Join us as we take up the challenge to position the University of Sydney as the best in Australia and a leading institution globally.

This Library Strategic Plan presents six programs to advance the University’s strategic vision and goals,¹ and to create a culture of research excellence, develop a distinctive Sydney education and grow a university culture built on our values.

The needs of our University community drive everything we do, so we invited students, academic and professional staff from across the University to join us for a series of conversations to explore what thriving means to them.² Our discussions informed the development of this strategic plan, and are part of our ongoing program of engagement with the University community.

The Library remains central to the University’s founding mission³ to create and disseminate knowledge and skills, and to foster understanding. Opportunities for university libraries are greater than ever. In a rapidly changing environment, we can redefine the 21st-century research library by anticipating the changing needs of our community and experimenting with emerging technologies, service models and skills. At the same time, we must expand the depth and breadth of our expertise as custodians of information and knowledge, and curate our collections for future generations.

Open to all, the Library is uniquely positioned to connect our University community in safe and inclusive environments. We create spaces and services to inspire learning, spark creativity and foster collaboration. We facilitate knowledge creation and dissemination, and seek to shape the future of scholarly communication and access to information.

Many of the initiatives within this plan are deliberately aspirational. Some initiatives will require significant investment, and others will extend beyond 2020. All will require extensive collaboration with our community to realise our goals.

We invite you to work with us to create and sustain a world-class research library and a University community where everyone can thrive.

¹“We aim to create and sustain a university in which, for the benefit of both Australia and the wider world, the brightest researchers and the most promising students, whatever their social or cultural background, can thrive and realise their potential.” From University of Sydney. (2016). University of Sydney Strategic Plan 2016–20: Sydney: University of Sydney, p6.
²Library Engagement Café events (June 2016).
Vision and values

The University Library seeks to inspire a love of learning in order to advance the academic potential in everyone.

To achieve excellence and engage our community we leverage our information and knowledge expertise and provide an inspiring think space for staff and students. We facilitate easy and open access to information resources and services, and create opportunities for collaboration and knowledge creation.

The Library’s six programs are grounded in our values of inspiration, collaboration, integrity, respect and curiosity.
The Library and the University

The Library’s six programs are guided by the University’s strategic goals. Each program is framed by an open-ended question, to invite discussion. The University’s strategic themes of excellence, engagement and simplification are woven throughout our plan.

To realise the University’s vision to

– create and sustain a university in which, for the benefit of both Australia and the wider world, the brightest researchers and the most promising students, whatever their social or cultural background, can thrive and realise their potential

The University will focus on

– a culture built on our values

– a distinctive Sydney education

– a culture of research excellence

To advance the University’s strategies to

– develop our leaders

– embed our values

– break down institutional barriers

– transform our undergraduate curriculum

– transform the learning experience for our academics and students

– invest in research excellence

– attract and develop outstanding researchers

– partner for impact

The University Library will

– engage with our University and information communities

– develop an inclusive and engaged leadership culture

– champion the university experience

– embed digital and information literacy skills in the transformed curriculum

– influence the culture of scholarly communication

– invest in scholarship infrastructure
We will

– build a culture of engagement with the University community and external partners, as a foundation for the continuous improvement of the University Library.

– build Library staff capability to create a safe, inclusive and welcoming experience for all members of the community, for example through engagement with the National Centre for Cultural Competence.

– partner with the Indigenous Strategy and Services Portfolio, National Centre for Cultural Competence and Campus Infrastructure Services to incorporate Wingara Mura Design Principles\(^4\) into the design and development of Library spaces.

– collaborate with colleagues from across the University, and national and international information communities to shape the development of local, national and global information policy initiatives.

In 2020

– staff and students are engaged as co-designers and co-creators of University Library services, spaces, collections and programs.

– all experience a welcoming and respectful library environment, spaces for “deep listening”\(^5\) and opportunities to connect with people from different backgrounds.

– students and staff experience an increased sense of belonging to the University community. Library spaces are designed to foster social interaction and demonstrate the importance of place.\(^6\)

– library staff are leaders in the development of information policy initiatives impacting the research, higher education and information environment. Staff and students have early access to solutions to enhance research excellence and academic success.

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\(^{2}\) Ibid., p5. Design Principle EE1.3.

\(^{3}\) Ibid., p5. Design Principle EE1.4.
We have a joint responsibility – Education Portfolio, Faculties, Library, and everyone in the University community – to think about the ways that students learn, and look at ways to embed our graduate qualities so that they are real.

We want to equip students with a way of thinking that will set them up for success in careers that haven’t been invented yet. We’re interested in the role of informal learning spaces like ThinkSpace in developing students’ digital skills and building their capacity to adapt to new technology, think creatively and cope in a rapidly changing environment.

Professor Adam Bridgeman
Director, Educational Innovation
Library ThinkSpace launch, September 2016
2. How might we promote understanding across institutional barriers?

The opportunity

Develop an inclusive and engaged leadership culture. Provide a platform to connect a diverse and inclusive University community where every person counts. 7

We will

- engage with the Indigenous Strategy and Services Portfolio to create a University where Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are active, proud and engaged participants in the University community. 8

- partner with the National Centre for Cultural Competence to build a University culture where staff and students are confident and competent in interpersonal situations and intercultural settings. 9

- introduce a “Leading from Everywhere” initiative to build staff capability to connect with colleagues from across the University and lead change from all levels.

- build student peer support networks in Library spaces to foster connection10 and social inclusion across the student community.

In 2020

- all experience a library and information environment that is open to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture, and that actively promotes positive cultural identities and Indigenous leadership. 11

- library staff members identify cultural competence and engagement with the University’s core values as key leadership qualities in recruitment and professional development.

- library staff practise leadership qualities and foster a culture of entrepreneurship at every level. The best ideas for the continuous improvement of the University Library are identified and implemented.

- students have opportunities to develop their academic and graduate leadership qualities, facilitated by the Library’s Peer Learning Advisor service.

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8 Ibid., p10.
10 At our 2016 Engagement Café events, our staff and students told us that they need to feel connected to each other in order to thrive.
12 The University’s values are Inclusion and Diversity, Respect and Integrity, Courage and Creativity, and Openness and Engagement. loc. cit.
3. How might we transform the learning experience for our students and academics?

The opportunity

Champion the university experience. Create contemporary research library services that connect our community, enhance the development of graduate qualities and enable a culture of research excellence to flourish.

We will

– develop an integrated analytics environment in partnership with the University’s portfolios and professional service units. Investigate the correlation between engagement with scholarly content, student retention and academic success.

– facilitate simple and seamless online delivery of high-demand learning resources through integration of library services with the University’s enterprise virtual learning environment.¹³

– enhance access to library services, subscribed electronic collections and unique collections of physical and digital research assets.

– collaborate with faculties to integrate authentic problem-based learning experiences within the transformed curriculum.

– create opportunities to enhance informal learning. Collaborate with faculties and professional service units to develop cross-disciplinary communities of practice within Library environments.

In 2020

– students, professional staff and academics have access to targeted interventions that identify risk factors for disengagement, enhance engagement and retention, and support academic success.

– students get the information resources they need, when they need them. Information resource delivery processes are streamlined through simple, integrated workflows and targeted Library support.

– students and staff benefit from a responsive, accessible online presence, improved location intelligence and simplified access to electronic and print collections.

– students experience cross-disciplinary and inter-professional learning opportunities¹⁴ through a suite of tailored internships and research projects.

– students and academics have 24-hour access to safe and inclusive learning spaces across University sites. Vibrant communities of practice¹⁶ promote social connection, creative experimentation and inventiveness.

¹⁴ Ibid., pp33–34.
¹⁶ Students who were active in extracurricular activities and organisations were 1.6 times more likely to be engaged in their future careers.
4. How might we develop digital and information literacy capabilities to enhance excellence?

We will

– partner with faculties and the Education Portfolio to define graduate qualities for digital and information literacy skills.¹⁷

– collaborate with faculties and the Education Portfolio to map digital and information literacy skills development and informal learning opportunities against the new curriculum.

– partner with faculties and the National Centre for Cultural Competence to foster broader understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander knowledge sources and protocols for accessing and using cultural knowledge in intercultural research and education contexts.¹⁸

– partner with the Research Portfolio and faculties to develop researcher capability in delivering high quality and highly visible research outputs.

In 2020

– graduates are equipped with the digital, technology and information literacy skills they need to manage the transition from study to career.

– undergraduate and postgraduate by coursework students experience integrated digital and information literacy skills training, access to emerging technologies and opportunities to develop their learning at identified points of need.

– students and staff have the necessary skills and competencies to use Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander knowledge sources and settings ethically and effectively in their education and research programs.¹⁹

– higher degree by research students and academics are equipped with the skills, tools and knowledge to optimise the quality and impact of their research outputs and raise their professional research profiles at every point in their career.²⁰

The opportunity

Create a whole of university framework for the integration of digital and information literacy skills, resources and targeted training. Embed digital and information literacy skills in the transformed curriculum.

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¹⁸ Ibid., p13.


²⁰ Ibid., pp23–24.
11 million ebooks and journal articles accessed last year

"The Library has unique capabilities that support our ambition to develop our researchers throughout their careers, and improve the quality and impact of our research.

Professor Duncan Ivison
Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research)
5. How might we shape the future of scholarly communication?

The opportunity

Influence the culture of scholarly communication. Promote the University’s research and scholarship. Explore emerging modes of inquiry to enhance a culture of research excellence.

We will

– lead discussions and raise awareness of international and national developments influencing the quality, dissemination and translation of scholarly communication and research outcomes.

– enhance academic and industry engagement with the University’s research and scholarship.

– promote the visibility, dissemination and use of original Australian scholarship through strategic publishing and distribution partnerships.

– engage with faculties and portfolios to prioritise the digitisation of rare and special Library collections and unique research materials in accordance with the principles of the Library’s Digitisation Plan 2016–20.21

In 2020

– academics and students have access to authoritative information sources and expertise to optimise the quality and impact of research outputs and explore emerging modes of research dissemination.

– researchers and industry practitioners discover University of Sydney journal research publications and datasets via leading citation indices and discovery services.

– Sydney University Press is internationally recognised as a distinctive and respected scholarly publisher in its areas of specialty.

– academics, students and members of the education and research community experience easy and open access to the University’s rare and special collections, in particular greater access to unique Australian research materials.

6. How might we build a sustainable, scalable research library for future scholars?

The opportunity

Invest in scholarship infrastructure to further the University’s mission to create and disseminate knowledge, skills and understanding.

We will

— support the University’s translational research agenda through coordinated collaboration with faculties and relevant professional service units.
— partner with the Research Portfolio and ICT to develop and implement sustainable, scalable enterprise scholarship infrastructure. Provide a suite of tools and standards to manage the discovery of and access to the University’s education and research outputs.
— refine our collection development policies to advance the University’s strategic priorities. Anticipate shifts in research and education focus. Facilitate the acquisition of information resources in emerging research areas and formats.
— develop an enterprise level digital asset management system to preserve the University’s cultural and historical assets and contemporary digital collections.

In 2020

— academics and higher degree by research students have access to training, expertise and equipment to support data publishing, rapid prototyping, data citation and visualisation.
— staff and students have the best tools and services to optimise the discovery of research outputs and ensure their long-term preservation and reuse, and access to a dynamic repository of education assets.
— staff and students experience seamless, equitable access to collections of information resources that meet their research, education and accessibility requirements. Collection development policies provide a simplified framework for the automated acquisition of information resources.
— future generations discover and access the University of Sydney’s cultural and historical collections, and can repurpose significant collections of born-digital 21st-century research materials.
Partnership for impact

We partner to deliver initiatives that further the University’s strategic vision and goals.

Here are just a few of the 2016-20 collaborations we’re excited about.

- Our Scholarly Record
- Research Dissemination
- Connecting Students
- Embedding Graduate Qualities
- Informal Learning Opportunities
- Library as Place
- Unlocking Unique Collections
- Scholarly Content Analytics
- Learning Resources Integration

We invite you to work with us to realise the vision of a University where everyone can thrive.
References


Consultation

People

University Library staff
University Executive
University Executive Research Committee
University Executive Education Committee
Strategy Office
Professor Stephen Garton
Provost and Deputy Vice-Chancellor
Professor Philippa Pattison
Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education)
Professor Shane Houston
Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Indigenous Strategy and Services)
Professor Tyrone Carlin
Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Registrar)
Professor Duncan Ivison
Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research)
Professor Barbara Caine
Dean, Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences
Professor Archie Johnston
Dean, Faculty of Engineering and Information Technologies
Professor Kathryn Refshauge
Dean, Faculty of Health Sciences
Professor Trevor Hambley
Dean, Faculty of Science
Professor Joellen Riley
Dean, The University of Sydney Law School
Professor Gregory Whitwell
Dean, The University of Sydney Business School
Grant Cruchley
Senior Manager, Research Policy & Analysis
Research Portfolio
Jo Metzke
Director, Talent, Organisational Development and Diversity
Human Resources
Christine Tsintarakis
ICT Relationship Manager
Information and Communications Technology

Events

May 2016
Library Senior Management Team Strategy Workshop
June 2016
Engagement Cafes
July 2016
Library Managers’ Day Strategy Workshop
July 2016
Values Cafe, Library Show and Tell
September–October 2016
Library Strategy Pop-up Stations
Connect
library.strategy@sydney.edu.au