

**UNITED STATES
COPYRIGHT OFFICE
STRATEGIC PLAN
2022 – 2026**

*Fostering Creativity
& Enriching Culture*





FOREWORD BY THE REGISTER

This Strategic Plan updates and takes forward prior plans of the Copyright Office, building on the accomplishments of my predecessors and colleagues. Drawing on relatively modest resources, the Office has consistently offered valuable services to the public and provided deep copyright expertise. That work will continue and grow.

In today's digital economy, copyright has become increasingly relevant to the public, as virtually everyone on the internet is both an author and a user of creative works. This includes individuals who may not have access to the expertise or resources of professionals. At the same time, services utilizing vast numbers of copyrighted works have multiplied, providing benefits to consumers but straining traditional licensing mechanisms. The Copyright Office needs to adapt proactively to the resulting new reality, while upholding the fundamentals that have served us well for more than 150 years.

To do so, we are expanding our outreach and education programs to grow awareness of copyright and its benefits. A key focus will be ensuring that the copyright system is accessible to all, welcoming diversity and ultimately enriching the cultural landscape. We also must accommodate the public's expectations for up-to-date and user-friendly technological tools. And given the intrinsic value of data and the importance of evidence-based policymaking, the Office is committed to making good use of the abundant information that we collect through our services.

On the legal and policy front, the impact of evolving technologies has led to greater reliance on the Office's expertise, with a corresponding increase in our issuance of regulations and reports. We have also taken on an expanded role in developing and overseeing new structures established by Congress to assist in exercising rights and resolving disputes—most recently in the Music Modernization Act and the CASE Act.

As we consider where we are now and where we want to go, we have identified four overarching goals: copyright for all, continuous development, impartial expertise, and enhanced use of data. The Office has long been engaged in furthering these goals in some form, in alignment with those of the Library of Congress, but we have broadened their scope and sharpened their focus as we look to the future.

I am excited to implement this strategic plan with the Office's dedicated staff, and look forward to working with stakeholders and the public along the way.

Shira Perlmutter

Register of Copyrights and Director
U.S. Copyright Office



MISSION STATEMENT

The U.S. Copyright Office promotes creativity and free expression by administering the nation's copyright laws and by providing impartial, expert advice on copyright law and policy for the benefit of all.

VISION STATEMENT

Enriching the nation's culture by empowering and connecting the global copyright community.

ABOUT THE COPYRIGHT OFFICE

For over 150 years, the Copyright Office has been a linchpin of the American copyright ecosystem. Under the direction of the Register of Copyrights, the Office administers a dynamic set of laws and offers a range of important services. Its responsibilities include registering copyright claims; recording information about copyright ownership; managing licensing fees; educating the public; and advising Congress, the judiciary, and the executive branch on copyright issues. At the end of 2020, the Office's role expanded to include hosting a new tribunal for resolving small copyright claims.

The Office's core services of registration, recordation, and statutory licensing play an important role in expanding culture and knowledge, supporting the ability to protect and exploit creative works while facilitating their dissemination through licensing and other lawful uses, here and abroad. Together, its registration and recordation systems have built the largest collection of information about copyrighted works in the world.

Through this work, the Copyright Office helps fulfill the constitutional purpose of "promot[ing] the Progress of Science and useful Arts, by securing for limited Times to Authors and Inventors the exclusive Right to their respective Writings and Discoveries."¹

¹United States Constitution, Article 1, Section 8

SPOTLIGHT

150 YEARS OF COPYRIGHT AT THE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

The relationship between the Library of Congress and the Copyright Office dates back to the Office's origins. In 1870, Congress placed the national copyright registration system at the Library of Congress, and in 1897, Congress created the Copyright Office as a separate department of the Library. The Office is led by the Register of Copyrights, who is appointed by, and works under the general direction and supervision of, the Librarian of Congress.

The Copyright Office plays an important role in helping to build the Library of Congress's collections through both mandatory deposits under section 407 of the Copyright Act and works submitted for registration under section 408. To date, the Office has transferred millions of selected books, sound recordings, motion pictures, and other works to the Library, creating an unparalleled record of America's diverse cultural heritage and creativity. Under the custody of the Library, these works may now be used in conformance with the Copyright Act.

A decorative background featuring a musical staff with various notes and rests, rendered in a light blue color against a darker blue background.

COPYRIGHT OFFICE STRATEGIC GOALS

The Copyright Office has adopted four overarching goals to chart our course for the future:

COPYRIGHT FOR ALL

We will work to make the copyright system as understandable and accessible to as many members of the public as possible, including individuals and small entities as well as historically underserved communities.

CONTINUOUS DEVELOPMENT

We will continuously improve and update our services, utilizing state-of-the-art technology, to meet the evolving needs of the copyright community.

IMPARTIAL EXPERTISE

We will continue to provide impartial, expert advice on copyright law and policy to Congress, the courts, and other U.S. government agencies, here and abroad.

ENHANCED USE OF DATA

We will enhance our development and use of data in decision-making and performance measurement, as well as making it available to advance the state of copyright knowledge.

SHARED GOALS

These Copyright Office strategic goals parallel and further the mission-critical goals of the Library of Congress.

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS GOALS

COPYRIGHT OFFICE INITIATIVES

**Expand
Access**

Copyright for All – Make the copyright system as understandable and accessible to as many members of the public as possible.

**Enhance
Services**

Impartial Expertise – Advise Congress, the courts, and other U.S. government agencies on copyright law and policy.

**Optimize
Resources**

Continuous Development – Develop and continuously update robust, state-of-the-art, and flexible services.

**Measure
Impact**

Enhanced Use of Data – Use data to inform policies, measure performance, and advance the state of copyright knowledge.



STRATEGIC GOAL

COPYRIGHT FOR ALL

CURRENT FOCUS

The Copyright Office has made it a priority to inform and educate the public. This priority has taken on increased importance with the rise of digital networked technologies and the corresponding enhanced relevance of copyright law to individuals. The Office conducts extensive outreach activities, including producing informational materials such as circulars, FAQs, and videos; answering questions from the public; and providing educational programs on a variety of topics. In response to the challenges of the past two years, the Office has presented more events remotely, significantly expanding its audiences.

MOVING FORWARD

Broadening participation is critical to both the success of the copyright system and its continued public acceptance. The Copyright Office will focus on making the law and its services as easy to understand as possible for both individuals and entities of all sizes, with an emphasis on outreach to previously underserved communities. Fundamental to this work will be research on how the system is used and by whom, and partnerships with organizations to help reach wider audiences. The new Enterprise Copyright System (ECS) will assist in this endeavor by making services easier to use. The recently established Copyright Claims Board, or CCB, will also make justice more accessible by providing a forum for resolving small claims. The result should be a copyright system that truly works “for all,” ultimately enriching the volume and diversity of the creative content available to the public.

SPOTLIGHT

THE CASE ACT AND THE COPYRIGHT CLAIMS BOARD

When Congress passed the Copyright Alternative in Small-Claims Enforcement (CASE) Act in December 2020, it required the Office to establish the Copyright Claims Board (CCB) to resolve disputes regarding copyright claims for an amount of no more than \$30,000. As the first intellectual property small claims tribunal in the United States, the CCB will be a voluntary, alternative forum to the federal courts, staffed by copyright experts using streamlined, affordable procedures. It will make resolution of claims more feasible for those without substantial resources.



STRATEGIC GOAL

CONTINUOUS DEVELOPMENT

CURRENT FOCUS

The Copyright Office's modernization initiative is already transforming both external services and internal work processes. This includes building a new Enterprise Copyright System (ECS) to make all of the Office's services digitized, interconnected, searchable, and easy to navigate. Additional work is underway to maximize the Office's efficiency and productivity with improvements to the public information contact center, warehouse management, and financial systems.

MOVING FORWARD

As current multiyear projects reach production readiness, the Office is committed to continuing the modernization process. It will review and refresh systems on an ongoing basis, without waiting until they have become outdated. At the same time, the Office will identify opportunities presented by emerging technologies to augment existing services and explore new standalone offerings. Throughout, the Office will follow a user-centric approach to meet the needs of the copyright community.

SPOTLIGHT

THE ENTERPRISE COPYRIGHT SYSTEM

ECS integrates and updates all of the Copyright Office's technology-based services, including:

- a redesigned and easier to use **registration** system
- replacement of the paper-based **recordation** process with an electronic system
- substantial improvements to the copyright **public records** system
- new tools to streamline Office review of **licensing** statements of account

All services will share the same user-centered, flexible design, providing a consistent interface with easier public access and use.



STRATEGIC GOAL

IMPARTIAL EXPERTISE

CURRENT FOCUS

The Copyright Office has long been a trusted source of impartial expertise on copyright law, policy, and practice. The Office serves as the principal advisor to Congress on national and international copyright issues, and Congress has delegated authority to the Office to develop regulations governing many areas of copyright law. The Office also works on a wide variety of copyright matters with the courts and executive branch agencies, and regularly engages with foreign counterparts and intergovernmental organizations in the United States and abroad.

MOVING FORWARD

The laws and policies that govern creative intellectual property continually evolve in response to changes in technology and markets. As the Office looks toward 2022 and beyond, it remains committed to the development and application of up-to-date and balanced copyright law and policy through rulemakings and studies, as well as technical advice on proposed legislation and agreements. The Office will also continue to play an active role in the international arena, participating in both policy discussions and the provision of education, and serving as a resource for the global copyright community.

SPOTLIGHT

THE MUSIC MODERNIZATION ACT: A BILL WHOSE TIME HAD COME

The Orrin G. Hatch–Bob Goodlatte Music Modernization Act of 2018 (MMA) was the most significant piece of copyright legislation in decades, updating the law to reflect consumer preferences and technological developments in the music marketplace. The MMA was the culmination of years of dedicated work by members of Congress, as well as a wide range of creators and business interests, with input and policy advice from the Copyright Office. The Office has adopted numerous regulations to implement the MMA, retains regulatory authority to administer many of its provisions, and conducts outreach to educate rightsholders on how to collect royalties under the new system.



STRATEGIC GOAL

ENHANCED USE OF DATA

CURRENT FOCUS

In the course of providing services, the Copyright Office collects various types of valuable copyright-related information. The Office's public records on registration and recordation are already available to the public, and the new ECS will make them more usable. The Office also collects other data related to internal operations performance and web metrics. This data is used to inform policies and to measure performance.

MOVING FORWARD

The Copyright Office will enhance the development and use of data as an evidentiary foundation for policymaking and to improve measurements of organizational performance, and will make more data easily accessible to both internal and external audiences. Through this work, the Office can more effectively determine how best to shape policies and set budgets and fees, as well as provide resources to inform the public debate.

SPOTLIGHT

ENHANCING THE USE OF DATA AND ECONOMIC EVIDENCE

Over the next five years, the Copyright Office will enhance its development and use of data. The addition of in-house economic expertise will allow the Office to better produce and analyze the evidence on which to base operational decisions and inform policy conclusions. Once on board, the new chief economist will build a research agenda to support Office services and reach out to collaborate with external researchers.

CONNECT WITH THE COPYRIGHT OFFICE

To build and maintain a modern, accessible copyright system, the Copyright Office must effectively connect with the creators and users that fuel the creative process. To that end, the Office is committed to communicating regularly with stakeholders and the public about updates to services, regulations, and processes, and to incorporating their feedback into its decision-making. Doing so is key to a copyright system that welcomes, supports, and serves all.

LEARN MORE

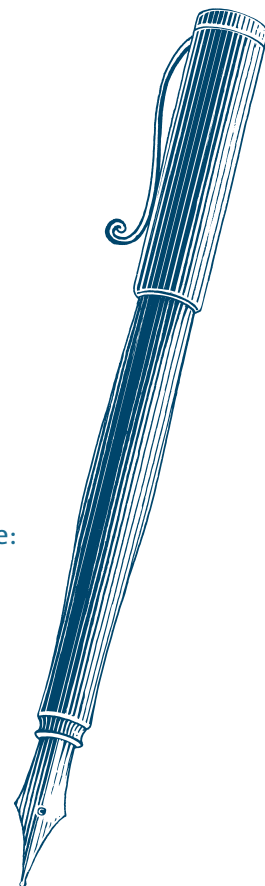
To learn more about the Copyright Office: copyright.gov.

To stay up to date with Copyright Office news, sign up here: copyright.gov/subscribe.

Follow the Copyright Office on Twitter for news and updates here: twitter.com/CopyrightOffice.

This plan is available at copyright.gov/reports/strategic-plan.

You can also contact the Copyright Office online at copyright.gov/help or by calling (202) 707-3000 or 1 (877) 476-0778 (toll-free).







In 1791, lawyer and topographer Abraham Bradley Jr. was hired as a clerk in the General Post Office. Bradley, an authority on postal routes and schedules, began creating detailed maps of the country.

Bradley's hand-colored map represents one of the first types of works protected by copyright that has grown as creators dream of new ways to engage their creativity.

You can view a facsimile of this map on display in an exhibit, **Find Yourself in Copyright**, on the 4th floor of the James Madison Building and at copyright.gov.

