

DCU Library Strategy

2023-2028

A component plan of the
DCU Strategy 2023-2028
Transformation for an
Unscripted Future



Contents

Introduction	01
Strategy Overview	03
Strategic Pillars	04
Championing and Empowering our Students	05
Opening Research	06
Creating Connections	07
Investing in and Valuing our People	08
Developing our Organisation	09

Introduction

DCU Library is the heart of the university. It is an active driver of knowledge creation and discovery, learning, scholarly discourse, innovation, and connections.

This new strategy, developed after a period of significant organisational change for the Library sets out a transformational pathway for our future. It builds on our established reputation for innovation, user-centric services, and trusted expertise.

Our strategy is a constituent component of DCU's Strategy 2023-2028 - Transformation for an Unscripted Future and directly drives and contributes to the achievement of DCU's objectives. It too is developed in the context of the many challenges faced by society both locally and globally - including the cost of living and housing crisis, social isolation, a climate emergency, and the proliferation of new technologies.

Our strategy calls out and challenges us to deliver an ambitious offering to the university community, an offering that enables all at DCU to succeed, and to find their voice in this loud and demanding world.

The Library will lead in digital transformation, open research, digital literacy and maximising accessibility and engagement between collections and users. As a university of place, we will explore and progress the best utilisation of our spaces to support and innovate new approaches to research, study, and learning.

We will strive to address disadvantages in access to information and content, embracing the principles of equity and openness. We will, over the next five years, work to be future ready as an organisation, and a custodian of impactful, sustainable collections, services, and spaces.





Our Mission

To empower DCU's research, teaching and learning ambitions through the development of innovative services, diverse spaces, and the provision of deep, rich, and relevant collections.

Our Vision

To be a library that is vital to the success and well-being of students and staff, one that is at the heart of academic life and actively enables and contributes to the transformation of citizens and society.

Key Drivers

To realise these ambitions, we will work in line with the key DCU drivers of innovation and creativity, empowering and harnessing our collective leadership and remain mindful of the issues of environmental and economic sustainability, viewing our activities and services through a lens of equality, inclusivity and respect for every individual.

Our Values

We share the values of DCU and have pride in our ethos as information professionals. Our values direct our strategy and inspire our operations.

We strive to be an inspiring physical and virtual destination and a community, a place where we enrich experiences and enable creativity and connectivity.

- We support and celebrate a culture and community of openness and inclusion.
- We are collegial and collaborative.
- We aim to be student and research focussed and are ambitious in our reach and our plans.
- We strive for innovation in the delivery of our expert services.
- We pride ourselves on service excellence and develop an environment that is smart, responsive, future focussed, agile and encourages risk taking.

Strategy Overview

Our Organisational Purpose

Mission

To empower DCU's research, teaching and learning ambitions

Values

Student and Research Focussed, Open, Inclusive, Collaborative, Ambitious, Innovative, Responsive

Vision

To be a leading innovative European University distinguished by the quality of the DCU experience, and the impact of our teaching and research on our stakeholders and on issues of global concern

Our Guiding Philosophy

People

Focus

Impact

Our Strategic Pillars

Pioneer a Transformative Student Experience

Value and Develop our Staff Community

Advance our Research Reputation and Impact

Enhance Local and International Engagement

Optimise Organisational Resilience and Readiness

Our Drivers

Collective Leadership



Innovation, Creativity and Enterprise (ICE)



Sustainable Development



Agility



Strategic Pillars

Championing and Empowering our Students

We aim to provide our students with a unique, inspiring, and inclusive learning experience that empowers them to succeed and flourish during their time at DCU and beyond.

Our strategy supports and drives the university's ambitious and innovative curriculum renewal programme, student transversal skills development and associated distinctive active pedagogies which form key elements of the university's teaching and learning strategy.

In partnership with our student and wider DCU community, we plan the transformation of our library spaces to enrich the student experience, support student well-being, creativity, collaboration, and new forms of teaching, learning and research.

We will continue to ensure our collections, programmes and services remain relevant, discoverable, and accessible at point of need for all at DCU and proactively support students at key stages of their academic journey. We remain committed to driving the development of our students' critical digital and information literacy skills, instilling in them the importance of academic integrity, empowering them to thrive academically, professionally, and as informed, responsible citizens.

Priority Actions:

- In collaboration with key university partners and the student community, we will develop a plan for the **phased transformation of library physical spaces**. This plan will include a critical review of our openly available print collections to ensure an effective balance between student learning spaces and high use collections.
- We will expand and renew our educational programmes and online learning tools and resources that enable and support the development of students' **information and digital literacy skills and knowledge**. We will map our teaching and learning interventions to the competencies identified in the university's transversal skills competency framework.
- We will continue to exploit the **library's services platform and digital infrastructure** to further integrate library owned and openly available contemporary and unique collections across the learning and research life cycles.
- We will develop a plan for the **redevelopment and re-design of the library's website** to ensure an effective, accessible, efficient, and intuitive web experience for our users.
- We will accelerate increased awareness and use of **Open Educational Resources (OERs)** in collaboration with colleagues across the university.



Key DCU Relationships:
Students Union, Student Support and Development, Faculty, Estates, Information Systems Services.



Opening Research

DCU Library plays a leading and critical role in enabling research excellence and maximising the visibility, reach and impact of DCU's research outputs.

In this new plan, we will further develop infrastructure, responsive services, training and partnerships that enable and support the transition to open research and reflect the strategic focus of the university's research agenda.

DCU Library is the home of a number of nationally and culturally important unique and distinct collections and archives.

To ensure these collections support and drive research and learning now and into the future, we will develop an ambitious digitisation programme and enhance our digital infrastructure to prioritise the management of research-intensive collections and ensure their discoverability, accessibility, and long-term preservation.

Key DCU Relationships:
Research Office, Graduate Studies Office, Faculty, Educational Trust.

Priority Actions

- We will **actively contribute and lead the development of institutional open research policies and goals** through our active membership of DCU's Open Research Task Force.
- We will significantly **grow our programme of training and support on open research** principles and practices aimed at both our student and staff communities.
- We will develop **proactive research data management services** and grow our support for **digital scholarship** activities.
- We will continue to work with key national and university partners to further develop **quality, robust and financially sustainable open access publishing routes** for the DCU community including a sustained investment in, and growth of, **DCU Press and DORAS** DCU's institutional repository.
- We will **develop a special and archival research collection development and management policy** involving their whole lifecycle, including digitisation and the management of born digital content, identifying and accessioning allied and relevant collections to contribute to research, and maximising access through partnerships such as with the Digital Repository of Ireland.



Creating Connections

DCU Library does not exist in isolation.

It empowers the DCU community engaging with all schools, faculties and professional units sharing our expertise, creating and growing partnerships and networks of opportunity.

In a similar manner, we respect and support the intrinsic value of contributing to professional and other networks and reach out to our professional colleagues across and beyond Ireland.

We are acutely aware of our geographical location, nestled within local communities, close to schools and public libraries.

DCU Library has developed a specific outreach function and will deepen and broaden this role and grow new connections and partnerships.

Key DCU Relationships:

Cultural Arts Office, Educational Trust, Student Support and Development, Alumni Office.

Priority Actions:

- In line with DCU's commitment to collective leadership, we will continue to **seek and identify new opportunities for the library to add value and expertise across the University.**
- We will build on our **successful local community cultural outreach activities and partnerships** and broaden and develop a multi annual comprehensive Outreach and Public Engagement Programme.
- We will expand our collaboration with secondary schools offering innovative programmes and study support and explore growing relationships with the **Further Education** community.
- As a member of the **European Consortium of Innovative Universities (ECIU)**, and Erasmus+ we will develop a Library network and explore potential areas where we can collaborate, share expertise, and support the work of the consortium.
- We will contribute to, and direct activities and strategies, as a **key member of professional networks and groups** such as the Consortium of National and University Libraries (CONUL), the Irish Universities Association Librarians Group (IUALG), and the Irish Research electronic Library (IReL).
- We will support the university's relations with the **alumni community** by exploring the expansion of our engagement and service offering.

Investing in and Valuing our People

Since our last strategy, DCU Library is now physically located on three campuses and with an extensive and sophisticated online digital presence. This has necessitated a growth in staff numbers and expertise in delivering a multiplicity of services.

We will review our structures to ensure they are future focussed and ready and allow us to continue to be responsive and agile in an ever-changing environment.

We are committed to developing and enabling a culture of innovation, belonging and inclusion.

We do not lose sight of the centrality and wellbeing of our colleagues and staff in delivering upon our mission and vision and will continue to directly support and encourage professional development and allied opportunities.

Priority Actions:

- To deliver on our new strategy, we will undertake an **organisational review** ensuring our structure fully aligns and supports our ambitions. As part of this process, we will also review current and future skills needs.
- We will further embed a **culture of experimentation, innovation and professional development**, empowering staff to develop their knowledge, skills, and leadership capabilities.
- We will review our **staff workspaces** with a view to phased investment where needed whilst taking account of new ways of working.
- In support of the university's EDI action plan, and to ensure an inclusive environment and culture, **we will work towards applying for, and achieving, the Athena Swan bronze award.**

Key DCU Relationships:
Human Resources, Learning & Organisational Development, Equality Diversity and Inclusion Office.





Developing our Organisation

DCU Library has grown significantly and such growth has necessitated immense flexibility and adaptability to meet various challenges and ensure continued innovation and the delivery of impactful, sustainable programmes and services. During the life of this strategy, we aim to accelerate the digital re-engineering of our processes and workflows.

We will advance our data analytics and evaluation capabilities to ensure we deliver optimal value and efficiency over the course of this strategy. We will continue to keep our service models under review and refine according to student and university needs cognisant of changing workforce models and patterns.

We will leverage new technologies, digital tools and platforms and continue to develop and innovate. DCU has matured as a university from its origins over 40 years ago.

It is timely and opportune to develop a dedicated DCU Archives Service for the records and archives of DCU and its predecessor bodies both to support research and to collect and protect its organisation and institutional memory.

Key DCU Relationships:

Registry, President's Office, Estates Office, Office of the CEO.

Priority Actions:

- We will **progress a mature and comprehensive digital infrastructure** leveraging additional value from our services, aligning all relevant aspects of our functions and collections and progress university systems integration initiatives.
- We will **seek to establish a DCU Institutional Archives service** to capture and preserve the unique records of the university.
- We will review and refresh a **comprehensive and up to date suite of library policies** and procedures.
- We will develop a **comprehensive suite of meaningful Key Performance Indicators and enhance our data-intelligence capabilities** for collection analysis and evaluation, ongoing service and process reviews, and to underpin effective decision making across our organisation.
- We will incorporate **environmental considerations into our operational planning** and delivery, working closely with relevant university units to reduce the environmental impact of our libraries.
- We do not work in isolation and **will actively and continuously seek feedback and input from our community** as we implement changes to services, systems, and processes.