

# The role and significance of career development fund in strengthening library talent

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## ABSTRACT

*Career Development Fund (TKKSP) was established in 1984 in Universiti Sains Malaysia Library. The initiatives of the fund began from the idea of Chief Librarian Lim Huck Tee to serve and assist library staff in the development of their career and vocational skills. From the beginning, the funds are made possible through the generosity of the professional staff and librarians in USM libraries. The purpose of these funds is to support career enhancing activities and monies from the fund are expanded to provide total support for library staff to participate in job and career related development activities. Library staff is encouraged to utilize the fund wherever they believe the participation will contribute to their personal and professional career growth in the field of librarianship and other discipline as well as strengthening their vocational preparation. The discussion of this paper encompasses several important issues on the contribution of career development especially in the role of librarians in the effort of increasing the source of funding. Then, discuss critically the relation of funding in career development of library staff to be recognized as talent bench strength in order to meet and exceed the goal of library as well as explained the strategies that will be conducted to gain the fundraising in future.*

**Keyword:** Career Development Fund; USM Library; Career Development; Library employees; Librarians

## INTRODUCTION

The efforts and initiative of Career Development Fund (TKKSP) has contributed to crucial effects in the career development of library staff in USM. Many of library staff has been promoted due to the existence of this fund which helps them in providing the avenue to participate in career related development activities. The fund began with the name of *Tabung Bantuan Kakitangan Ikhtisas Perpustakaan* in 1984, initiated by Chief Librarian Lim Chee Hong. Then, the fund's name was altered throughout the years with the consensus of the Board and members.

This fund is controlled by the Board of Committee comprises of USM's librarian. This committee is being selected through a biennially meeting. This fund requires the contribution of time and resources by elected members of career development fund. Thus, senior leadership in the library are required to commit, engage and contribute consistently in this fund. In the meantime, this fund has allowed library staff at all levels to expand their professional development and offer opportunities at no cost to the institution because

there is no interest or hidden charges issued to the applicant. This fund allows USM library to "include" its staff in enrichment programmes, enhancing staff's capacity to render better outreach services to users.

In addition, Ottawa public Library (2012) conclude that library talent refers to the library employees which define specifically to the attributes that focus on professional and technical competencies as well as leadership abilities in which the fund prepares them in the development of opportunities and experience to move up in their career enhancement.

### **Brief Description of Career Development Fund (TKKSP)**

The non-profit Board of Committee has several roles and responsibilities toward the fund. This includes the areas of financial reporting and accountability, member's registration requirements and fulfillments, risk management, and accountability to members, benefactors as well library community as a whole. In addition, the Board is also accountable in giving recognition to the benefactors and sending out letters of achievement for those who have completed their studies. The Board is also responsible to define a strategic vision and plan that are relevant and responsive to the library community in the aspect of increasing the funding.

The main principle of this fund is to enhance career planning by providing career development opportunities to support library staff in order to meet both individual target and organizational goals. Nevertheless, career development is the responsibility of the employee. However, the library will endeavor the initiatives of the staff to meet their career goals.

The purpose of the fund is solely to provide opportunities for career advancement for example to obtain additional qualifications in education that will further assist career development of the staff within the library and university. In addition, this fund throughout the history of the library has inculcated and strengthened the spirit of cooperation and generosity among its staff. On the whole, the important element is building relationship between the employees and the organization's vision and mission.

### **Request for Funding**

The main fundraisers are among the professional staff in higher rank and librarians in USM Library, where every new recruited professional employee have to contribute RM20 once in a lifetime to be entitled for the membership. Whereas, all library staff would benefited from the fund and are entitled to borrow and reimburse the money in accordance with condition of qualification provided. Among the requirement for eligibility for the fund are:

1. The employee must be a permanent library staff of USM.
2. Priority is given to the applicant who is not funded by any organization, scholarship or fund.
3. The applicant must present the proof of receipt or admission/offer letter after eligibly obtaining the fund within 1 month.
4. The applicant must present a copy of examination result to the Board as a proof.

The application form can be obtained from the Secretary or Treasurer of Career Development Fund (TKKSP) and must be completed together with supporting documents such as admission/offer letter, examination result, certificates of accomplishment or completion the course and other relevant documents. The Committee of Fund is responsible for checking and validating those documents or seek further clarification upon submission from requestors. Successful applicant will be required to sign an agreement with the Board to authenticate the agreement. The applicant is also required to appoint one guarantor among the library staff to validate the application. The applicant who applies for the fund is required to pay the settlement 3 months after receiving the money and follow the mode of payment provided (Table 1).

Table 1: Mode of Payment

Mode of Payment	Amount
1st 12 month	RM10.00
2nd 12 month	RM15.00
3rd 12 month	RM20.00
4th 12 month	RM25.00 paid until finish

The applicant cannot request for more than one application to borrow from the fund unless they have settled the payment of the former loan. Priority will be given to another applicant unless they provide strong reason and submit an appeal of application and it is subject to the approval from the Board.

### Reward

All the members of this fund are entitled to claim the fund in a form of money as a reward if they successfully achieve excellent performance in academic and vocational skills. The amount given is according to the level of achievement (Table 2).

Table 2: Reward Sum

Qualification	Reward
SPM	RM200
STPM	RM250
Diploma	RM300
Degree	RM500
Master	RM700
PHD	RM1000

Reward is also given to those who write academic and non-academic articles or book and those who are actively involved in writing papers in local and international conference and proceeding. The amount of reward is listed in Table 3.

Table 3: Reward Sums

Publication	Reward
Conference papers and proceedings/published conference papers and proceedings	
National	RM100
International	RM200
Articles and book	
Academic	RM100
Non-academic	RM300
Co-author, editor and others	RM100

### THE ROLE OF THE FUND

The main role of this fund is to assist financially the library staff in their career development. The fund provides a simple method of payment with minimum amount starting from RM10. Noticeably, the fund does not burden the staff to pay off the money on loan and it is designed to benefit the library community.

Moreover, the library community automatically gains an awareness of fundraising requirement and activities as well as an appreciation throughout the organization that enables them to be benevolent and generous, because the activities are integrated into the organization's activities rather than operating in isolation. For example, annual charity sales. This activities include outreach program and sales of good which are held throughout the year.

Most activities planned by Client Services Division, USM include the Career Development Fund (TKKSP) to be involved as symbiotic activities in generating income for the fund. This process can be seen as a catalyst to nurture philanthropic culture among the library staff.

### The Essential of Career Development

According to Neuenschwander and Kracke (2011), career development is a lifelong endeavor that starts during childhood and usually ends in old age after retirement from paid work. Career goals have to be developed and first choices concerning educational trajectories have to be made, funneling future career options and pathways. These choices have to be well prepared by exploring one's own abilities, interests, and values and the career opportunities provided by institutions.

Furthermore, Barnett and Bradley (2007) highlight that the issues in organizational support for career development (OSCD) or known as organizational career management refer to the programs, processes and assistance provided by organizations to support and enhance employees' career success because OSCD belongs to a class of environmental support and resources variables that are specifically relevant to the pursuit of an individual's career goals. OSCD comprises of formal strategies (including career planning, training and

assessment centers) and informal support such as providing mentoring, coaching and networking opportunities.

Hence, Career Development Fund (TKKSP) is important and pertinent throughout history and it has made major contribution in career success and performance of library talent in the financial aspects. The funds have encouraged a number of library staff to advance their career to the next level. For example, Deputy Chief Librarian USM, Encik Mohd. Idris Haji Ali, started his career as a library assistant in 1973 without any additional qualifications and after a number of years consistently receiving support from the fund and opportunity from the organization, he managed to a Master's degree. Until 2012, there are several library staff that have advanced in their career and received reward from the fund recently (Table 4).

Table 4: Examples of Library Staffs Benefiting from the Fund

No Staff	Position	Education Achievement
1. Rosnani Ahmad	Librarian	Sarjana Sains Pengurusan Maklumat (UiTM, Shah Alam, Selangor, Mei 2011)
2. Nor Asyikin Md Akhir	Library Assistant	Diploma Teknologi Maklumat (Politeknik Seberang Perai, Pulau Pinang, Disember 2009)
3. Mohd Fathullah Zulkeply	Technician	Diploma Kejuruteraan Elektronik (Politeknik Seberang Perai, Pulau Pinang, Januari 2009)
4. Salasiah Zakaria	Technician	Diploma Kejuruteraan Elektronik (Politeknik Seberang Perai, Pulau Pinang, Januari 2008)
5. Tengku Syarmiza Tengku Zahid	Library Assistant	Sarjana Muda Sains Kemasyarakatan (USM, Pulau Pinang, Ogos 2008)
6. Mohd Nasir Md Rashid	Senior Librarian	Master of Arts in Library and Information Studies (Victoria University of Wellington, February 2007)

Moreover, this fund plays an important role in cultivating motivation among professional staff to write academic and non-academic papers (Table 5).

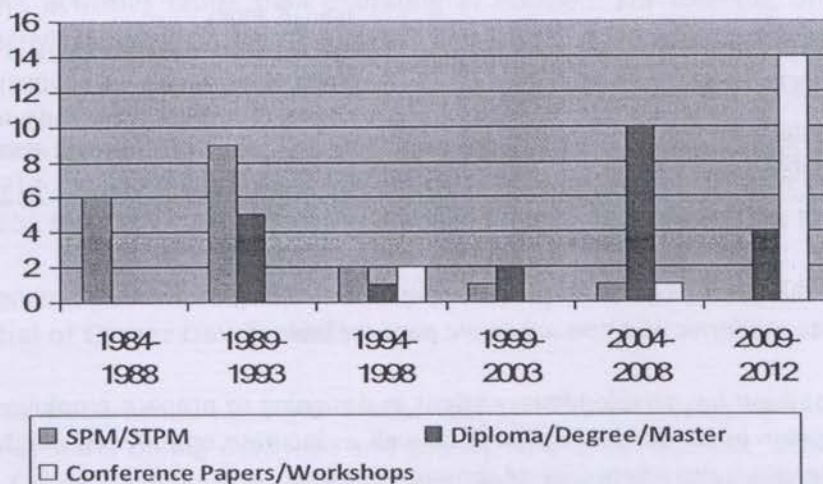
In short, the fund has enabled library talent in designing to prepare employees for moving high motivation in career enhancement as well as increase employees' ability and skills in fulfilling the vision and orientation of the organization.

Figure 1 shows the statistics of achievement level from 1984-2012. In 1980s, several library staff sought for secondary education because at that time the minimum requirement level to become library employees was at least Sijil Rendah Pelajaran (SRP). Then, from 2000 onwards the number decreased and were replaced by those who pursued their studies at the Degree and Master's level. Moreover, until 2012, quite a number of staff have written and presented papers in conferences.

Table 5: Papers Presented at Conferences

No	Papers Presented	Conference/Seminar
1.	Siti Roudhah Mohamad Saad, Radia Banu Jan Mohamad, Cik Ramlah Che Jaafar dan Shahriza Fadly Misaridin Title: Khazanah warisan tempatan di Perpustakaan Hamzah Sendut, Universiti Sains Malaysia: Koleksi kaum peranakan Asia Tenggara	Paper presented at Seminar Kebangsaan Perpustakaan Akademik 2011
2.	Jamilah Hassan Basri, Mohd Pisol Ghadzali, Mohd Ikhwan Ismail Title: Blue Ocean Strategy: the application in USM library	
3.	Nurul Azurah Mohd Roni, Mohd Kamal Mohd Hanafiah and Basri Hassan Title: Impact of ICT on privacy and personal data protection in two Malaysian academic libraries	Paper presented at Asia-Pacific Conference on Library and Information and practice: Issues, challenges and opportunities 2011
4.	Rizalawati Ayu Abdul Razak Title: Do you facebook? Usage and application of facebook page among academic libraries in Malaysia	
5.	Noraida Hassan, Wan Emilin Wan Mat Ali, Engku Razifah Engku Chik Title: Practice evidence base in Malaysian libraries: a CSI challenge	Paper presented at International Conference on Libraries 2009

Table 6: Staff's Achievement Level: 1984-2012



### Talent and Career Management

The library wants to earn its reputation in advancing the library talent through a successful career development opportunities. It is one of the sustainable excellences in parallel with the vision and mission of university adhered in an APEX university. The talent and career management are inseparable where noted in the Capital Associated Industries (2012) which stated that career development is viewed as critical for talent management. Furthermore, it is clarified in the survey from Hewitt Associates, conducted in March and

April 2010, which includes data from HR professionals at 193 large employers. The study found that 30 percent of survey participants said that career development is more important to their employees than pay as a reward strategy with an additional 55 percent saying it was of equal importance. Moreover, with regards to career development philosophy, 62 percent said their employees are in charge of their own development with some guidance from their manager. Further 85 percent described employees' perception of career development opportunities as "some" or "limited."

In relation to the organization, library has to analyse the need for and promote career development among staff and create a good plan to help employees learn and develop new skills. Thus, the fund highlights the different ways library help their employees to seek out and find career development opportunities. Furthermore, library managers need to discuss career development with their employees, openly and frequently communicate the organization's belief and stance in career development. There is a connection between talent and career management as proposed by the Right Management (2012) (Figure 1), which claims that talent is a critical ingredient to achieving excellence. The ability to strategically assess the talent you have and the talent you need is integral to meet and exceed the goals of organization.

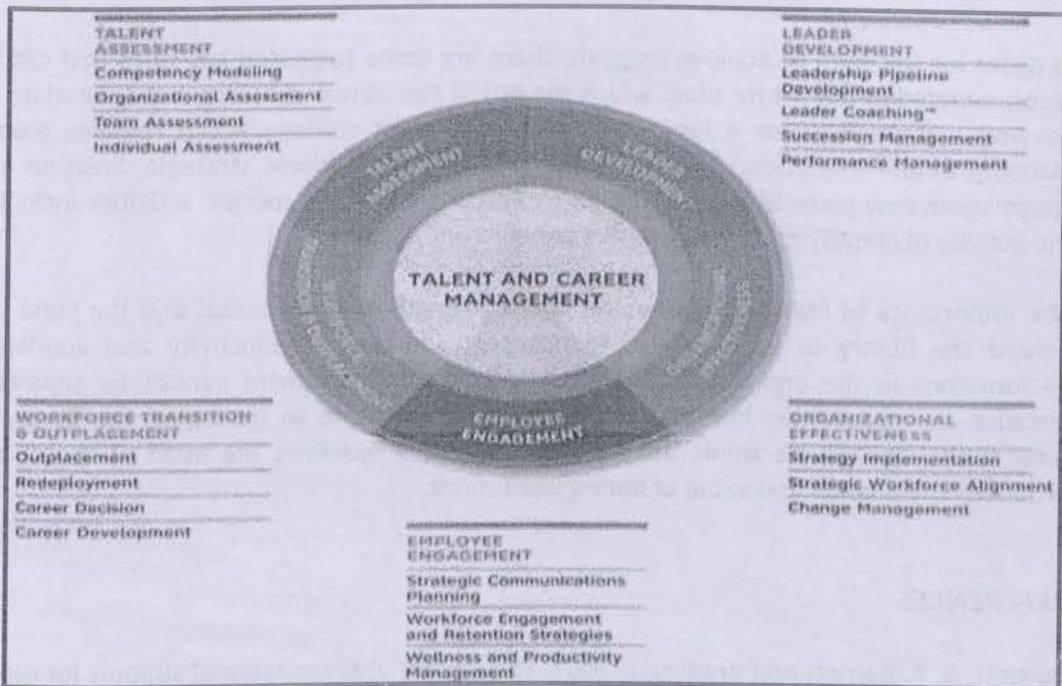


Figure 1: Staff's Achievements Made Possible from the Fund

### STRATEGIES FOR FUNDRAISING

Total collection of the fund up to December 2011 is RM12,893.32. The accumulated fund fluctuates from year to year. Thus, the Board has to plan strategies to increase the funding. Among the strategies are:

1. Increase the payment subscription of membership; the Board needs to review the subscription of payment
2. Community and events in libraries; Dinner, outreach events

3. Sponsorship
4. Donations and gifts; contribute most in the total collection of the fund
5. The rental of massage automatic machine; It is estimated that the cost of profit that can be generated is RM300/permonth. The total sum accumulated in one year is RM3600.
6. Charity activities for example jumble sale has taken place as a must-have-activity every year; according to the previous experience of the Board it is noted that jumble sale profit has contributed the highest income to the fund.
7. Sale of goods during convocation day
8. Selling recycled items around universities for example paper, bottle and plastics
9. Internet fundraising for example through Facebook, blogging and online business

The task of the funding Board is to make sure that all the strategies are profitable in the long run. Means, fundraising strategy can be time consuming but will be worth it. So, it is crucial for the Committee to include good plans that are sustainable and ongoing. In short, it is challenging task to the Board to ensure the fund increase from year to year and can be channeled out accordingly.

## CONCLUSION

In order for this fund to achieve its goals, there are some suggested key roles that can be recommended in the future plan, which the Board can obtain input from the librarians to develop a framework for a long term staff investment strategy which requires proper planning before execution. Also, the Board can set and endorse strategic direction and adopt some new plans in fundraising for instance to carry out specific activities including the activity of identifying more potential benefactors.

The importance of library to foster the talent strength is fundamental and the Fund has helped the library to grow talent, reduce costs, increase productivity and accelerate performance in the organization. Talent and career management cannot be separated because the capabilities lead to many innovative solutions in managing the library. It reflects the way people think, act and work where it redefines the need of library and broadens the mission and value of library institutions.

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**ABSTRACT**

The role and significance of career development fund in strengthening library talent is discussed in this paper. The author discusses the importance of career development in the library profession and the role of the career development fund in supporting the career development of library staff. The author also discusses the importance of the career development fund in supporting the career development of library staff and the role of the career development fund in supporting the career development of library staff. The author also discusses the importance of the career development fund in supporting the career development of library staff and the role of the career development fund in supporting the career development of library staff.

Keywords: career development, library talent, succession planning, library profession, career development fund.

**INTRODUCTION**

According to the 1998 report on the State of the Profession, the library profession is facing a significant challenge in the 21st century. The report identifies the need for a career development fund to support the career development of library staff. The report also identifies the need for a career development fund to support the career development of library staff.

The career development fund is a critical component of a library's talent management strategy. It provides a source of funding for career development activities, such as training, mentoring, and professional development. The career development fund is also a key component of a library's succession planning strategy. It provides a source of funding for the career development of library staff who are identified as potential successors to key positions in the library.