Our vision
The University of Manchester Library will harness the pioneering heritage of Manchester to inspire a world of learning and research.
We will broaden understanding and cultivate intellectual growth in our students, researchers and local and international communities.

The Higher Education sector continues to change rapidly, and this presents new challenges for academic libraries. Our first priority is to understand thoroughly the communities we work with.

We need to be in a position to forecast learning and research behaviour, to identify best practice from within and beyond the sector and to take advantage of the opportunities provided by digital technologies.

This will ensure we can develop a service for a global digital society while conserving and interpreting collections covering 5 millennia.

Over the coming years we are preparing to boost research performance, provide excellent student experience, enhance the lives of the local community and attract the best students and researchers to Manchester.

Read on for just some of the projects we plan to develop to achieve this vision.

Jan Wilkinson
University Librarian and Director of The John Rylands Library

We hold over 4 million items including 400,000 ebooks and 25,000 journals
With our students

We will provide for a future where access to relevant collections, excellent learning programmes and inspiring spaces are ensured.

Here are just some of the projects that will deliver our strategy

We will...

- Play a leading role in reviewing learning spaces across campus within the context of the Estates Masterplan, forecasting trends to create flexible, future-proof, inspiring places to study which will be fully equipped with the technology students need.
- Take our innovative learning programme, My Learning Essentials, to the next stage. We will extend the range of modules and courses, both to build the skills our students need to succeed, and to support our academics in their research and teaching.
- Develop a reading list strategy for the University in partnership with academics. Working together we will meet student expectations in relation to the material they most need, how they access it, and in what format.
- Reinvent our enquiry services so that every customer will experience seamless access to expert support from wherever they are.
- Ensure our digital services are intuitive to use and are accessible on mobile devices.
- Contribute to supporting our students into rewarding employment through a new and exciting range of work experience and volunteering programmes.
- Open and lead a vital debate within the University about housing our low use print collections. The discussion will be in the context of the Estates Masterplan, reliable data and our National Research Library status.

We welcomed more than 2.5 million customers into our Library buildings last year
With our researchers

We will forge trusted professional partnerships that will support the University’s world-class research.

We will...

- We will transform the way our customers access, interact and contribute to digital content, in the context of the wider information landscape.
- Develop meaningful relationships with researchers by listening, engaging in conversations and working together to inform our service development.
- Scope a significant contribution to the National Graphene Institute through information management and archive creation.
- Lead on the transition to Open Access publishing, providing all necessary services, including the establishment of our own journal in partnership with Manchester University Press.
- Attract international researchers to the University through the development of the John Rylands Research Institute. Working in partnership with the Faculty of Humanities, and through increased use of digital technologies, we will achieve greater use and enhanced understanding of the Library’s Special Collections.
- Lead the development of digital preservation so that future generations can access the wealth of digital objects, images and emails.
- Transform the way in which our customers access, interact and contribute to Library content embedded within their own personal working environment.

Here are just some of the projects that will deliver our strategy.

Each day, on average, our customers borrow 5,755 books.
Here are just some of the projects that will deliver our strategy

With our communities

We will work together to attract world-class students and researchers to Manchester and open up our collections for the public to enjoy.

We will...

- Use a broad range of in-depth research to understand our diverse communities and how best to engage them across our broad range of collections and services.

- Deliver a spectacular and ground-breaking project, using emerging digital tools, to showcase objects from our unique collections. These objects will be selected and interpreted by ‘community curators’ of local young people and cultural groups, in partnership with University experts.

- Radically review library spaces to stimulate imagination, learning and creativity. Recent successes, such as the Alan Gilbert Learning Commons and the medical Library in the Stopford Building, demonstrate our user-centred approach. This will be exemplified through the re-development of the Main Library by 2018.

- Open up the historic entrance of The John Rylands Library and explore the use of the building to generate revenue.

- Create themed collections to showcase digitally some of our very best and unique heritage. This might be landmarks in science and medicine, the making of Manchester or the French Revolution and its aftermath.

Our communities can access

11 Library sites, 24 hour study space, Wifi and 730 PCs
“I expect instant Library access on the move.”

“I want great quality places for silent and group study when I need them.”

“I need help finding what I need when I need it.”

“I want open access to the world’s great research.”

“I want the world to see my research.”

“I want a Library open to change and new ideas.”
Leading, challenging
and connecting
Strategy 2013-2017