



NUI Galway
OÉ Gaillimh

LIBRARY STRATEGY

The Journey to 2020



Foreword

The Library is centrally located on the University campus and is equally pivotal to realising the goals of the University's strategy to 2020. This document maps an exciting journey on which the Library will power the University's scholarship through skilled staff, rich collections, creative learning spaces and integrated discovery and publishing channels. This dynamic agenda will be vital in enabling NUI Galway to attract, retain and stimulate the best staff and students and to make a distinctive impact globally. It will advance by taking the opportunities presented by the ongoing digital revolution alongside a continuing commitment to preserving the past. The result will be a potent combination of new value and old values.

The strategies of the University and the Library are closely aligned and equally ambitious. Both face the future undaunted by many challenges and unbowed by the difficulties we have all experienced in recent years. The new Library agenda broadens its engagement with the University community and with local, regional and global audiences. In some cases this will involve doing familiar things in different ways, and in others new departures are signalled. There are surprises also, for example the introduction of a popular Maker Space as a symbol of how a transformed Library building will facilitate new forms of creative, engaged and active learning.

A common theme throughout these pages is that the Library wants to reach out to its communities. There is an appetite for partnership, working on an equal and trusted basis to achieve success for the University and all of its people. Making a difference to the lives of our students, not only in terms of academic achievement but also in providing a welcoming place of community and sharing for all disciplines, is another focus. The importance of external engagement is also evident, often with an emphasis on promoting cultural heritage or sharing resources.

Turning future aspirations into reality is often difficult, but in reading this document you can feel confident that its ambitions will be realised. This confidence is based on the skills, experience, commitment and overall excellence of the Library team which has come together to create and own a vision for the Library in 2020. More than that its members have taken on different roles and formed new teams to achieve this vision. We value them all. Timothy Healy, former President of the New York Public Library, put it well when he observed that "The most important asset of any library goes home at night – the library staff".



Professor Pól Ó Dochartaigh
Registrar and Deputy President

The Journey to 2020

We live in interesting times. The ways in which information is created, stored, transmitted and used have changed profoundly in recent decades and the pace of change remains fast.

Access to information, anywhere and anytime, is easy. Technology affords us new opportunities and a level of independence. Abundance of information has replaced scarcity. Learning takes place in many settings, informal as well as formal. Scholarship has become much more multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary. Above all, we live in a global society in which our activities and impact are no longer confined to local audiences.

These changes have transformed the way in which universities and their libraries operate and have created new needs and expectations. Libraries are competing for attention in the digital world. People are more self-sufficient and can find and access information outside libraries. They have different expectations when they visit library buildings, looking for places to collaborate, talk and create or to experience events and exhibitions. Self-service accounts for more transactions and interaction with library staff increasingly revolves around new needs at a higher level of complexity. This is because the digital environment has brought challenges as well as opportunities and in turn new roles for libraries, along with a valued element of continuity.

NUI Galway's Library has throughout its history recognised and responded to many new challenges for itself and its users. In recent times, for example, we have helped our users address information overload by teaching information skills. We have expanded technology support at the Library and IT Service Desk, created new group study areas for collaborative work and a Maker Space for digital creativity. The Library has provided access to a vast online collection of journals and books as well as unique archives and special collections, and completed the world's largest theatre archive digitisation project to create the Abbey Theatre Digital Archive. We have adapted with flexibility and commitment to meet today's needs.

Tomorrow's challenges and expectations are the focus of this strategy document. Informed by consultation with the campus community, we have developed a vision for the Library in 2020 which aligns with the University strategy and identifies six priorities:

- A compelling place for academic engagement
- Access to excellent and relevant collections
- Connectivity through partnership, communication and community
- Graduates who think critically and have lifelong academic skills
- High-impact publication of research, data and digital content
- Expert staff, skilled to help in person or online



Our vision is that the Library will be a catalyst for your success as NUI Galway's hub for scholarly information discovery, sharing and publication. Our ambition is to add new value in partnership with the University community and external collaborators. Between now and 2020 we will seek and take opportunities to transform the Library building, develop our collections to meet the requirements of academic programmes, communicate effectively and understand your needs, broaden the coverage and availability of our information skills programmes, and create digital collections for innovative research and global access.

You will experience a more dynamic learning environment, simpler routes to the information you need in all formats, access to rich archival and special collections, exciting exhibitions and cultural events, more tools for discovering and managing information, and new digital publishing partnerships. The Library team will work with you to make all of this possible. We have built a shared commitment to the Library vision during its creation and will develop our skills and expertise to meet your evolving needs. We will ensure a continuity of approach too. Our vision rightly promotes long-standing Library values such as integrity, caring, listening and welcoming which will underpin everything we do.

To learn more about the journey to 2020, please read on and enjoy!

John Coa
University Librarian



Creating a Compelling Place for Academic Engagement

The Vision for 2020

The Library building is the central hub of scholarly activity at the heart of the campus, where you can feel part of the University community. You are able to exploit a range of flexible, technology-enabled spaces, designed to suit different learning styles, formal and informal, individual and collaborative.

The building provides opportunities to take control of, and responsibility for, your own learning, with easy access to staff support. There are spaces for information access, discovery and knowledge creation and areas such as poster or digital display zones where you can promote and share your work. An intuitive, user-based layout maximises the use of collections and services. Informal spaces for relaxation, social interaction and viewing of digital displays and exhibitions add to the sense of community. The emphasis throughout is on comfort.

THE AGENDA

Learning, research and knowledge creation thrive in the right kinds of space and the Library building, with one million visits annually, is a key location for academic engagement on campus. The University's strategy to 2020 intends to develop a plan to regenerate existing buildings. It notes that "This plan will include the transformation of our Hardiman Library building into a dynamic learning environment, reflecting the culture of knowledge creation in a contemporary university".

Such a transformation will be a vital enabler of the University's mission to educate students to be creative, independent critical thinkers, with a capacity for teamwork and leadership. A reimagined learning space will promote interaction and engagement, innovative ways of thinking, and opportunities for digital creativity and entrepreneurship.

What could a transformed Library building deliver?

- An exciting learning environment at the heart of the campus
- Increased student engagement, retention and academic performance
- Improved student experience across all disciplines
- An attractive and comfortable place of community and interaction for the whole campus
- Enhanced University competitiveness in attracting staff and students
- More visitor engagement and retail opportunities

Changes to the current building show what is possible. Examples are the creation of group study rooms to facilitate collaboration and new social space in the reconfigured foyer. The opening of a high-technology Maker Space has unleashed a wave of creativity among staff and students. The success of the adjoining Hardiman Research Building points the way in promoting collaborations, attracting new collections and hosting engaging exhibitions. A transformed Library building can make a massive difference to the University.



Creating a compelling place for academic engagement will advance by:

Developing a Building Transformation Plan

A study commissioned by the University's Working Group for the Implementation of the Capital Programme has concluded that a transformation is feasible. The Library will work with the University to plan its funding and implementation on a phased basis. We will consult with our communities to create innovative and exciting spaces.

Improving our Knowledge of User Preferences

The Library's Operations Team will establish mechanisms for tracking the future direction of pedagogy and research so as to inform future repurposing of space. It will deploy emerging UX (User eXperience) methodologies to undertake regular observations of user behaviour.

Developing Collaborative User Engagement with Exhibitions

The Library will partner with others to devise a programme of physical and virtual exhibitions and events, curated by students, academics and researchers. This will maximise the space in the atrium of the Hardiman Research Building, act as a visitor attraction, and encourage the dissemination and creation of knowledge. The exhibitions programme will also facilitate both the inbound and outbound sharing of exhibitions to encourage external collaborations.

“ The Library building, with one million visits annually, is a key location for academic engagement on campus ”

Providing Access to Excellent and Relevant Collections

The Vision for 2020

The Library provides rich collections in a variety of formats, enabling you to build your knowledge and to create new knowledge. You have access to the information resources you need for your study, teaching or research, seamlessly when and where you need them. Our collections, including world-class archives, are embedded in the academic programmes and research activities of the University.

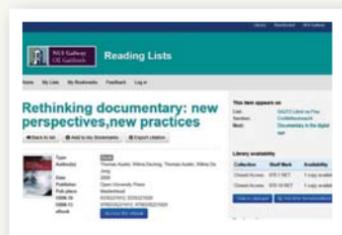
We build and preserve collections for today and tomorrow, taking particular care of our unique printed heritage while continuing to maximise e-collections for access to information from anywhere at any time and to optimise the use of physical space. Collections, paper and online, are accessible, easy to find and attractively presented to support browsing and discovery.

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The Library's collections, developed over the past 170 years, tell the story of our University and reflect research and teaching strengths throughout its history. The knowledge they contain is the fuel that sparks the imagination and curiosity of our students and underlies the scholarship and research of our staff. They are a source both of pride and competitive advantage for the University.

The world of scholarly communications has changed beyond recognition with the growth of both online and open access publishing. The needs and preferences of NUI Galway students and staff have similarly evolved, bringing an expectation of seamless access to content in new formats. The Library's collection strategy reflects these changes and will ensure access to excellent and relevant scholarly resources.

We strive to be fully aware of the information resource needs of current teaching, learning and research, and to develop our collections accordingly. The University develops its programmes to respond to societal, cultural and economic needs and we will enable these programmes through proactive Library-led collection development. As new ways of learning emerge and flexible and blended learning programmes increase, our collection formats and access mechanisms will evolve to suit, ensuring seamless discovery and access to content.



Providing access to excellent and relevant collections will advance by:

Improving Discovery and Access

We will implement a world-class technology platform that will greatly enhance the discoverability of all our collections, integrating archives, published resources and digitised content. The platform will greatly improve the experience of interacting with scholarly material and will expose the full breadth and depth of our collections.

The same technology will facilitate more efficient workflows, freeing Library staff to focus on developing the collections and adding new value. Greatly enhanced analytics will provide essential data on engagement with Library resources to inform both academic planning and collection development.

Integrating with Students' Learning

The Library will continue to be a national leader in meeting course reading requirements. We will radically transform the learning experience by providing students with seamless access from within Blackboard to the content they need for their studies.

We will collaborate with academic staff to ensure students have access to the most current and relevant content in appropriate formats to enable their learning. We will promote our collections to ensure our treasure trove of scholarly content is embedded in academic programmes.

Reflecting Current and Future Scholarship

We will respond to the evolving needs of researchers by developing and reviewing our collections, including archives, building on our strengths to ensure relevance to ongoing scholarly research. We will reflect current research priorities through the development of evidence-based collection development and ongoing collaboration with other libraries via the IReL consortium. Our responsibilities to the scholar of the future will not be forgotten. We will ensure the preservation of our unique printed and archival heritage and will participate in initiatives for the preservation of online content.

Connectivity through Partnership, Communication and Community

The Vision for 2020

You are part of a targeted and ongoing conversation, keeping you informed about Library services and helping us to ensure your requirements are met. The Library is embedded in your activities, always ready to collaborate with you as a trusted partner.

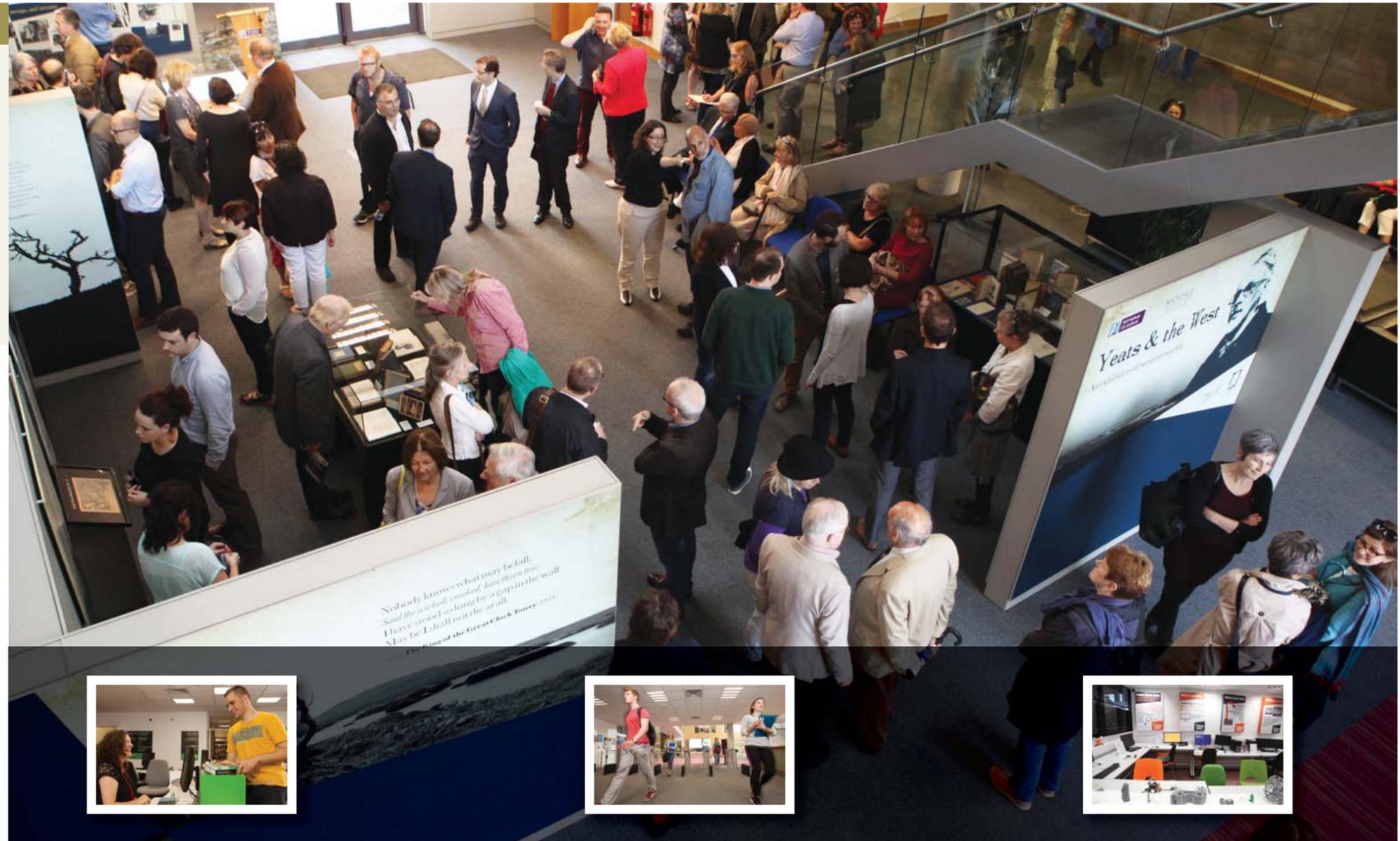
As you use the Library to pursue knowledge, alone or in collaboration with others, you feel part of a scholarly and culturally diverse community. You can attend an exhibition or a lecture in the Library, share or display your own work, collaborate with colleagues or work alone in a crowd of fellow scholars. The Library is deeply connected with the local community through its heritage collections and links with cultural organisations. We proudly support the University's role in relation to the Irish language by our provision of collections and services in Irish.

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Public engagement is a recurring theme in the University's strategic plan for 2015-2020. Situated at the heart of the campus, the Library is very much a place of community for everyone in the University. We cultivate partnerships with others on campus and beyond, welcoming visitors in person to our exhibitions or online through digital collections and social media engagement.

The goals outlined in the Library's 2020 vision document are closely aligned to the University's strategic plan. Meeting these goals will greatly depend on our success in developing new means of communication and marketing strategies that will fully engage our audiences. The Library's Marketing and Engagement Team will use a variety of approaches, and especially face-to-face contact, to understand fully where the Library fits into the lives of its users, actual and potential, across all disciplines and categories.

Awareness of what the Library is doing to enrich scholarship and enhance user experience will save you time and open up new possibilities. There are more communication channels than ever before, but getting attention is often difficult so we will focus our messages carefully. Two-way communication is essential and we will seek to understand your perspective. Our knowledge of what you need will shape the development of the Library, ensuring a user-centred approach throughout.



Connectivity through partnership, communication and community will advance by:

Communicating Effectively

We will seek first to understand, then to be understood, recognising the need for dialogue, listening and mutuality. Our communications strategy will be flexible, making full use of social media but also continuing to emphasise the personal touch which is a major part of our tradition. Ensuring the fullest uptake of all that the Library has to offer will be a particular focus.

Working in Partnership

The Library will take all opportunities to create and develop partnerships to promote and extend the academic and cultural reach of the University. In doing so, we will build on highly successful collaborations. On campus these have included co-creation of stimulating exhibitions with academic staff. Externally, our partnership with Ireland's national theatre has created the unique Abbey Theatre Digital Archive.

Engaging External Communities

We will work closely with external communities in many different ways. These will include welcoming them to events we host, managing and promoting their archives, participating in schools liaison initiatives and playing our part in the University's internationalisation agenda.

Promoting Interactivity

The Library will be a facilitator of interactivity and engagement. We will continue to introduce new technologies and spaces to expand opportunities for students across all disciplines for hands-on experimentation and learning. Locations like our Maker Space will be integral to this and we will enable the sharing of students' academic work with the University community and beyond.

Developing Graduates Who Think Critically and Have Lifelong Academic Skills

The Vision for 2020

By participating in the Library's skills programmes, you are empowered to become a lifelong learner. You achieve success through the development of your core academic skills such as critical thinking, study skills, information skills, academic writing and digital literacies. These skills help you to achieve your full potential during your studies, enhance your employability and prepare you for further research.

The Library has excellent facilities for face-to-face teaching sessions, complemented by a suite of online learning modules.

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Information overload has become a pressing issue as scholarly communications, formal and informal, have multiplied vastly. Navigating the digital information landscape is a particular challenge, often presenting difficulties in establishing the reliability of sources. Multiple formats, paper as well as digital, present themselves, including printed material, archives, data sets and video recordings. Finding, using and managing information effectively are vital productivity skills both at university and throughout a career, but also as a skill for life in a knowledge-driven society.

The University's strategic plan recognises the need for skilled graduates. This is a priority for the Library too, and our Research and Learning Team will make available a varied and stimulating information skills programme. This will involve a broadening of existing coverage to incorporate skills in areas such as open access publishing, digital rights management, data-driven research and systematic review techniques.

Learners across all disciplines and learning environments will have opportunities to extend their investigations and become more confident, focused and self-directed. The Library's skills programmes will further the University's commitment to new students as they make their transition to university study and throughout their academic progression up to and including PhD level where a structured module is already well established and will be developed further. Collaboration and partnership with a range of stakeholders will be important in aligning our offerings with academic programmes.

A new balance of online and in-person delivery will be informed by dialogue and experience, offered at all stages of academic progression and linked to writing and other skills. Our online training resources will maximise reach and access, but teaching sessions will also be presented in person at both introductory and advanced levels and across the entire year, as needed. Whatever the format, skills development will be creative, using a variety of approaches, including online guides, flipped classroom techniques and social media.



Developing graduates who think critically and have lifelong academic skills will advance by:

Offering a Varied Academic Skills Programme

Coverage will evolve with needs and developments in scholarly information publication and communication. Promotion of enquiry and critical thinking will drive the programme and topics will range from accessing, analysing and evaluating information to citing and referencing for academic integrity, and the embedding of digital literacies. Participants will understand cultural, ethical, economic, legal, and social issues surrounding the use of information.

Providing Flexible Access to Training and Advice

The academic skills programme will be offered online and in person according to need. This blended approach will offer choice and maximum flexibility of access. Online training materials will be available whenever and wherever they are needed, while face-to-face sessions will be scheduled as appropriate alongside access to advice on a drop-in basis. Strong teamwork will characterise our approach to answering enquiries in order to maximise accuracy and speed of response.

Partnering with Multiple Stakeholders

We will work closely with academic staff, the Centre for Excellence in Learning and Teaching and all providers of training in academic skills, as well as with everyone who participates in the different components of our programme. The aim will be to align with developments in academic programmes, pedagogy and complementary academic skills.

“The University's strategic plan recognises the need for skilled graduates”

High-Impact Publication of Research, Data and Digital Content

The Vision for 2020

The impact of your research is enhanced by the Library's publishing services. These include advice, training and infrastructure for open access, commercial publishing and rights management. Funders require your research data to be made available on an open access basis and preserved for future researchers to discover and reuse. The Library hosts and describes research data for easy discovery and linkage to and from your publications. We promote awareness of what you publish.

The Library is your partner in digital scholarship and e-research. Our digitisation programme generates new digital content and metadata which have potential for new research, discovery and innovative presentation or use. We work to enable scholars to apply new tools to reinterpret, analyse, visualise, and reuse digital content, including archives and datasets, text and multimedia, made available locally and globally as part of an international digital library community.

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Creativity and culture are increasingly recognised as powerful levers for both personal and societal development. They are a driving force for economic growth and are at the core of 'glocal' competitiveness in the knowledge society. They constitute the essence of place and are central to Galway's branding.

We see an opportunity for the Library and the University via digital initiatives that build on our particular advantages. These include the collocation of collections and research institutes in the Hardiman Research Building and the uniqueness of our archives and special collections in Irish, English and other languages. The quality and diversity of other players on campus in digital humanities, social sciences and data analytics offers the potential for partnerships.

In recent years, digitisation and open access have fuelled a trend for libraries to become publishers. This will accelerate as the Digital Publishing and Innovation Team works closely with researchers to create digital collections for innovative research and learning and widen access to University publications. The Team will partner with others in research data management and in developing vital infrastructures such as preservation systems, identifiers, work spaces, policies and funding streams.

An innovative, high-impact programme of digital projects, leveraging our unique collections and working with local and external partners, will create new pathways to understanding and, through user interaction, collaboration, and global media exposure, help to stimulate cultural tourism and the creative economy.



High-impact publication of research, data and digital content will advance by:

Establishing a Centre for Digital Scholarship

Combining scholarly interpretation with innovations in technology, a Digital Scholarship Centre, developed in partnership with others, will be a locus for collaborative knowledge creation and the discovery of new insights. An appropriately resourced space will enable its users to acquire the necessary skills and knowledge to leverage digital content and technology effectively for scholarly ends.

Publishing Digital Collections

The Digital Collections Repository is the cornerstone of our digital infrastructure. It provides search, preservation and access facilities and will host a growing range of digital archive collections. The repository architecture allows for the construction of applications that leverage our content without the necessity to duplicate it.

Advancing Open Access

Open access publishing is recognised as an enabler of wider readership, increased citation and international impact. The Library's ARAN repository and related systems will maximise open access to NUI Galway's research output. Areas for development include altmetrics, the utilisation of global identifiers for authors, papers and data and the hosting of research data necessary for peer review, reproduction of results and where appropriate, reuse.

“ In recent years, digitisation and open access have fuelled a trend for libraries to become publishers ”

Ensuring Expert Staff, Skilled to Help in Person or Online

The Vision for 2020

In all encounters you meet a knowledgeable, skilled, customer-focused staff member. Help is readily available face-to-face or online through a range of channels according to your needs and preferences. All members of Library staff take pride always in providing courteous and efficient service to you, ensuring that you have an equally positive experience whether you are on or off campus. They use their talents and experience to address your queries, connect you with the best information sources, save you time and help ensure your success. Library staff are supported and encouraged to develop their skills continuously to meet your evolving requirements.

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Delivering on the new agenda to 2020 depends on a range of factors, none more important than the contribution of all members of Library staff. There has been a very strong engagement by everyone in the team to develop a vision for the Library in 2020 and to shape the agenda to realise it. Important changes have been made, characterised by a spirit of collegiality, to align roles and teams with what is needed. Five user-centred teams will work together on the journey to 2020:

Operations, focused on aligning Library space and staffing with the needs and standards of a modern learning and research environment

Collections, ensuring an integrated approach to managing, developing and making accessible information resources in all formats

Marketing and Engagement, achieving a two-way communication to inform you about the Library and to understand what you need

Research and Learning, partnering with the academic community to enable research and develop the skills to thrive in a changing information landscape

Digital Publishing and Innovation, bringing University publications and data to global audiences and creating digital collections for innovative research



Ensuring expert staff, skilled to help in person or online, will advance by:

Investing in Skills Development

We will promote focused skills development at individual and team level, identifying needs and enabling opportunities, formal and informal, online and face-to-face, on and beyond the campus. Staff mobility among teams will be encouraged, as will international engagement.

Attracting New Talent

New areas of engagement require new talents and experience, sometimes only available from outside the University. The aim is to return to normal levels of recruitment activity in the coming years. We welcome also the opportunity to integrate library staff at Shannon College of Hotel Management and St. Angela's College, Sligo.

Living our Values

We are passionate about information and service excellence. Integrity and professionalism underpin everything we do. We are welcoming and caring to all. We listen to our users and put your needs at the heart of service planning. We embrace teamwork, collaboration and partnership so we can learn and achieve more. We are committed to enabling you to achieve or surpass your aspirations. We innovate, embrace change and are willing to take risks. We celebrate the diversity of our staff and users.

“ All members of Library staff take pride always in providing courteous and efficient service to you, ensuring that you have an equally positive experience whether you are on or off campus ”

Making it All Happen

People are the most vital resource in achieving our goals for 2020 but other elements are essential too. These include a phased regeneration of the James Hardiman Library building, an expansion in storage space for archives and additional purchasing power to meet new calls on our information resources and technology budgets. A particular challenge is to fund expanding areas of opportunity such as digitisation and exhibitions programming. We will work with the University to achieve the necessary resources to enable the realisation of our shared ambitions, recognising that investment in the Library benefits the whole campus community.



For further information, and to follow our progress towards 2020, please contact:



NUI Galway
OÉ Gaillimh

James Hardiman Library

National University of Ireland, Galway
Galway, Ireland

+353 91 493712 library@nuigalway.ie



nuiglibrary



@nuiglibrary

www.library.nuigalway.ie

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An Irish language version of this publication is available