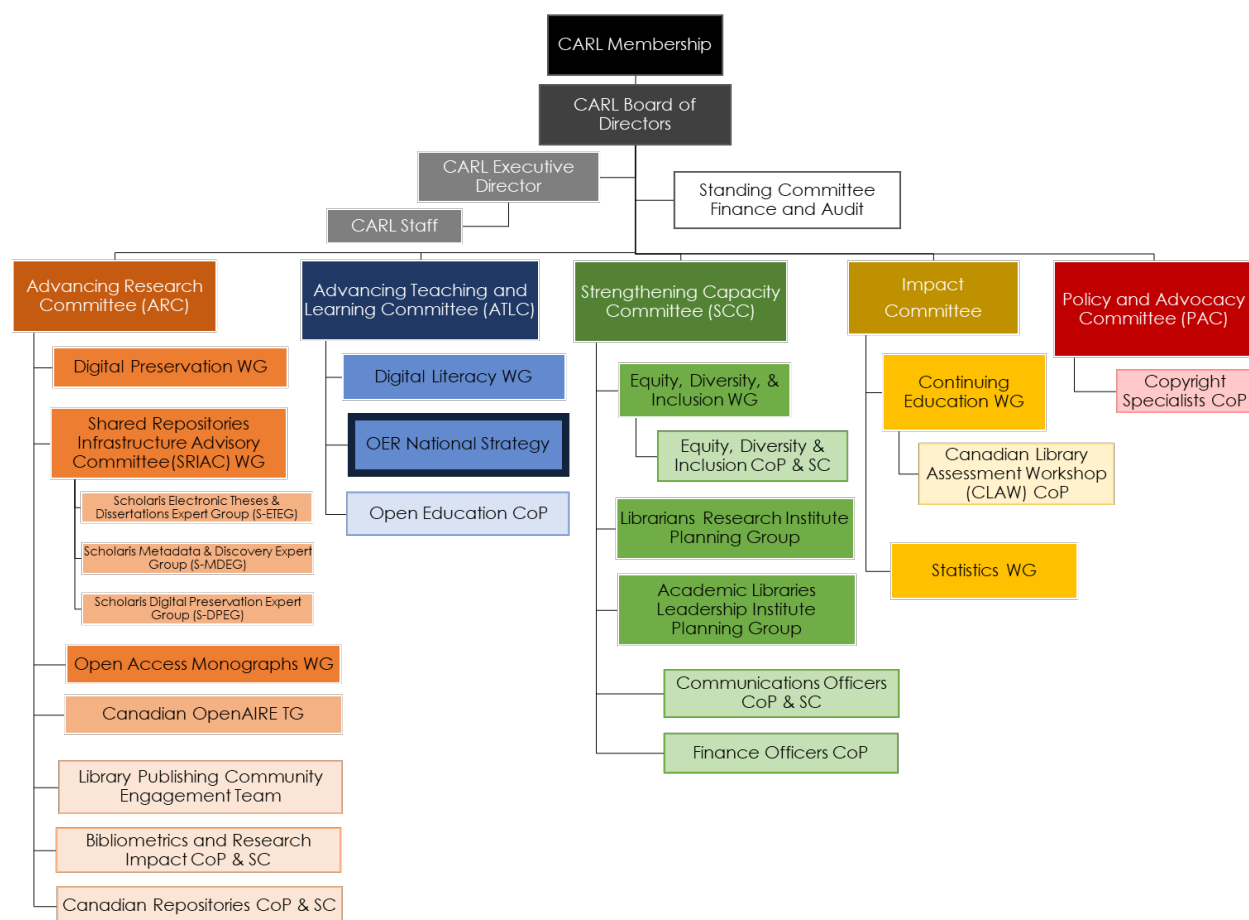
CARL remains in dialogue with the Canadian Coalition for Affordable Learning (CCAL) regarding future direction for the OER National Strategy. At the most recent meeting, held on July 24th and spearheaded by Catherine Lachaine (VPO for Open Education), advocacy, infrastructure and approaches to OER discovery were discussed. The Indigenous Knowledges Summit (2024) report was recently completed, and a French translation is being prepared. The report highlights the shift in summit focus from developing principles to education and developing respect for Indigenous perspectives and experiences and addresses how non-Indigenous practitioners might approach OER in an Indigenous context. NIKLA will take the lead in this area moving forward.

Open Education Community of Practice

The Open Education Community of Practice launched its first event as a newly re-formed group in June, drawing 33 participants for a discussion on Sustaining Openness: Navigating Budget Constraints in OER Programs and Grants. Since then, the community's membership has expanded from 40 to more than 70 subscribers to its listserv. This fall, the CoP will host a bilingual event in September featuring Mélanie Brunet on Conducting a Program Evaluation of an OER Initiative: Benefits and Challenges.

Administration & Outreach

Current Committee, Working Group, and Community of Practice Structure (as of November 2024)



Webinar & Community Call Series

CARL continued to host [regular webinars and community calls](#), sometimes in partnership with other groups, on topics of interest to the various library communities of practice that they support, which are free and open to all – both CARL members and non-members.

CARL Delegation to Belgium, France, and Switzerland

From June 22-July 4, Susan and Katherine escorted a group of 18 CARL directors to Brussels, Paris, Lyon, CERN (Geneva), and Lausanne (where most of the group then attended LIBER). The delegation had meetings, largely focused on open science topics, with officials from the European Commission, the French Ministry of Higher Education and Research, peers from a number of university and national research libraries and archives, and representatives from

international and European library associations, infrastructure providers, and library education programs.

Conferences, Events, International Meetings

Since the last report, CARL staff attended events, workshops, webinars and international meetings including: OCUL Accessibility Symposium, BRIC Conference, and the Canadian Association of Learned Journals (CALJ) annual conference at Congress.

CARL Member Transitions

Lori Birrell commenced her appointment as University Librarian and Dean at University of Saskatchewan on September 3.

Staff

The current general division of responsibilities is:

- *Susan Haigh – Executive Director.* Overall executive direction and management; lead for CARL advocacy and public policy; outreach and strategic national and international relations;
- *Katherine McColgan – Manager, Administration and Programs.* Board Secretariat; financial and office administration and oversight; support to Policy Committee and advocacy activities; annual statistics program management; CARL privacy officer;
- *Houda Tarib – Administrative Officer & Event Coordinator.* Book-keeping and financial administration; meeting and hospitality arrangements; office management and administrative support; support to Standing Committee on Finance and Audit.
- *Julie Morin – Senior Program Officer.* Support to Strengthening Capacity Committee and Impact Committee; annual statistics program management; E-lert co-editor;
- *Elizabeth Kalbfleisch – Senior Program Officer.* Support to Advancing Research Committee and Advancing Teaching and Learning Committee; E-lert co-editor.
- *Taleen Aktorosian – Communications and Project Officer.* Support CARL's communication channels and selected initiatives, including a variety of pan-Canadian communities of practice; E-lert co-editor.

Visiting Program Officers (part-time)

- *Susan Cleyle – VPO, Leadership Development Initiatives* (September 2021 - September 2026)
- *Janice Kung – VPO, AI and Library Services* (November 2024 – November 2025)
- *Mark Swartz – VPO, Open Science* (November 2024 – November 2025)
- *Rowena Johnson – VPO, Copyright and Other Public Policy Matters* (September 2024 – September 2026)
- *Catherine Lachaine – VPO, Open Education* (January 2025 – January 2026)
- *Gabriela Mircea – VPO, Metadata and CARL Collaboration with OpenAIRE* (August 2023 - September 2026)
- *Stephanie Savage – VPO, Copyright and Other Public Policy Matters* (October 2024 – September 2025)

- *Sarah Lake - Visiting Program Officer for Digital Preservation (May 2025 - May 2026)*
- *Victoria Owen - Special Policy Advisor, Accessibility*

Consultants / On retainer

- *Kathleen Shearer – Research Associate - RDM, scholarly publishing and open science initiatives.*
- *Temple Scott Associates (Don Moors, Josh Matthewman, Ujwal Ganguly) – Government relations*
- *Clark Wilson LLP (Michal Jaworski, Jeff Holloway) – Contracts*
- *Emond Harnden LLP (Sheri Farahani, Lauren Brecher) – Human resources*
- *Gowling WLG (James Plotkin) – Copyright / Intellectual Property*
- *Cain Lamarre (Anaïs L'Heureux-Lefebvre) – Human resources for Québec*

Respectfully submitted,

Susan Haigh,
September 12, 2025