

The University of Manchester

Job Description

Job title:	Head of Digital Reach
Reports to:	Director - AI and Ideas Adoption
Organisation unit:	University of Manchester Library: AI and Ideas Adoption (AIIA)
Date:	January 2025
HERA:	MAPS-UML-AI&IA-DSC-A (587, Grade 8)

Overall purpose of the job:

- To support the Director for AI and Ideas Adoption on developing new partnerships in support of the wider Imagine 2035 vision and strategy. Expanding our digital reach through civic partnerships including Manchester's innovation district *Sister* and through new international collaborations. Assisting in the design of new and re-imagined library services as we seek to ensure our academic research library remains pivotal to supporting the ambition of the University of Manchester. Developing our Library's role in supporting the creative, entrepreneurial and social impact ambitions of the University of Manchester in its position as a civic anchor institution
- To expand our Library's digital reach. To support the increase of research, teaching and engagement with our collections and enhancing the impact of these activities through an expanded digital reach. To achieve this through novel configurations of our teams and processes, the adoption of new technologies including AI enhanced approaches and a transformation of our underlying digital platforms and workflows.

Key responsibilities:

Increasing the digital reach of our world-class Special Collections

- To support the development of initiatives with Sister, the Turing Innovation Catalyst (TIC), Unit-M, and other innovation partners of the University and in the City of Manchester's innovation district
- To oversee the development of new services in collaboration with these partners and to explore new opportunities to engage people and local communities with our collections in emergent civic spaces
- To support initiatives with our international library partners and educational institutions to exchange knowledge and practices in rethinking research libraries
- To foster and manage partnerships with technology companies, other academic institutions, and research organizations to bring external insights and innovations into the library

- To enhance the reputation and profile of the University of Manchester Library as being at the forefront of innovation in support of the University's *Manchester 2035* strategy.
 - To establish, develop and nurture strategically important relationships both internally and externally to the University, engaging with University, Library and external stakeholders
 - To develop effective strategic relationships with library technology suppliers and influence discussions in accordance with our Library's objectives
- To represent the University Library at internal and external meetings and take a leading role within sector-wide groups such as RLUK, N8, ALN and SCONUL

Increasing our digital reach through internal/external relationships and civic partnerships

- To work in close collaboration with the Head of Digital Special Collections, Head of AI Development, and Head of Digital Service Innovation to deliver the agreed strategic direction for our digital platforms. Particularly those platforms and systems deployed to support advanced imaging, digitisation and digital preservation
- To enhance the digital reach and discovery of our outstanding collections, particularly our special collections, to inspire and nurture world-class research, teaching and learning at The University of Manchester and increase the wider public impact
- To oversee the optimisation of the integration of digital collections systems into the wider digital infrastructure of the Library and University
- To oversee the optimisation of end-to-end digital special collections workflows from digitisation to research, discovery, digital exhibitions and the preservation of accessible collections for future generations of researchers and learners
- To enhance the ability for stakeholder communities to undertake interdisciplinary research at scale with our digital special collections, exploiting the opportunities provided by AI and machine learning
- To support the continual improvement of the discoverability of our collections, particularly in light of changing search and information retrieval technologies, such as Large Language Models
- To support the driving of engagement with our Library's physical artefacts as our digital presence blends the physical and digital worlds into a single experience

Leadership and management

- To inspire, motivate and manage the Digital Reach team, which includes the Advanced Digital Imaging, Digital Engagement Platforms and Digital preservation sub-teams
- To deliver the agreed strategic direction for Manchester Digital Collections (MDC), Manchester Digital Exhibitions (MDE) and the underpinning digital collection platforms
- To work closely with the Head of Digital Service Innovation to ensure all digital platforms are appropriately managed and supported, with digitisation and digital preservation workflows continually improved
- To take an active role in the strategic development of the Library, and to work closely with the Library Management Group (LMG) and other managers to ensure emerging trends and technologies are assessed for the opportunities and challenges they pose
- To support the design of strategies and roadmaps in support of Imagine2030, our Library's vision and priorities for the next period of its development
- To deputise for the Director of AI and Ideas Adoption as necessary

Increasing our digital reach through innovation

- To support the coordination of Library Futures initiatives; cross-Library agile teams leading on positive disruption in areas including collections, publishing, and digital transformation.
- To seek creative partnerships of mutual benefit to help push the boundaries of the possible for future iterations of our Library
- To prepare our Library and stakeholders for horizon events, their future opportunities and challenges
- To enhance the reputation and profile of the University Library as being at the forefront of disruptively creative and innovative solutions in support of University strategy
- To identify and bid for sources of funding, such as research funding, that can be pursued in support of initiatives to develop our Library in new directions
- To accelerate ideas adoption, overseeing the rollout of successful ideas across the library, working collaboratively with other teams
- To prioritise and coordinate pilot initiatives, with a view to scale them up into service if defined measures of value are met
- To bring in ideas and approaches from beyond the Higher Education and library sectors applying them effectively in our context
- To support the next wave of digital transformation as we re-orientate the Library for an AI augmented world

General

- To keep policies, procedures, KPIs and staffing within the team under active review recommending and implementing improvements and changes as necessary
- To be responsible for compliance with and the embedding of University policies, procedures and requirements. In particular those relating to cyber security, health and safety; equity, diversity and inclusion; and information governance
- Such other duties as may reasonably be associated with the grade and a role of this nature
- To work at any Library site as required
- To be flexible in relation to hours of work as may be reasonably requested from time to time
- To wear supplied Library branded clothing during defined promotional activities and special events
- To share in the Library's culture and values and ensure the working environment reflects the Library's Ways of Working
- To contribute to an environment that values and celebrates the diverse nature of the University of Manchester's population and to take positive steps to achieve equality in the workplace and to both meet and exceed our obligations under equality legislation

Person Specification:

Essential knowledge, skills and experience:

- Possessing a relevant degree/postgraduate qualification plus significant appropriate management and leadership experience

Or

- Extensive vocational and strategic management and leadership experience demonstrating professional development through a series of progressively more demanding and influential work roles, backed by evidence of significant development of appropriate specialist knowledge
- Capable of operating within a complex organisation and managing complex strategies
- Able to influence partners and stakeholders at a Library, University and sector level
- Ability to lead cross functional teams through agile methodologies
- Exceptional ability to communicate complex digital transformation and strategic concepts to a diverse range of stakeholders
- Ability to lead and manage change effectively, building effective narrative of change, anticipating challenges and working through risks and issues
- Ability to develop strategic relationships and operate in a large complex organisation
- Knowledge of the Higher Education and research libraries is beneficial, however applicable skills and knowledge from beyond these sectors will be equally considered