From Vision to Value

ORCID's 2022–2025 Strategic Plan

From Vision to Value

The core of our strategic focus for 2022–2025 is to **build commitment to and engagement with ORCID** as an essential element of the research experience, both for researchers and member organizations.

As in all things, our strategic plan aligns with ORCID's values: **Open, Inclusive, and Trusted**.

Introduction

ORCID is a global initiative, whose mission is to enable transparent and trustworthy connections between researchers, their contributions, and affiliations by providing an identifier for individuals to use as they engage in research, scholarship, and innovation activities. Since our launch in 2012, ORCID has sought to create value for the research community by enabling the collection, connection and reuse of persistent identifiers and metadata under the ultimate control of researchers themselves. After achieving financial breakeven at the end of 2019, we took a small step back to focus on improving our internal systems and processes so we could provide a foundation for the sustainability and resilience our community expects and deserves from us into the future.

In 2021, we embarked on an intensive member and user value research project to listen to our stakeholders ensure our strategy is aligned with what our community needs next, and needs most from us.

This document, *From Vision to Value: ORCID's 2022–2025 Strategic Plan*, is the outcome of this work and sets out our priorities for the next phase of ORCID's development, increasing the incremental value that we provide to our stakeholders while maintaining focus on two core goals:
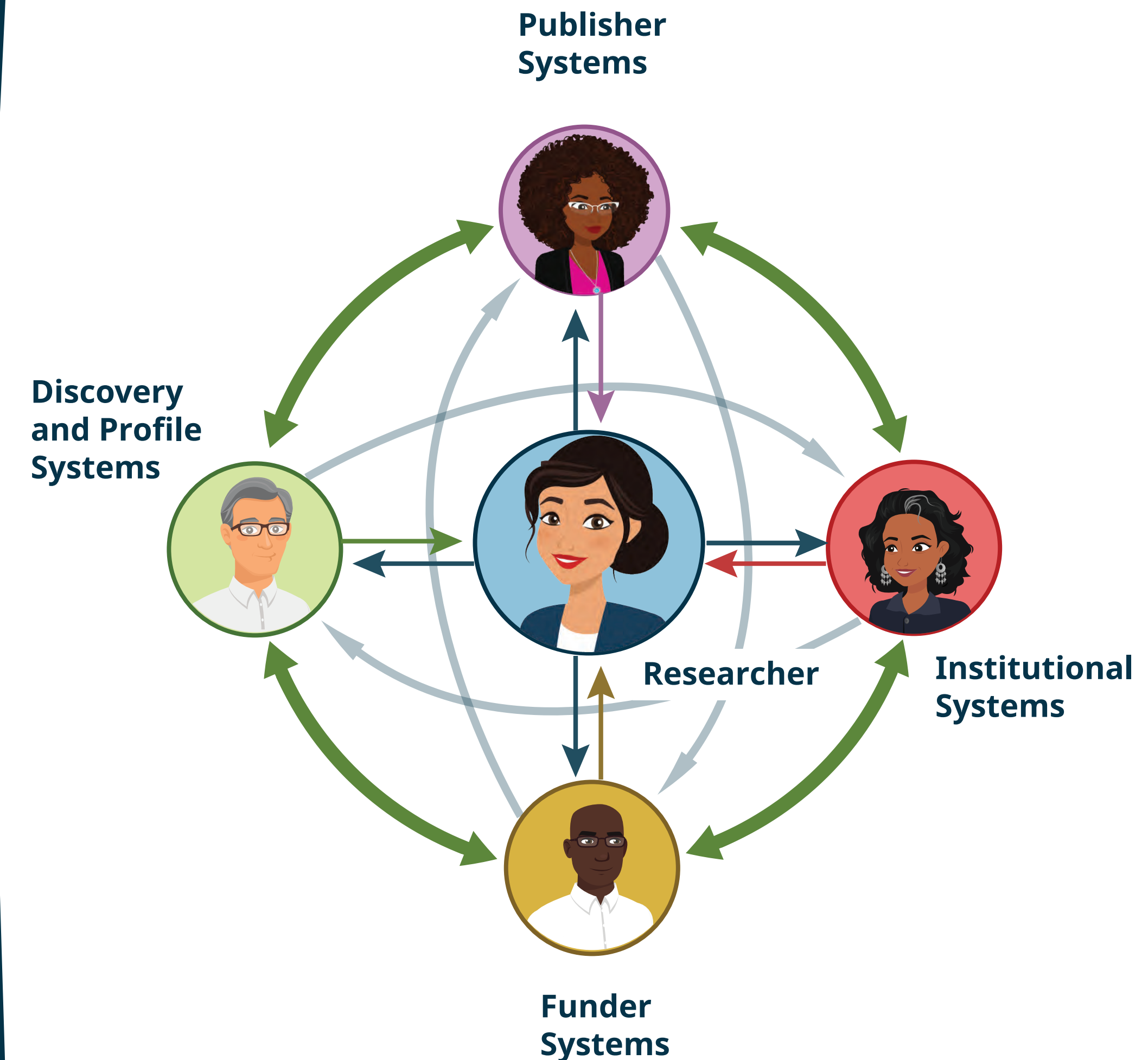
1. Reducing administrative burden for researchers

2. Helping our member organizations understand the impact of the research they facilitate or fund.

Fostering behaviors to drive the ORCID "virtuous circle"

Our recent Member and User Value Research validated that ORCID is on the right path with regards to our overall vision, mission, and approach. The Value Research also highlighted some key opportunities for us to strengthen the "virtuous circle" of ORCID use and adoption and bring tangible value to our stakeholders along the way, thus furthering our vision of a world where all who participate in research, scholarship, and innovation are uniquely identified and connected to their contributions across disciplines, borders, and time.

To state this more simply, the more fully populated, sufficiently complete ORCID records and integrated systems there are, the more value that stakeholders can gain from participating in ORCID. It is our goal to create the conditions to allow this to happen.

The central theses of this plan is that by building stakeholder commitment to and engagement with ORCID, we will in turn create more value for researchers and members alike and drive further participation by other stakeholders, perpetuating ORCID's virtuous circle.

Publisher Systems

Discovery and Profile Systems

Researcher

Institutional Systems

Funder Systems

1. Reduce administrative burden
2. Understand the impact of the research you facilitate or fund

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2022–2025 Strategic Themes

In order to build commitment to and engagement with ORCID as an essential element of the research experience, we have identified four major strategic themes for the next three years.

On the following pages you will find some key insights we learned from our research with member organizations and researchers, as well as the top priorities within each theme. Together, these themes, insights, and priorities form a framework by which we will organize and prioritize our activities across the organization, as well as to measure and communicate our progress with each other and our community.

Increasing Value to Members

Increasing Value to Researchers

Increasing Global Participation

Upholding Trust and Integrity

Increasing Value to Members

Key Insights

Our biggest source of membership support is from research institutions. Generally, their objectives are highly aligned with ORCID's and they understand and are supportive of our mission.

However, this group has told us that it is difficult for them to realize the promised value of ORCID due to lacking the technical resources and expertise to integrate, and the difficulty of engaging a critical mass of their researchers to use ORCID.

Strategic Priorities

We will be more proactive in delivering value to member research institutions, rather than simply enabling and expecting them to integrate with our API. This should include:

Continuing to develop and enhance value-added services ourselves such as the Member Portal

Incentivizing, partnering with, and if necessary investing resources in, the most popular vendor and open source systems used by academic institutions to ensure they have better out-of-the-box integrations

Working with our fellow PID infrastructure organizations to make it easier to implement common cross-PID use cases

We will equip our members with more compelling ways to encourage their researchers to use ORCID, by for example:

Sharing best practices and success stories

Creating simpler, easier to re-use messages and collateral

Developing metrics and features that demonstrate the benefits of ORCID to researchers such as time saved through data re-use

We will work with influential organizations such as Funders and Government Agencies to encourage the use of ORCID, by for example:

Adopting ORCID in their national research strategies

Implementing ORCID in funding and assessment workflows

Increasing Value to Researchers

Key Insights

While most of our users are reasonably satisfied with ORCID, many researchers obtained their ID either because they were required to do so to complete a task, or because they thought it might be useful later.

As a result, many researchers don't understand "what's in it for them" to use ORCID, and therefore are not motivated to invest the time and effort required to complete and maintain their records.

Strategic Priorities

We will reduce the effort that researchers need to invest in completing and updating their ORCID records by, for example:

Improving workflows so that records are updated automatically by default, whilst maintaining full control for those who want it.

Guiding users to the most useful and appropriate services to connect with their records, based on factors such as discipline and location.

Targeting, and if necessary investing resources in, integrations with the most popular vendor and open source systems used by researchers that are not yet integrated with ORCID.

We will incentivize researcher participation in ORCID by, for example:

Clarifying ORCID's primary use cases to researchers and highlighting our differences from other profile systems.

Encouraging member organizations to update and re-use ORCID data so as to demonstrably reduce administrative burden and save researchers time. Simply collecting ORCID iDs is not enough.

Developing metrics, features and case studies which illustrate how much time and effort is saved through the use of ORCID.

Exploring new use cases which provide additional value to researchers, e.g. credentialing, richer data export.

Increasing Global Participation

Key Insights

Universal uptake of ORCID is inherent in our mission, and our current member organizations think that it is very important that ORCID is adopted universally around the world.

However, although ORCID has good participation among researchers in most parts of the world, organizational membership is lacking in key geographies such as China, India, Russia and much of the Global South.

Strategic Priorities

In order to drive membership in low and lower-middle income countries, we will move from a fee structure based on equality (everyone pays the same) to one based on equity (fees are adjusted according to regional affordability) while also supporting the development of local expertise and communities of practice.

While continuing to encourage researcher participation everywhere, we will focus our efforts on developing organizational membership in countries where:

- We believe we have the most potential to grow new membership based on factors such as research intensiveness and current researcher participation in ORCID.
- There is natural alignment of ORCID values and research norms.

We are prepared to develop new partnership models with national or regional organizations that have both the local knowledge and resources to spearhead organizational membership growth in their locations.

Upholding Trust and Integrity

Key Insights

ORCID currently enjoys high levels of trust from member organizations and researchers alike. However, in order to maintain this trust, we need to constantly monitor and manage key financial, reputational and technological risks.

Strategic Priorities

To head off emerging reputational risk,we should take a more proactive approach to improving data quality by, for example:

- Communicating and clarifying ORCID's trust model.
- Applying techniques such as machine learning to reduce irrelevant or abusive content such as spam
- Working with members to crowdsource reports of data quality issues such as duplication or fraudulent records.

In order to fulfill expectations of the reliability of our infrastructure, we will improve resiliency through means such as:

- Moving our hosting to the cloud and implementing a high-availability architecture.
- Stepping up our cyber security game through e.g. regular pen testing, security certifications.

In order ensure ORCID's long-term sustainability and anticipate future necessary investments or financial shocks, we need to bolster ORCID's reserves, through for example:

- Continuing to scale new membership through partnership with consortia.
- Regularly reviewing and adjusting our fees in alignment with cost development.
- Continuing to drive opportunities for operational efficiency.

Towards a critical mass of global participation

Yearly Active Records
7,306,639

Active Integrated Member Systems
1,076

Countries with members
54

Organizational Members
1,240

Users Granting Update Permissions
5,477,024

National Consortia
23

LEGEND
National ORCID Consortium
ORCID member

10

Key insights that inform our strategy

Our strategic planning is informed by our community

We conducted a member value research project in the first few months of 2021 to better understand what member organizations and consortia leads value about ORCID and what we can do to better help them achieve their goals. We also surveyed our users, gathering over 40,000 responses, and conducted selected follow up interviews.

We used insights from this work to inform our strategic themes, the activities within the themes, and to frame the key choices we need to make.

Key Insights from Member Value Research

ORCID is strongly supported by each of its main stakeholder groups.

Our main stakeholder groups have similar goals for ORCID membership.

ORCID is well aligned with members' strategic objectives, but actually realizing the benefits is more challenging.

Member satisfaction varies by membership length and whether or not there's an integration.
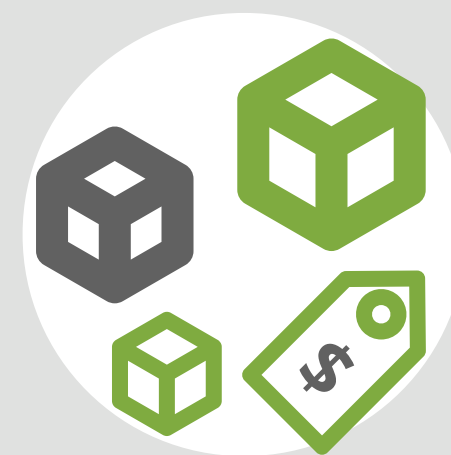
The main barriers to adoption lie within member organizations.

Better-populated records and easier integration are key to fulfilling the promise of ORCID.

Most members think that ORCID can be trusted with their and researchers' data.

Very few members are concerned with the cost of ORCID membership, however Consortia would appreciate more flexibility in pricing.
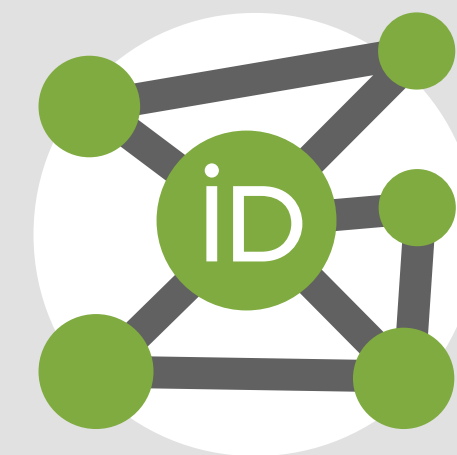
By far the most valued current membership benefit is access to the member API.

ORCID member organizations think that it is very important that ORCID is adopted universally around the world.

Key Insights from User Value Research

1 People are pretty happy with ORCID.

2 Usability remains an issue.

3 Works are still key to the ORCID experience.

4 Users are confused about what ORCID is, what it does and what features it offers.

5 We have a number of users who created their ORCID because they were required to to submit a manuscript or apply for funding.

6 Many users think ORCID is an academic profile (or should be).

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Going from vision to value: bringing value to our vision

ORCID and our community of researchers and member organizations have together accomplished so much in the nearly 10 short years since we launched our registry in October of 2012. The critical mass of global participation shows how much our vision has resonated, and we are committed to enabling our community to realize the value of the vision they have invested in.

We look forward to continued global collaboration in 2022 – 2025 as we go from Vision to Value and build commitment to and engagement with ORCID as an essential element of the research experience, both for researchers and members.

We invite you to follow our progress on our blog, our Product Roadmap, and in our Annual Reports.