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**The Library of  
Trinity College  
Dublin - Strategy**

**2015**

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**2020**

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**Trinity College Dublin**  
Coláiste na Tríonóide, Baile Átha Cliath  
The University of Dublin

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“A library which knows  
no walls save those of  
the world itself”

## Erasmus



Patrick Prendergast,  
Provost

Libraries are fundamental to successful universities. Fundamentally redefining libraries in the digital age is critical for the future success of universities.

The Library of Trinity College Dublin is renowned throughout the world for its unique buildings and for the strength and distinctiveness of its collections. Trinity College has always combined innovation and tradition. So it is with the Library, and the need for evolution and innovation has never been more pressing than now.

Trinity College Dublin is taking explicit steps to define the nature of a major research library in the 21st century. Trinity is asking the essential question “What sort of University will we be, and with what sort of Library?”

This Strategy takes the Library in a new direction by setting about addressing these questions. It is bold and ambitious, as befits Trinity’s bold ambitions. Given the universal reach of the Library - whether physical or virtual - and its impact on undergraduates, researchers, academics and visitors alike, it is one of the most important documents in defining Trinity’s future.

Trinity wants to generate debate around the key societal, educational and research questions that affect any and every university and library, and so will be hosting a series of events through 2015/6 to catalyse the discussion. I warmly welcome broad participation in this programme of events.

This Strategy launches a new era for the Library of Trinity College Dublin. As Provost I welcome how it faces new realities while building on the patrimony of previous generations. It has come to fruition under the leadership of the new Librarian and College Archivist Helen Shenton and I thank her and her team for the leadership they have shown and the ambition they have set for the Library – it will ensure the Library remains one of Trinity’s distinguishing glories.



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# Introduction

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*"All of my memories of Trinity are bound up in libraries", said the journalist alumna; "Even now, when I think of certain writers ... I remember the desk where I first thought, 'oh yeah, I get that'".*

*"I don't use libraries", said the engineer, adding six months later, "on reflection, the Library is where the learning actually happens".*

*"When I was 12, my Mum took me to see the Book of Kells and the Long Room. That day, I turned to her and said that this is where I want to go to University", said the 4th-year law student.*

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Arriving in Trinity College Dublin as Librarian and College Archivist in summer 2014 — via Harvard Library, the British Library and the Victoria and Albert Museum — I undertook wide and deep consultation as a key component of this new Strategy for the Library. During those many rich and riveting conversations, I have been struck by the multiplicity of meanings, diversity of uses and broad range of values that the Library holds for students, staff, researchers, academics, alumni, city dwellers, politicians and visitors.

The Library has a universality and centrality to the University. Its universality comes from its complex plurality of roles: from holding UK legal deposit material for the island of Ireland to ensuring seamless access to e-content to having Ireland's greatest collections of maps and manuscripts to providing study space for students 24 hours a day.

The Library's centrality is symbolised by its location at the crossroads of the campus, at the centre of a cross that reaches out into the city of Dublin in all directions. The Library is on the axis between the technology and knowledge quarter of "silicon docks" and the "cultural quarter" of national memory and heritage organisations, and holds a key, anchoring position on the axis of the "Dubline" snaking up through the city, drawing visitors from all over the world.

As the very concept of what a library is blurs and morphs<sup>91</sup>, the boundaries between a 24-hour bookstore and coffee shop, a pop-up learning commons, a data visualisation lab, a social collaboratory and a library are melding.

<sup>91</sup>[TEDxDublin](#)

So, in Trinity's tradition of innovation, this Strategy sets about redefining the Library. 150 years ago, a brilliant architectural solution to structural and space challenges saw the creation of the sublime, soaring, barrel-vaulted roof of the Long Room. 50 years ago Trinity commissioned an imaginative, controversial, brutalist, constructionist — and successful — new building which became known as the Berkeley Library. Trinity was the first Library in Ireland to automate its catalogue, was the first to integrate Conservation, was a pioneer in devising an exhibition around a single item. So now, in that Trinity tradition, we must innovate — in both the virtual and physical realms — to create the Library that ensures our multiple communities progress and flourish.



Helen Shenton,  
Librarian and College Archivist





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**Moving beyond  
digitisation of  
library content  
to “digitalisation”  
of the library**  
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# A 21st-Century Research Library for the Future

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The overall vision is for the Library to be truly at the core of the Trinity College Dublin community, providing increasingly diverse services, facilities and partnerships to ever-widening, inter-disciplinary academic fields; building on historic strengths and increasingly developing new areas; balancing Trinity College Dublin’s international profile and its national responsibilities for the benefit of the entire community. The uniquely strong, public-facing aspect of the Library of Trinity College Dublin is a key area for development. Resourcing is increasingly challenging. Entrepreneurial partnerships with technology and business, with the city, promotion, marketing and significant philanthropy will be critical to success.

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Transformative shifts are underway in higher education, in research, in teaching and in learning. These range from increasing globalisation of higher education and the impact of MOOCs to increasing inter- and multi-disciplinarity; from big data to large-scale digital humanities; from mobile technologies to the Open Access movement. At the same time, transformational shifts are underway in information and in libraries. These include moving beyond digitisation of library content to “digitalisation” of the library; the development of “library as place, and place as library”; partnership opportunities for capital

and infrastructure development and innovation; new business models of access to content and collaborative collection and content development; the democratisation of collections through digitisation leading to greater emphasis on unique and distinct collections; the need for new skills for information and library staff.

The Library is positioning itself in the context of these major transformational shifts in education, in content and in information.



Most people intuit the intrinsic value of the Library for the University. This document calls out the intrinsic value of the Library at the core of the University and confronts the harder questions of:

- *What is the added value of the Library?*
- *What value does the Library bring to the University's capacity to catalyse new ways of scholarship and to curate scholarly output?*

As access to information becomes ubiquitous and widely available, the value of the library is one of trust. It is a trusted transmitter, trusted filter and trusted advisor. The Library can add value by data mining, by developing discoverability tools, and by facilitating the transformation of information to knowledge through new tools and skills.

The vision is for the Library to be the physical and virtual “go-to” place to learn, to research, to search for and use information resources, to study unique and distinct collections and to showcase the impact of Trinity’s research to the world.

In the physical realm, Trinity has the “wow” factor of the Long Room in the Old Library, experienced by 750,000 visitors each year. The vision is for Trinity to have the equivalent “wow” factor in all the library spaces - where research excellence is manifest to inspire students and where potential industry partners are taken, where serendipitous encounter happens.

The collections at Trinity are a treasure house for future research, teaching and learning. The vision is to unlock

the unique and distinct collections and make as much as possible accessible and discoverable by linking imaginatively across the University and beyond.

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## The vision is for the Library to be the physical and virtual “go-to” place to learn and to research

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This is at the beginning of the new strategic cycle for the University and part of a longer term strategic direction to create the 21st-century library for the future. Given the nature of the challenges and opportunities, it will take longer than five years to achieve; this is essentially a **15 year strategy**. The next steps are a 5-year implementation plan and further work with the University and the wider community on the fundamental issues about “The Future of the Library; the Library of the Future” in a programme of events through 2015/6, including a symposium.

*Given that this is a longer term, strategic direction for the Library, the motif of briefly describing “what this might look like” has been used throughout the document in order to paint a picture of the library of the future. The sequencing and pacing of specific priorities will be determined by a number of internal and external factors*





# The Library Manifesto

## Moral

– We have a moral responsibility to the future generations of Ireland to develop students' full potential and advance research that benefits Ireland and the world

## Intellectual

– We have an intellectual responsibility to create the current and future library in this revolutionary and disruptive time of educational, technological and information change

## Cultural

– We have a cultural responsibility to steward world-heritage items entrusted to our care

## Social

– We have a social responsibility to make the library spaces welcoming, safe, individual and community places that reflect different and changing styles of learning, teaching and research

## Statutory

– We have a statutory responsibility for legal deposit on behalf of Ireland

## Financial

– We have a financial responsibility to contribute to the knowledge economy, nationally and globally

## Professional

– We have a professional responsibility to develop our own skills and talents to be able to achieve the above





# The Next Five Years

The Library is aligned with the University's strategic priorities. Technology-enhanced education, internationalisation, exploring innovation and entrepreneurship, stimulating creativity, catalysing research and engaging with the City are especially pertinent. This Library Strategy should be read in conjunction with the University Strategy 2014-2019.



The challenge over the next five years is to define and attain the next level of a 21st-century research library.

We will do this by:

- *Understanding the evolving, sophisticated interplay between the digital shift and the library's physical holdings and environments and operation*
- *Defining the next level for a 21st-century visitor experience of world-heritage items uniquely in the context of a university*
- *Creating an integrated strategy and diversified funding plan that balances and achieves the above*

Photographer: John MacLean

Over the next five years we will work to several overarching strategies. Recognising that we are in a revolutionary and disruptive time of transformational shifts in higher education; in research, teaching and learning; and in information, our approach will be from the perspective of user and audience. The Library will operate in several dimensions: virtual and physical; inter- and multi-disciplinary and anti-disciplinary; national and international. The Library will be integrated and lateral. It will build on historic strengths and create new areas of expertise. It will operate from a risk-based perspective.

The Library is the gateway and the entry route for many people into the University. The onsite and online use of the Library is changing, expanding and becoming blended, more complex and diverse. The number of public visitors is growing and diversifying.

There is enormous potential for the Library to demonstrate the opening of the University to the city and beyond.

The Library's starting point will be from the perspective of users and audiences. The Library will think like our users, understand our users' changing expectations and changing behaviours as technology evolves, as teaching, learning and research change,

as employers' and employment expectations change, as study methods change.

## The Library will think like our users and understand our users' changing expectations

To understand better internal Library users over the next three years, the Library will develop:

- *Longitudinal study of user behaviour of virtual and physical interactions with the Library*
- *Anthropological and ethnographic approaches to usage*
- *Heat-mapping the use of the collections, real-time heat map of people using the collections*
- *'Tell Us' tool and further feedback mechanisms on the website. Joining up and integrating our approach to all the collections and content, thinking across the collections and content, integrating the collections and content*
- *Identification of specific users' needs eg of international students, online students, to inform planning*

To better understand external audiences over the next three years, the Library will:

- *Explore how the Library impacts and contributes to raising the University's reputation, performance and ranking*
- *Undertake data analysis on the Library's impact (economic and non-monetary) on Trinity, on Dublin, on Ireland*
- *Undertake research on the external perception of the Library to inform funding strategy*

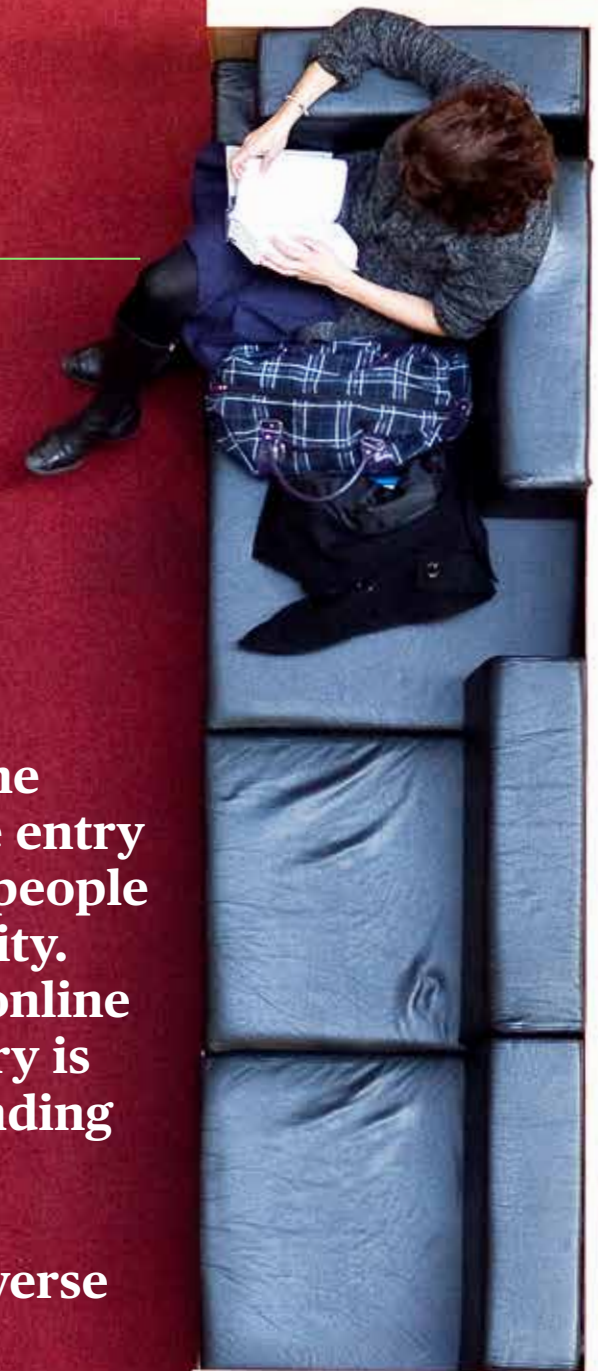


# Strategic Priorities

*We will create  
for the Library:*

- 1 Integrated Space Plan
- 2 Integrated Digital Plan
- 3 Integration into Teaching, Learning and Research
- 4 Prioritised Funding Strategy
- 5 Suite of Inter-Related Policies and Programmes

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**The Library is the gateway and the entry route for many people into the University. The onsite and online use of the Library is changing, expanding and becoming blended, more complex and diverse**  
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# 1 Integrated Space Plan

A key transformative development is the “library as place; place as library”. The digital shift and the virtual space are developing hand-in-hand with a social shift in the use of spaces, library spaces, learning spaces, communal spaces. The Library - virtual and physical - is a place of learning.

## Space

- Enhance facilities in the Library to allow for greater global access to the research collections
- Improve the stewardship of collections through the provision of modern facilities for manuscripts and early printed books in the Library
- Provide appropriate modern facilities for the unique and distinct collections to be used as primary sources for teaching
- Accelerate access to unique and distinct Library content to activate new areas of scholarship

### What this might look like:

Fit-for-purpose facilities for Research Collections, as a study space for using unique material for research and teaching either in a reimagined current location or relocated within the Library

Accelerated creation of digital collections for global study of materials

Developing the Map Collection with a geospatial approach

## Long Room

- Improve and enhance conservation measures in the Long Room; and improve the visitor experience

### What this might look like:

Relocation of temporary exhibitions from the Long Room in order to concentrate the glory of the “most beautiful room in Ireland”

Sensitive conservation measures to the fabric and interior of the Long Room to minimise risk and ensure the College fulfils its stewardship responsibly

## Exhibition (i)

- Develop physical and virtual contemporary exhibitions of Library Treasures as a 21st-century experience of world-heritage items, uniquely in the context of a university environment

### What this might look like:

Reimagined Treasures Exhibition, incorporating improved visitor experience and active involvement with the care of the collections and the buildings, showcasing current research across the disciplines, using innovative technologies including spin-outs from Computer Science and Engineering



In parallel, creating a virtual version of reimagined physical exhibition

### Exhibition (ii)

- Create the exhibition space for student-curated exhibitions and for showcasing Trinity content, research and innovation, inspiring student users, connecting the public with the academic life of the university, linking with Dublin Creative, improving Library entrances



#### What this might look like:

Showcase TCD academic publications and have launches in the contemporary libraries

Showcase TCD academic research with daily “press cuttings” on wall of screens, latest academic research on ‘newspaper’ screens in Engineering, Mathematics and Science, in Health Sciences, in the Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences

A mixture of the “Newseum” and the TCD Science Gallery concept

### Exhibition (iii)

- A staging post and venue for travelling, packaged exhibitions and events linking across the City of Dublin, for events linking with Science Gallery, Douglas Hyde, Arts Collections







### Partnership with the City

- Advance engagement with the City

#### What this might look like:

An imaginative and creative new linkage to the city between the Library and Nassau Street

Café and gardens around the Library buildings

### Integrated Space Strategy

- Advance an integrated space strategy for the Library that works toward all collections being housed in appropriate environmental conditions to PD5454 standard. An integrated strategic storage programme for the Library's physical collections, thereby enabling redesign of contemporary Library spaces

#### What this might look like:

Develop a national treasury of collaborative collection management and environmentally advanced storage with educational and national institutions/partners, with the Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht, Department of Education & Skills etc with an emphasis on the national benefits and shared access facilities

## 2 Integrated Digital Plan

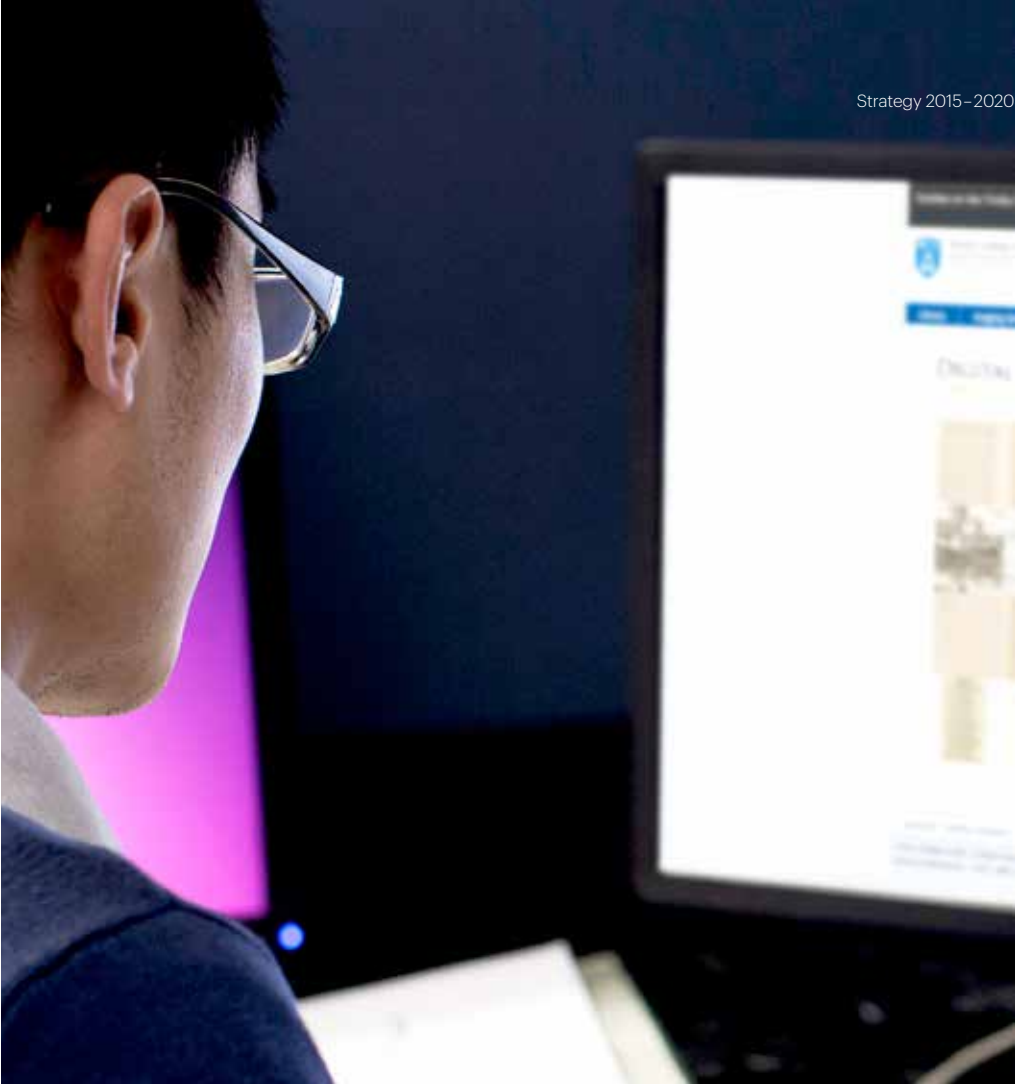
In an increasingly digital world, the ability to support users in navigating the rich and complex universe of digital content through integrative technologies, tools and services, is key to Trinity’s success. Users want to be able to search for any resource in any format with a single search.

“Digitalisation” of the Library, leveraging technologies to enhance and complement services on-site and online, and creating new services will drive the creation of the digital knowledge environment.

Key emerging digital issues range from e-legal deposit to linked-data to Open Access digital repositories to e-journal licensing to copyright.

### As key priorities, the Library will:

- Enable Library data and content to be syndicated and aggregated, making it easily discoverable through any number of interfaces and connected to relevant information from beyond our walls
- Undertake Digital Futures horizon scanning, define future robust and flexible infrastructure
- Articulate the roles of the institutional repositories (intra-TCD and national) and establish a mechanism for sharing resources and expertise
- Accelerate access to digital content and enhanced search tools in an integrated search interface
- Ensure access to UK e-legal deposit and work to extend Irish Legal Deposit to digital formats, in step with the 2017/8 Review of UK e-legal deposit and the development of Irish legislation
- Explore the possibility of Trinity acting as a hub for e-legal deposit, along the lines of the national libraries of Scotland and Wales
- Advance and accelerate the infrastructure for creation and access to digital collections by opening up the analogue legacy collections for global access through large-scale digitisation; by curating and preserving digital acquisitions and e-research output; by supporting big data, large-scale digital humanities, data mining and multi-purposing of scholarly output
- Develop the digital dimensions of Library services to enhance supports for research, teaching and learning



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**Leveraging  
technologies to  
enhance and  
complement  
services on-site  
and online**  
—







- Embed Library services and expertise into systems and tools already used for research, teaching and learning
- Expand the range of online services, and tutorials available to support the reader experience
- Develop digital content and tools to enhance online learning
- Develop digital tools to enhance discoverability of the content
- Develop and carry out institutional digital archiving
- Develop data curation and data retention of scholarly output



**What this might look like:**

Integrated searching across all interfaces

Innovation lab in partnership with research groups developing user-centric discovery tools

A reimagined web portal

Irish e-legal deposit and advocating web archiving of the .ie domain

Digital content and tools to enhance online learning; sourced/created digital texts and negotiated access to digitised content for online students; guidelines/expertise about copyright for the use of external resources for on-campus teaching

Established digital preservation and data archiving



### 3 Integration into Teaching, Learning and Research

Developing creatively in the light of the changing expectations and changing behaviours of students and researchers, the Library will:

#### Teaching, Learning and Research

- Align with the academic priorities, as outlined in the University Strategic Plan, and as they evolve
- Develop formal and effective frameworks for integration based on academic structures
- Establish and deliver a portfolio of teaching and learning services aligned to the University Strategic Plan
- Develop new partnerships across the academic community, for example, Global Relations, Online Education, Research and Innovation.
- Establish and deliver a portfolio of research services aligned with the inter- and multi-disciplinary nature of the TCD research environment (as outlined in the University Strategic Plan)
- Analyse the research needs of the Schools, raise awareness of the unrealised research potential of the library collections and activate new areas of scholarship
- Work in partnership with the Trinity Long Room Hub on joint research ventures
- Support the integration of international students and multiculturalism into the life of the College and teaching, learning and research
- Catalyse research and scholarship by partnering with key TCD Research Themes (see below).

#### What this might look like:

Partner with ADAPT to advance user-centric research project starting in year one (Intelligent Content and Communications research theme)

Partner with Schools on Horizon2020 in cultural heritage

Partner with AHSS in developing a centre of Medieval Studies, focusing on the resources of the Library and a reimagined Master's programme

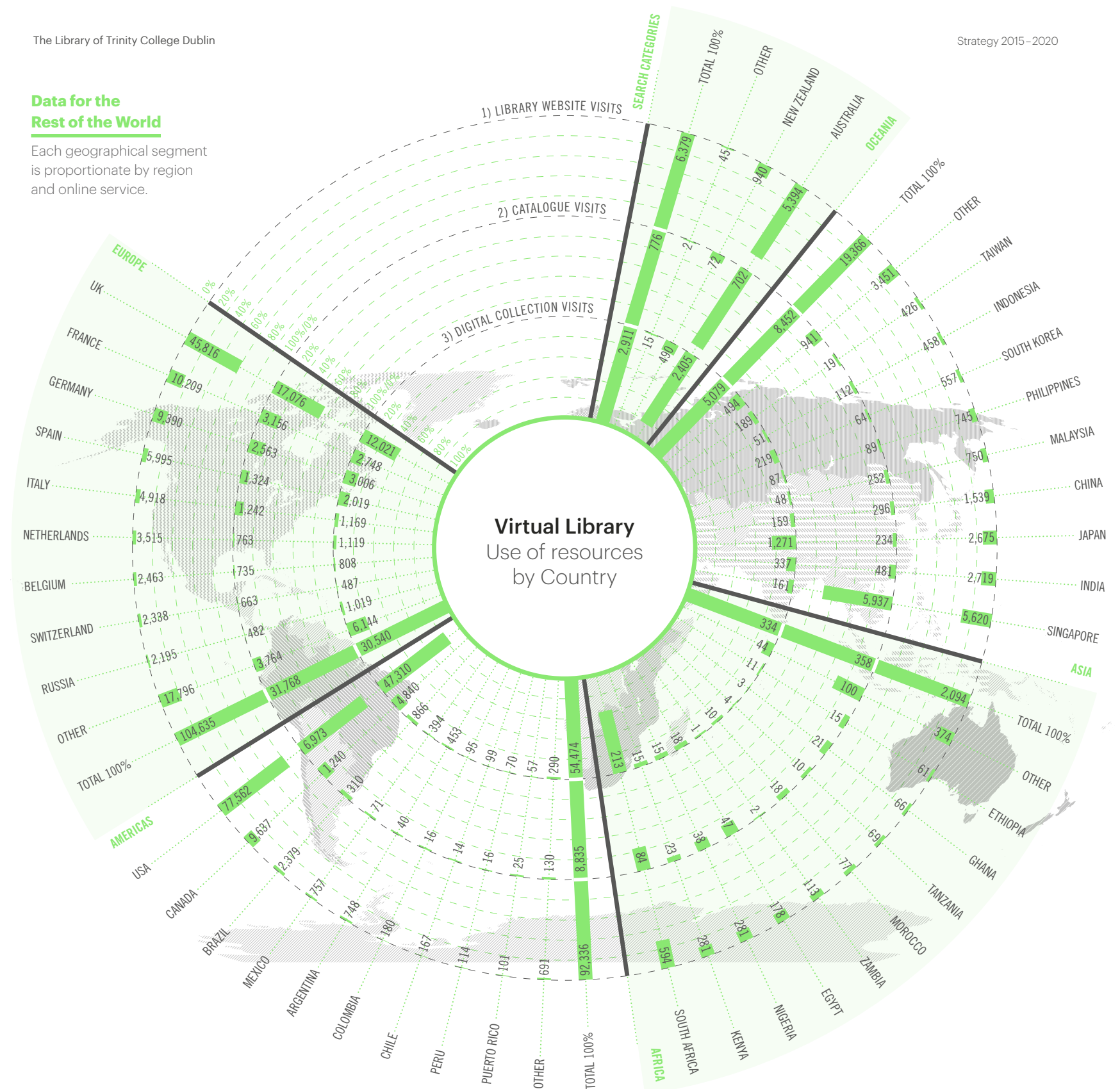
# Global Reach

Over **2,160,000\*** visits to the Virtual Library from around the world

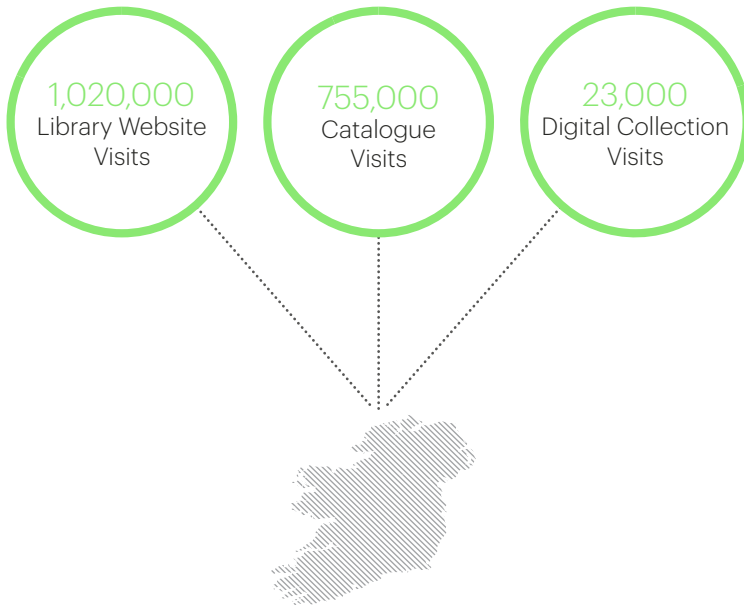
(Figures for year 2014)

## Data for the Rest of the World

Each geographical segment is proportionate by region and online service.



## Data for Ireland







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**Accelerate access to  
unique and distinct  
Library content to  
activate new areas  
of scholarship**  
—

[Changed Utterly - Ireland and the Easter Rising.](#)







### Enabling Collaboration

- Re-imagine spaces in the Berkeley, Lecky, Ussher, Hamilton and Stearne libraries with an emphasis on flexibility in order to catalyse collaboration, to enable different, changing styles of teaching, learning and research, to support blended learning, to support experiential learning for students, to foster emerging technologies, and to provide safe and delightful surroundings for students

#### What this might look like:

“Learning Commons”, zoning for quiet contemplative spaces and for busier “collaboratories”

Student-curated exhibitions as part of revised curriculum

Tech Bar with the customer focus of a “Genius Bar”

Study and social spaces for students

Data visualisation space

Entrepreneur hub as a honey pot for information and ideas for entrepreneurship modelled on the Business and Intellectual Property Centre created by the British Library embedded in City Libraries

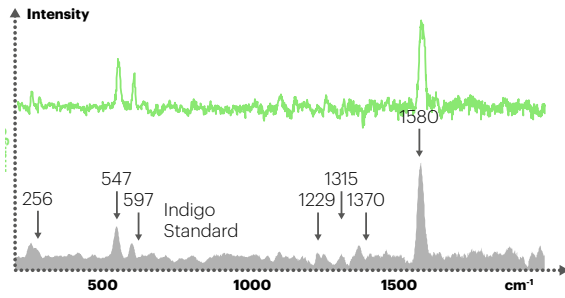


## 4 Prioritised Funding Strategy

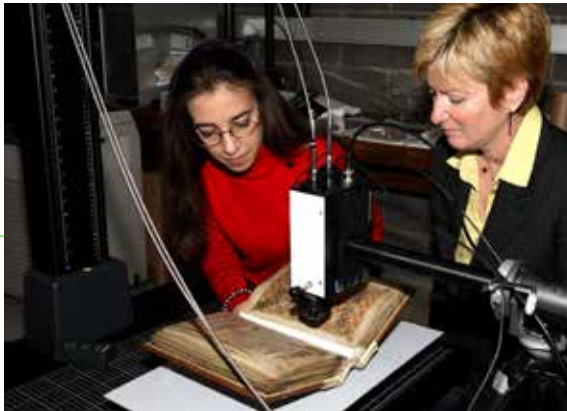
These ambitious initiatives will be dependent on creating an integrated, prioritised funding strategy, to identify new and alternative funds and resources, and to repurpose current funds. Elements will include:

- Development of a major, diversified, philanthropic fund-raising strategy, with a draft 5-year set of funding objectives in 2015, in alignment with the College's overall fund-raising strategy
- Responsible use of funding to support our primary academic mission
- Entrepreneurial partnerships with technology and business (from years 2 and 3)
- University-wide grant funding in partnership for University priorities, eg with Research and Innovation
- Promotion, marketing and profile-raising
- Strategic approaches to the Irish Government (using comparator funding of the other two UK legal deposit university libraries post UK e-legal deposit implementation Review in 2017 i.e. years 3 and 4, and proposing a Collaborative National Treasury to address storage urgency)
- Leverage funding from the University for University-identified priorities
- Target additional funding from grants, awards, nationally and internationally
- Investigate income generation
- Consider workflows and efficiencies in the light of the changing environment





*Above & right) Scientific Analysis of Early Medieval Manuscripts: Colour Analysis of a segment of indigo from The Book of Kells*



## 5 Develop a suite of Inter-Related Policies and Programmes

Given that content is changing so significantly; given the changing roles for the Library in the transformation of information into knowledge; and given the challenges of progressing access, stewardship, content development in the context of transformational shifts in education, the Library must develop a suite of appropriate policies. These are more than business-as-usual policies and more than strategic enablers. They are strategic developments in their own right.

### Collection, content and e-resource development

Building on the solid work to date which defined current collection development, the Library will develop a collection, content and e-resource development policy that aligns with emerging research, teaching and learning priorities in Engineering, Mathematics and Science, in Health Sciences, in the Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences, that envelops all formats, that works across all parts of the Library i.e. collection management and all research collections, that links through to e-legal deposit, e-deposit Ireland and emerging national and international content. This will be undertaken with wide consultation.

The collections at Trinity are a treasure house for future research, teaching and learning. The vision is to unlock the unique and distinct collections and make them accessible and discoverable by linking imaginatively across the University.

### Access development – digital imaging; metadata/cataloguing policy; online and onsite access

In order to accelerate access to unique and distinct Library content for the purpose of activating new areas of scholarship and teaching, a digital imaging policy and programme closely linked to an integrated metadata/cataloguing policy across all Library collections will be developed.

The Library is the gateway and landing point for many different types of people into the University, both virtually and physically. The routes are becoming increasingly diverse. A policy for Library Access will be developed in the light of these changing constituencies.

### Research

Harnessing Library expertise in unique and distinct physical collections, in user behaviour and content, in digital systems and digital developments, the Library will partner in College Research Themes (currently), including Manuscript, Book

and [Print Cultures](#):

[Digital Humanities](#):

[Creative Arts Practice](#):

[Making Ireland](#):

[Intelligent Content and Communications](#):

[Telecommunications](#).

A key element will be addressing the question of the Library catalysing research and scholarship.

Develop a policy for full access to Old Library and Map collections.

Develop data management protocols to ensure the longevity of research outputs.

## Records Management

The Library will contribute significantly to ensure appropriate and sustainable stewardship of the College Archives and carry out the statutory role of College Archives as laid out in the Statutes, in tandem with Records Management and data policy.

## Stewardship Strategy

We will carry out internationally developed methodology for risk assessment and risk management of all collections, and prioritise mitigation to minimise the risks to collections and content and to the estate.

Taking an internationally-developed risk-based approach, for example, for prioritising the care of the collections to determine the integrated storage strategy, the Library will produce an integrated stewardship strategy for the conservation, preservation, security and storage of all formats of collections and content. The Library will apply and be assessed against international collection-care standards for all activities involving the use of our collections including digitising, exhibiting, lending, and research. The importance of disaster preparedness, risk mitigation, and resilience, will inform our work.



The Library will identify our risk appetite for developments. We have a high-risk appetite when taking a start-up, entrepreneurial approach for innovation and a lower-risk appetite, for example, towards stewarding the collections and infrastructure.

The risks for each of the individual strategic priorities will be assessed for impact and probability, together with the overarching risks of this Library strategy, and mitigating factors identified.

### **Key Dependencies and Interdependencies**

The achievability of the above is critically linked to the Library as one of the highest key priorities for Trinity's fund-raising focus and University Campaign.

The reimagining of spaces in the Library and the achievability of the improvements to the buildings, the collections and the visitor experience are critically linked to the University's Visitor Experience Master plan and the development of a collaborative National Treasury.

Underpinning all the above are communications and marketing, both internal and external; and the people who work in the Library and the working relationships across the University and beyond. The Library will further develop communication strategies and skills in partnership with the Communications Directorate. The Library will consult widely with staff, students, academics and external stakeholders through formal and informal mechanisms

regarding the above. The Library will work collaboratively and create strategic partnerships nationally and internationally.

In order to achieve all of these aims, the Library has a professional responsibility to develop individual skills and talents. We are committed to investing in Library staff, to become a learning organisation (in both an adaptive and active sense) in a learning institution, to being leaders in the University for staff development and talent development in order to create the next level of 21st-century research library.









# Alignment with University Strategy 2014-2019

The Library of Trinity College Dublin is aligned with the University's strategic priorities: technology-enhanced education, internationalisation, exploring innovation and entrepreneurship, stimulating creativity, catalysing research and engaging with the City.



## Contributors to the Library Strategic Plan and Acknowledgements

The Library Strategy has been created from policies, programmes and initiatives already underway and from consultation across the University with academic, administrative and library colleagues undertaken by the Librarian and College Archivist through autumn 2014 and spring 2015.





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**The Library's centrality is symbolised by its location at the crossroads of the campus, at the centre of a cross that reaches out into the city of Dublin in all directions.**  
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Trinity College  
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The University of Dublin,  
Dublin 2, Ireland

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[www.tcd.ie/library](http://www.tcd.ie/library)