The University of Manchester Library
National Research Library in the North

IMAGINE 2030
A Library for Our Third Century
The University of Manchester Library is one of the acknowledged great libraries of the world. Originating in 1824, The University of Manchester Library is the third largest research library system in the United Kingdom and sits at the heart of the country’s largest single-site University. With more than ten million items it is the largest non-legal deposit library, the only National Research Library in the north of England and holds the most extensive digital collections of any academic library in the United Kingdom.

Imagine2030 is The University of Manchester Library’s vision and priorities for the next period of its development. It is intended to engage and inform our many communities of researchers, students, visiting scholars, staff and public visitors. An operational plan underpins Imagine2030 and delivers our ambitions for the Library estates plan, internationalisation, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, a collections-led core business, an ideas-led workforce and on our critical role in supporting the University’s core goals of Research and Discovery, Teaching and Learning and Social Responsibility. Imagine2030 is the Library’s response and contribution to the University’s new strategic plan ‘Our Future.”

Imagine2030 is one of the most significant bodies of activity undertaken by The University of Manchester Library in its long history. As The University of Manchester moves into its third century during the course of Imagine2030, the University will reimagine and confirm its status as the home of one of the world’s great libraries.

Professor Christopher Pressler
John Rylands University Librarian
& Director of The University of Manchester Library

The University of Manchester Library provides students, researchers and the public with unique collections, spaces and professional expertise in disciplines across the Humanities, Arts, Sciences, Engineering, Health and Medicine.

In redefining the role and purpose of our Library, Imagine2030 engages our staff, our University and our civic, national and international partners in a transformative body of work guided by seven enabling themes:

- Research Innovation
- Engaged Students
- Valued Services
- Open Principles & Equality
- Manchester Collections
- Creative People
- Remarkable Spaces

THE THEMES WILL BE DELIVERED THROUGH THREE STRATEGIC PROGRAMMES:

Our Library
- For Manchester staff, students, alumni and communities

National Research Library in the North
- Vital to UK research

The University of Manchester Library Global
- A renowned international partner
THE UNIVERSITY OF MANCHESTER LIBRARY

The University of Manchester Library Executive Team leads five Directorates, each of which delivers strategic vision and planning for one of the most complex academic library systems in the United Kingdom.

Directorate of the John Rylands University Librarian
At the heart of the Library, the Directorate of the John Rylands University Librarian oversees the strategic direction of The University of Manchester Library.

Directorate of Collection Strategies
Collection development, collection management and strategic space planning are core activities for the Directorate as well as delivering on the Library’s role as National Research Library in the North.

Directorate of Curatorial Practices
Manchester holds one of the acknowledged great special collections of the world. The Directorate reaches out to multiple audiences and curates, conserves and transforms our collections in every format.

Directorate of Faculty and Student Partnerships
The UK’s largest student population studies within one of its most research-intensive institutions. Our Library builds positive relationships with Faculties and students in order to design and deliver great teaching, valued services and unparalleled modern collections of the highest quality.

Directorate of Research and Digital Horizons
Digital work and digital life are at the centre of the Library’s ambition to redefine our services, capabilities, global presence and our response to profound changes in open research and publishing.

IMAGINE2030

ENABLING THEMES

RESEARCH INNOVATION
Our Library supports transformative research

ENGAGED STUDENTS
Our students are partners in our ambition

OPEN PRINCIPLES & EQUALITY
Our inclusive ethos is to open knowledge to society

MANCHESTER COLLECTIONS
Our collections are amongst the greatest in the world

VALUED SERVICES
Our services are a key part of university and city life

CREATIVE PEOPLE
Our people are trusted, collaborative and diverse

REMARKABLE SPACES
Our Library offers boundless variety and inspiration

Underpinning the strategic role of the Library Executive Team, the Library Leadership Team works across all directorates and leads on the Library’s Operational Plan.

The University of Manchester Library has a presence across the University, city, region and around the world through its on campus and online collections, services and people. As National Research Library in the North it has a further special role as a key part of the United Kingdom’s research infrastructure.
OUR LIBRARY

For Manchester’s staff, students, alumni and communities

LEAD PRIORITY AREAS

Main Library Redefined
The University aims to either refurbish or rebuild the Main Library in order to deliver world-leading environments for research, learning, student development and engagement with our print and digital collections. The project will allow us to consider the total student and research experience of our Library, learning spaces and supporting services in line with scholarship, new technologies, shared service cultures, the importance of wellbeing on campus and social responsibility.

Our Students
Manchester provides world-leading depth of content for students via its eTextbook portfolio. Our award-winning teaching and learning programmes support students, PhD candidates and researchers on campus and through digital delivery with rich curricular engagement to ensure that anyone studying at Manchester is working in a great learning environment. Imagine2030 will continue to deliver a great taught student experience and will also focus on developing a new partnership with our postgraduate research community.

Digital Manchester
Through multiple partnerships across the University, the Library shares in the development of The University of Manchester Digital Futures and digital innovation initiatives. This is a programme of activity reaching into every part of academic and administrative work at the University, and will prepare our University for a digital future that enables blended ways of working, research, education and the projection of The University of Manchester globally.

Spirit of Manchester
The University of Manchester Library is as much a part of life in the city as it is in the University. Over 20,000 people from our local communities are members of our Library and we welcome over 350,000 visitors every year at The John Rylands Library. Imagine2030 will aim to increase our involvement in the cultural and educational life of our city through our tradition of radical innovation.

The University of Manchester Office for Open Research
The University of Manchester Office for Open Research brings together our world-leading existing work in open scholarship for all disciplines with new bodies of work in open data, citizen science and open access. It will be one of the most significant investments in the future of publishing, data and open knowledge by any UK university, reaching across all humanities and science disciplines.

PROGRAMME MISSION
The Our Library programme will deliver on the legacy and potential of The University of Manchester Library to provide memorable, rich and dynamic, services to our staff, students, alumni and communities. The Library also plays a key role in the University’s social responsibility activity.

STRAEGIC PROGRAMME
NATIONAL RESEARCH LIBRARY in the NORTH

Vital to UK Research

LEAD PRIORITY AREAS

National Partnerships
Manchester will work with the other UK National Research Libraries, the three National Libraries and with all other collecting institutions with a national role to transform our ways of working and to better enable research through our collections, services and facilities. We will actively seek cross-sectoral partners, including those allowing us to further develop the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion projects for our staff and research collections. The ground-breaking work of our Ahmed Iqbal Ullah RACE Centre will be fully represented as being of national importance.

The John Rylands Library Next Chapter
The John Rylands Library is the most remarkable university special collections library in the world. The next chapter in its eminent history will be a project to enrich and transform the researcher and visitor experience through new exhibition facilities and redesigned spaces for research, teaching, learning, events and research impact. The British Pop Archive will be established and a major discovery and cataloguing project will deliver new understanding of our internationally significant collections of incunabula.

COLIM Libraries
The university libraries of Cambridge, Oxford, UCL, Imperial and Manchester (COLIM) contribute to their institutions’ large-scale research environments. Three of the partners, including Manchester, are also National Research Libraries, and all five constitute the Band 1 institutions of largest library content purchasers in the UK. COLIM, where appropriate and in alignment with Research Libraries UK shares best practice amongst the libraries of the country’s most research-intensive universities, in particular in the fields of open access research communications and scholarly publishing.

Manchester Modern Collections
Our print and digital modern collections are amongst the most outstanding in the UK and we will seek to further increase their breadth and depth. Teams will deliver this across the Library with expertise in collection management and development and in close liaison with the Faculties and Schools of The University of Manchester. In addition to the internal drivers of growth, the Library will work with others nationally and regionally on contemporary and future-driven ideas of shared and collective collections.

Manchester Digital Scholarship
Manchester Digital Scholarship (MDS), based in the National Research Library in the North programme, will determine and deliver this diverse field of activity. Key partnerships will be developed, especially through our membership of Research Libraries UK, which will focus on the continued transformation of scholarship through digital technologies and global collaboration. MDS will act as a conduit for new research, research impact and for the coordinated long-term care and interpretation of research collections.

PROGRAMME MISSION
The University of Manchester Library is one of only five National Research Libraries in the United Kingdom and the only one outside of Oxford, Cambridge and London. National Research Library in the North is a confirmation and reimagining of Manchester’s leading and instinctively collaborative national role.

IMAGINE2030 A Library for Our Third Century
LEAD PRIORITY AREAS

The John Rylands Research Institute and Library
At Manchester there is a close and valued partnership between a dedicated research institute and a university library. This will be enhanced during the course of Imagine2030 by the repositioning of our joint activities as The John Rylands Research Institute and Library. This will further develop one of the world’s leading centres for the research, interpretation and curation of collections and the production of world-leading scholarship and its dissemination and impact on society.

Our Library Giving
In close collaboration with colleagues working on the Our Library programme, The University of Manchester Library will develop an innovative philanthropy strategy. This will be in partnership with the University’s Directorate of Development and Alumni Relations. It will ensure that valued benefactors in the UK and beyond are given the opportunity to work with the Library as they enable new research and transform lives through education.

Manchester University Press
The longstanding relationship between Manchester University Press and The University of Manchester Library will be deepened and transformed as each respond to the global shifts in publishing. Our University is one of only a very few worldwide with the opportunity to exploit both a global brand in its Press and one of the world’s finest libraries.

The University of Manchester Library International
Aligned with the University’s Research and Discovery, Teaching and Learning and Social Responsibility strategies The University of Manchester Library will build new partnerships and shared practices with key partners around the world. Initially, these will be developed with The University of Toronto Library, The University of Melbourne Library, The Chinese University of Hong Kong Library, Stanford Library and Harvard Library to enhance our research, teaching and staff development programmes and will also be affiliated with partners in The University of Manchester Worldwide.

Manchester Digital Collections
Manchester Digital Collections (MDC) is a new enterprise between Manchester and Cambridge. This is part of a suite of new services and partnerships between the Library, the University’s museums, galleries and heritage collections and with others around the world. MDC’s ground-breaking work will be developed and expanded to enhance other collections and collaborations.

In addition to these specific programme areas, The University of Manchester Library will design a new programme of international engagement based around dedicated liaison responsibility at a senior level for Europe, the Middle East and Africa, North America, South America, and for Australia and Asia.
In addition to fully engaging with the University’s overarching Financial Sustainability measure, The University of Manchester Library upholds the values of our University: Knowledge, Wisdom, Humanity, Academic freedom, Courage and Pioneering spirit and draws its measures of success directly from those of the University:

**GLOBAL INFLUENCE**
The Library will make a significant contribution to the reputation and status of The University of Manchester as one of the world’s great libraries within one of the world’s great universities.

**RESEARCH AND DISCOVERY**
The Library will play an integral role in the research lifecycle, partnering with researchers from development to research impact, and will also enable the University to deliver its mission on open research.

**TEACHING AND LEARNING**
The Library is a valued part of student life and academic success and will continue to listen and respond to the infinite variety of support required on campus and online by the country’s largest student population.

**IMPACT ON SOCIETY**
The Library is an outward-facing aspect of University activity, and will develop programmes of public engagement with research and collections as well as working to promote the acknowledged value of libraries to society.

**OUR PEOPLE, OUR VALUES**
The Library listens to those who use and work with us and will employ this evidence to optimise the changes in our working practices accelerated by the global pandemic, in conjunction with building a trusted workplace on campus and online for staff and students with wellbeing at its centre.

**INNOVATION**
The Library has considerable capacity to lead on transformation to the ways in which large research libraries work in a world that has changed significantly, and will do so in collaboration with challenging and rewarding partnerships in support of Manchester’s intention to be recognised as Europe’s most innovative university.

**CARBON REDUCTION**
The Library has one of the largest physical footprints of any single UK academic library system, and will work with many partners to contribute to the city’s decarbonisation pathway and 2038 zero carbon target.
PARTNERSHIPS

In addition to our internal associations, The University of Manchester Library has multiple partners beyond the University. We thank them for their engagement and we look forward to working further together, particularly with the following organisations:

- UK Research and Innovation (UKRI)
- Research Libraries UK (RLUK)
- The Russell Group
- Universities UK
- Cambridge-Oxford-UCL-Imperial-Manchester (COLIM)
- N8 Research Consortium
- The Northern Collaboration
- Manchester City Council
- The UK National Research Libraries (NRLs)
- Association of Research Libraries (ARL)
- Society of College, National and University Libraries (SCONUL)
- Council on Library and Information Resources (CLIR)
- Consortium of European Research Libraries (CERL)
- OCLC
- Ligue des Bibliothèques Européennes de Recherche (LIBER)
- Jisc
- DART-Europe Consortium
- Cambridge-Manchester Digital Collections Programme
- JRRI-Folger Library Fellowships
- JRRI-Huntington Library Fellowships
- JRRI-Library of Congress Fellowships
- JRRI-Newberry Library Fellowships
- International Federation of Library Associations

The University of Manchester Library is essential to The University of Manchester’s research and discovery, teaching and learning and social responsibility goals. Our Library works closely with Faculties, students, Professional Services, the University’s Cultural Institutions and our creative, humanities, scientific, charitable, civic, national and international partners in sustaining one of the world’s great libraries at the heart of one of the world’s great universities.