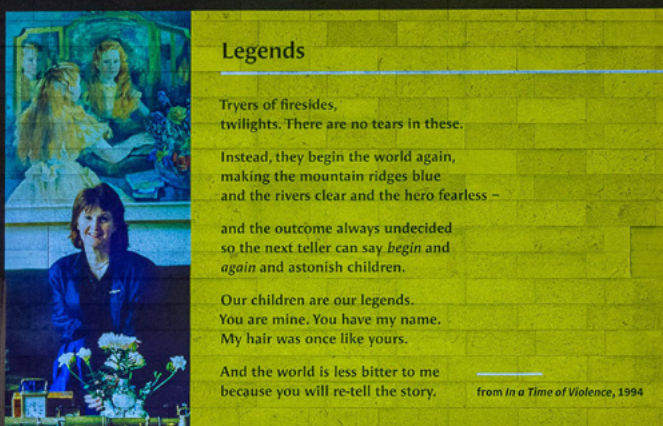


Annual Report 2024/25

Developing the Library's Strategic Direction



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

Image: Outdoor Display on the occasion of the launch of the Eavan Boland Library. The poems 'Legends' and 'A Different Light' by Eavan Boland are reprinted by permission of the Estate of Eavan Boland.



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Context and Overview

Context

Over the past year, half the world's population went to the polls, with consequential seismic political shifts and, as the Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney since termed it, 'rupture' to the rules-based geo-political order.

The Covid pandemic, war in Ukraine and subsequent energy crisis, supply change challenges and construction inflation, the war in Gaza and threats to security have already had a sizable impact on the University and consequently, the Library. Specifically, last year's major cyber-attack on the British Library included the shared digital infrastructure by which the Library of Trinity College Dublin gives our users access to very significant quantities of UK electronic legal deposit material.

The University's new governance structure was constituted and enacted this year. The Library now forms part of the new Critical Infrastructure Principal Committee of Board, which encompasses all the University's physical and digital infrastructure. The Library is also part of the new Sustainability and Environment Principal Committee of Board, which especially resonates with the recent strategic emphasis on becoming a 'Green Library' and creating a Sustainability Framework embracing all the different components and activities of the Library's operations.

Trinity initiated a comprehensive, long-term Masterplan of its physical estate to inform future decisions about the University's campuses to which the Library contributed. Specifically, within the Library's physical infrastructure, two major capital projects

are currently progressing, namely the Old Library Redevelopment Project and the new Laidlaw 'digital first and foremost' Library in the new Trinity East campus. In essence, on the same timeline to the end of 2027, we will be closing one Library for conservation and opening another innovative new Library. The key outstanding issue for the Library's physical infrastructure remains the serious, long-standing difficulty of adequate and appropriate storage for all the Library's seven million physical collection items.

The Library is acutely aware of its responsibility for vast quantities of extremely valuable data, comprising both reliable content of known, trusted provenance and metadata. Within the Library's digital infrastructure, much work was directed to ensuring the robustness of legacy systems and preparations for the next generation of digital systems, with an especial emphasis on long-term digital preservation, and extensive work on a new shared digital infrastructure following the cyber attack on the British Library. As the University grappled with the multi-faceted issues from rapidly evolving Artificial Intelligence (AI), the Library created an initiative to experiment with, and explore the implications of, AI, to support Teaching, Learning and Research.

Following the Trinity Legacy Review Group's recommendation, the Board decided to 'rename and explain' the Berkeley Library to the Eavan Boland Library. This decision reflected societal changes, such as the #MeToo movement and Black Lives Matter, and the current values of the University, since reinforced in the University's new THRIVE Strategic Plan 2025–2030.

The Library fulfilled the 'explain' mandate and created several physical and virtual displays including one on the podium, a central crossing point of the city centre campus, and generating extensive media coverage.

Following last year's encampments of the city-centre campus, Trinity set up a Taskforce on Academic Freedom and International Links, to which the Library contributed. Its findings and recommendations will assist when the University, and Library, are faced with similar events.

Looking forward to next year, Ireland takes on the Presidency of the EU in July 2026, and plans started on highlighting 'Libraries for Democracy', and the sterling institutions in Ireland that are bulwarks against mal-, mis-, and disinformation, and are trusted protectors and purveyors of truth.

Overview 2024/25

Within this external context, it is a testament to the hard work and commitment of staff that very significant progress has been made on the ambitious Library Strategy, within each of the five pillars, Integrated Space, Integrated Digital, Integration into Teaching, Learning and Research, Prioritised Funding and Inter-Related Policies and Programmes, and the underpinning strategic streams of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion and Sustainability.

Within the **Space** pillar, all the major enabling projects for the significant **Old Library Development Project** (OLRP) are now complete. The conservation of the **Printing House**, the third oldest building on campus in which the Book of Kells will be displayed when the Old Library is closed, was finished.

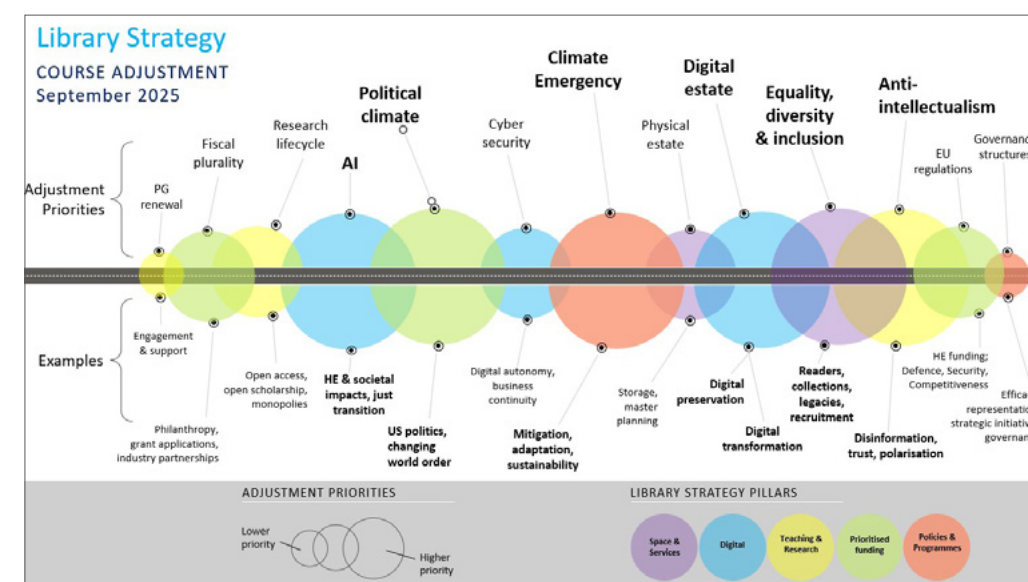


Image: Library Strategy Course Adjustment 2025

Displays of Library collections in the Printing House have been created to pilot the running of the space and to pilot packaged loan exhibitions when the Old Library is closed.

The new integrated design team were appointed, led by award-winning **McCullough Mulvin Architects**, and design proposals created for the Old Library, including the exhibition space, seminar space and study room, in close consultation with the Trinity project team.

In anticipation of the completed conservation works, preparatory work for the reinstallation of the collections back into the Long Room has already started, with project planning to produce **170,000 protective slip-cases** for the books.

Major progress was made on Trinity's first 21st century library, the new **Laidlaw Library**, which is the first 'digital first and foremost' Library and an anchor to the new **Trinity East** campus. The guiding principle for the new campus is that of **sustainability**. The new Library is a refurbishment of an industrial building, facing outward to a busy thoroughfare on Dublin's Grand Canal Quay, adjacent to Trinity's new Innovation Hub. Supplementing the generous donation from the Laidlaw Foundation, the project was awarded an HEA/SEAI **Pathfinder grant of €5.6m** to enable additional low carbon energy measures. **Richard Murphy Architects** in association with TKA Architects created design proposals working closely with the Trinity project team. This was underpinned by the Library's extensive **consultation** across the University with students and staff, and reference site visits to national and international state-of-the-art libraries.

Across the existing buildings, the Library redeveloped spaces and introduced services to enhance the **sensory environment** for students. Other initiatives in support of the Library's **Equality, Diversity and Inclusion**

Strategy included height-adjustable tables and 'body-doubling' sessions, together with the appointment of the Library's first **Educational Outreach and Civic Engagement Manager**, to make the Library's collections accessible to under-represented groups in society.

Within the **Digital** pillar, the flagship **Virtual Trinity Library** continued to open up the extensive unique and distinct collections to anyone with online access. Highlights this year include the completion of the **Selina (Ina) Boyle collection**, the start of the **Michael Davitt Project** and the research phase of the **Arabic and Islamic Manuscripts Project**. A series of exhibitions hosted by the Library showcased the Virtual Trinity Library, including **Oscar Wilde**, the **Book of Leinster** and **Zealous Mercurial Dreams were about to be realised**.

Phased progress was made towards the renewal of the **Library Services Platform**. In parallel, the Library held a **Think-In** with international leaders in Computer Science, Innovation, Digital Technologies and Librarianship to explore alternative approaches to the current market for library systems.

Following the **cyberattack** on the British Library, access to **UK legal deposit e-books and e-journal** issues was **restored** for Trinity's users. The mantra for the **new shared digital infrastructure** between the six UK copyright libraries is '**build back better**' and the Library is taking the opportunity to enhance resilience and autonomy.

A major **Digital Preservation programme** started and the second phase of upgrading **Trinity's Open Access Institutional Repository (TARA)** was completed.

Within **Teaching, Learning and Research**, a 'ground-up' approach was taken to addressing the rapid developments and challenges of **Artificial Intelligence** through experimentation and guidance.

The Library deepened its championing of **Equality Diversity and Inclusion** with Universal Design for Learning and Supporting Creative Practice in education. The Research Collections seminar room in the new Research Collections Study Centre enabled greatly expanded teaching with **original source material**.

An **Open Scholarship Group** was formed under the Research Committee, led by Trinity Research and the Library. The Library was active across national and international Open Access forums, including **League of European Research Universities (LERU)** and within several of the **National Open Research Forum (NORF)** projects.

Within the **Prioritised Funding** pillar, philanthropic events in **Chicago** resulted in substantial support for the Old Library Redevelopment Project. The Library is very grateful for significant philanthropic gifts **in the last year** from **Mary Clancy**, the **Stavros Niarchos Foundation** and **Marion Cameron-Gray**.

Nelofer Pazira-Fisk donated the **Robert and Nelofer-Fisk Archive and Library** of her late husband, journalist and war correspondent, **Robert Fisk**. The Library is very honoured to receive this donation, and grateful to the **Department of Further & Higher Education, Research, Innovation & Science (DFHERIS)** for support towards the vitally important life cycle costs necessary to make this extensive archive accessible to researchers. A collection of **Theobald Wolfe Tone** letters was generously donated by descendants of Wolfe Tone.

The third phase of the multi-year **Manuscripts for Medieval Studies Project** was enabled through generous support from **Carol Grigor**. The conservation of the 12th century **Book of Leinster** was completed, generously funded by the **Bank of America Art Conservation Project**.

Philanthropic support also enabled the creation of the first **Educational Outreach and Civic Engagement Manger** in the Library.

Within the pillar of **Inter-Related Policies and Programmes**, the important new policy on **Open Licensing of the Library's Digitised Content** represents a significant advance in how the Library makes images of its collection items available to researchers and the public. The Library progressed a cross-cutting **Sustainability Framework** and signed the **Green Libraries Manifesto** committing to become a green library.

Tribute and thank you to all Library staff

As a microcosm of the University, the Library encompasses a vast array of activities and functions. Staff in many different roles work to support our current students and staff and to steward our Library content, collections, and buildings for future generations. Some are front-facing, and some are '**unsung heroes**' whom our users never encounter but are vital to delivering knowledge and information to our students and staff. We have made remarkable progress across all strands of the ambitious Library Strategy this year, and I want to acknowledge and **thank every person** for their sterling work and individual contributions.



Helen Shenton

LIBRARIAN & COLLEGE ARCHIVIST

Image: The Long Room, Old Library following the decant of books



1. Integrated Space

Old Library Redevelopment Project

The major conservation programme is well underway of the Old Library's 18th century building. Three quarters of a million of the most valuable and vulnerable collection items were safely transferred, security tagged and catalogued as part of the major decant of the Research Collections from the Old Library in April 2024. The new Research Collections Study Centre also relocated to the Atrium of the Ussher Library.

Integrated Design Team

In line with a review of the campus-wide capital development programme, the scope of the Old Library Redevelopment Project design was redefined in the summer of 2024.

In January 2025, the newly appointed integrated design team started work with the project core team to develop a new plan that would retain the primary principles of the project. These include the conservation and preservation of the building and its collections; creating a world class visitor destination, and a new study centre including seminar space. All within the discreet footprint of the Old Library building, thereby minimising campus disruption and reducing risk and cost.

The design team is headed by McCullough Mulvin Architects, with Cogent Associates, Michael Slattery Associates, and Punch Consulting Engineers. Working in conjunction with Estates & Facilities, Library and Commercial Revenue Unit colleagues, the design team quickly refined three design proposals by summer 2025, which will enable the submission of a detailed version for planning approval the following summer. As part of this work, further refinement of the exhibition design and content has taken place, making use of the new orientation of the spaces on the ground floor.

Protective Slipcase Project

As part of the Old Library Redevelopment Project protective covers are being made for all of the books returning to the Long Room and Fagel Collection spaces ready to be part of the reopening of the Old Library. These protective covers or 'slipcases', cover the books except for their spines and will mitigate the risk to the books from the historic building environment and from dust and other particulates. During 2024/25 the initial phase of this project took place including planning and tendering for a digital cutter machine for the Library, to enable it to create 170,000 custom-made covers over the course of the project.



Image: Librarian & College Archivist, Helen Shenton with Eavan Boland's daughter, Sarah Casey on the occasion of the Eavan Boland Library launch event.

Developments Related to Contemporary Spaces and Services

Naming the Eavan Boland Library

Trinity College Dublin decided to rename its main library the Eavan Boland Library on 9 October 2024. The decision was made by the University Board after a period of research, analysis and public consultation overseen by the Trinity Legacies Review Working Group (TLRWG).

Eavan Boland was one of the foremost women in Irish literature, publishing collections of poetry and prose. She was also an academic, teaching and lecturing in Ireland and in the US. The Eavan Boland Library is the first building on Trinity's city centre campus to be named after a woman.

'It is a fitting recognition of Eavan Boland's poetic genius that our main Library, used by so many students and staff, will now carry her name. Eavan's poetry is well known across the generations, and her outstanding artistic contribution to highlighting the role of women in Irish society is widely appreciated', Provost, Dr Linda Doyle said at the time.

As part of the renaming process the Trinity Legacies Review Working Group (TLRWG) had sought submissions from the public and College community on renaming the Library in November 2023. Over 850 submissions were received by the TLRWG consisting of names of people, places, dates, and concepts which could be linked to Trinity College Dublin and its values of being 'Inquisitive, Pioneering, Responsible, Inclusive, and Collaborative'. The consultation period lasted three months.

In September 2024, after a process of deliberation including consideration of the 855 public submissions, the TLRWG identified several options for the renaming of the Library, with their preferred recommendation being the Eavan Boland Library.

A series of Library and College events took place to mark this historic decision, including a launch event on 10 March 2025 in the newly named Eavan Boland Library, along with Library exhibitions,

an *In Conversation* with poets, and poetry readings, which are detailed in the 'External Facing Events and Communications' section (p.32). An hour-long RTÉ Television programme feature on *Nationwide* marked the historic event together with other media.

Laidlaw Library

In March 2024, Trinity announced it would be developing an eighth physical library and first 21st century library — the Laidlaw Library — as an anchor to the new Trinity East campus. Plans progressed apace, refining the core concept and scheme design. This was underpinned by extensive consultation across the University with students and staff, and site visits to various state-of-the-art libraries. The new Library was awarded a Higher Education Authority/ Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland Pathfinder grant of €5.6 million to promote additional low carbon energy measures. Sustainability is a guiding principle of the ongoing development of the Trinity East site. The Laidlaw Library exemplifies this

approach with 'radical sustainability' at the heart of the project. The additional funding supplemented the generous gift from the Laidlaw Foundation that made the project possible in the first place.

Core Design Concept

The Laidlaw Library will be Trinity's first 'digital first and foremost' library, simultaneously anchoring the Trinity East campus while also building the research capacity of the University. It will be an opportunity to do things differently and will catalyse a radical re-think of the concept of the Library, for the near and distant future. Readers will be given access to 'digital reading spaces' specifically designed to facilitate modern and collaborative approaches to working with digital content. Spaces will be fluid and flexible, digitally mediated and with state-of-the-art technologies. Expert support will be provided to allow users to take full advantage of these resources, making the Library a hub for data science, digital creation and modern approaches to research.



Image: Laidlaw Library External View

In parallel with the provision of spaces and services that will help to catalyse research, the Laidlaw Library will also showcase the current research that happens in Trinity, through a programme of outreach activities such as events, exhibitions and community engagements. The building will have a variety of multifunctional spaces to facilitate such activities but will also be designed in a way that allows the entire building to function as an event venue, with large screens and speaker system providing a focal point for building-scale happenings.

TCD Sense Project

The Library continued to redevelop spaces and introduce new services to support the enhancement of the sensory environment for students across all reading rooms. This is part of a partnership with the Trinity disAbility Service, the Discipline for Occupational Therapy and the Students' Union to cater to a wide variety of sensory preferences. The key initiatives completed in the 2024/25 academic term include:

New Artwork Unveiled in the John Stearne Medical Library

In collaboration with the Robert Boyle Foundation, the School of Medicine and the University Art Collections team, specially commissioned paintings by artist Nuala Clarke were unveiled in the John Stearne Medical Library in December 2024.

The unveiling was the culmination of a project initiated by Jim Malone (Robert Boyle Professor Emeritus) and was co-funded by the Library and the Robert Boyle Foundation. The paintings add a reflective and tranquil atmosphere to the John Stearne space and have been paired with height-adjustable tables and soft furnishings to create a relaxing sensory environment.

Robert Boyle is considered the father of modern chemistry, a significant contributor to medicine. Nuala Clarke's abstract paintings were inspired by Boyle's book on the nature and interactions of colour.

Height-adjustable tables installed across several Library reading rooms

Based on feedback received in the *Library Pulse Survey 2023/24*, along with engagement with readers, a project was initiated in November 2024 to install height-adjustable tables across the Library's reading rooms, including the 24-hour space in Kinsella Hall. The tables provide a simple but effective way to allow readers in wheelchairs to be able to study comfortably across a wider range of spaces, and they also make it possible for readers to study while standing, which has proved to be of great benefit to readers with back issues.

Body-doubling sessions

In partnership with the Trinity disAbility Service, the Library opened up its main training space in the Eavan Boland Library from September 2024 for regular 'body doubling' sessions. A 'body double' is a term created by ADHD coach, Linda Anderson. It taps into multiple scientific theories that describe the benefits of having someone working alongside you, increasing productivity and focus, especially as they relate to task initiation and completion. The sessions were primarily aimed at students who experience procrastination or difficulty initiating a task and sustaining attention when engaging in study/assignments. The training room space was specially configured for each session to cater to a variety of study activities. Library staff checked in on a regular basis to provide additional support and structure. The sessions will be expanded for the 2025/26 academic term.

Developments in Reading Room Services

Extending the Click & Collect service to reading room collections

Academic libraries continue to navigate evolving user expectations and the realities of managing large print collections. During the Covid-19 pandemic, many libraries, including the Library of Trinity College Dublin, introduced Click & Collect services for collections held onsite in the reading rooms, enabling readers to remotely request materials and pick them up from a Library service desk. Once the pandemic restrictions were lifted, these services were suspended across most institutions due to resourcing constraints. In response to demand, the Library developed a new version of the Click & Collect service in summer 2025, allowing readers to place requests from storage but also from collections in the reading room for pick-up at their chosen service desk location. A key rationale for this service was to offer an alternative to the traditional practice of a reader having to use and understand the Library's classification system to locate books within the physical building spaces, which some readers found challenging.



Image: New artwork by artist, Nuala Clarke in the Stearne Library

Image: Digitisation of the Library Collections



2. Integrated Digital

Virtual Trinity Library and Digital Content Creation Programme

The Virtual Trinity Library programme is opening up the Library's unique and distinct collections, and continued to expand in 2024/25 with the addition of substantial digitised content. The multi-year initiative is cataloguing, conserving, digitising and researching the Library's collections making them accessible to a global audience, from school children to scholars. Approximately, 1,800 digitised collection items were added to Digital Collections, comprising over 20,000 images. Highlights include the completion of the Library's extensive Selina (Ina) Boyle collection, with its wide array of handwritten notated music by the Irish composer (1889–1967). The digitisation strand of the Michael Davitt Project (1846–1906), involving the founder of the Irish National Land League started with the appointment of the project photographer in November 2024. The Davitt papers are one of the most heavily used historic collections in the Library. A significant number of notebooks, diaries, as well as a large volume of telegrams were added to Digital Collections forming part of Michael Davitt's papers during this period.

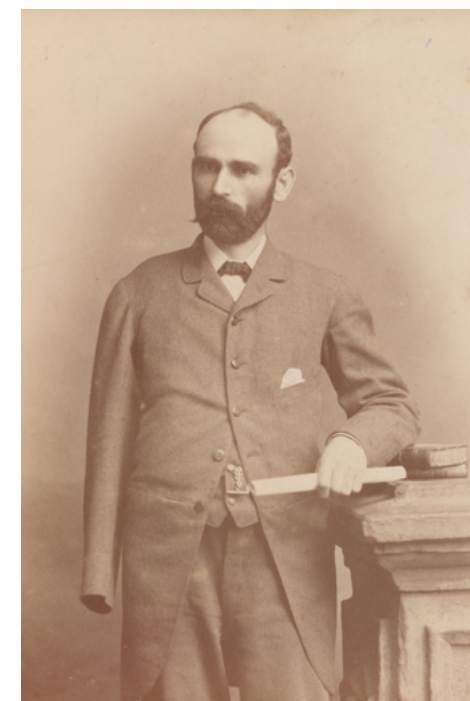


Image: Portrait of Michael Davitt



Image: Qur'an from India (TCD MS 1542)

In 2025, a project started to develop a deeper understanding of the Library's collection of Arabic and Islamic Manuscripts. There are approximately 80 manuscripts covering a wide range of subjects, such as texts on medicine, law, and astrology. The earliest Koran in the collection was written in India circa 1420. The Project Research Fellow commenced exploratory work into the content, context and provenance of this collection in July 2025. A wider project team will be recruited to complete the cataloguing, conservation, digitisation and research work associated with this project.

The 11th century Welsh illuminated manuscript, the *Ricemarch Psalter* featured in a BBC Wales programme *Cynefin*, as part of the planned digitisation of the precious work. The *Book of Armagh* containing the earliest copy of Saint Patrick's *Confessio*

attributed to the saint's own authorship, featured in a BBC documentary *Saint Patrick: Born in Britain, Made in Ireland*.

In a series of exhibitions hosted by the Library there was substantial public engagement and media promoting the Virtual Trinity Library. They included the exhibition *Oscar Wilde: from Decadence to Despair*; an exhibition on new acquisitions and donations to the Library Collections, *Zealous mercurial dreams were about to be realised*; and an exhibition on the *Book of Leinster*, following the three-year conservation of the twelfth century manuscript. They are detailed in the External Facing Events and Communications (p.32).

The Library's capacity to efficiently service requests from researchers for digitised images of the Library's unique and distinct materials has been augmented. and over 4,000 new images processed.

The Library also partnered with a commercial provider, the Irish Newspaper Archives (INA), which hosts over 180 digitised and born-digital titles of journals and newspapers from the island of Ireland and beyond. INA secured the copyright permission to scan the paper issues of the *Sunday Business Post* (later renamed the *Business Post*) from its first issue in 1989–2017, after which date, born-digital copies were available. Trinity's Santry Book Repository hosted an INA employee and their newspaper scanning equipment to digitise over 100,000 pages. The Library received the digital files for future use. The (*Sunday Business Post*) will be added to the INA platform, for which IReL (the Irish Research eLibrary) and Trinity have a subscription.

Preparing for the Next Generation of Digital Systems

The Library successfully upgraded legacy systems, migrated servers, and introduced new measures to strengthen resilience — as detailed below. The Library is in a good position for planning upcoming renewals of software and hardware, for progressing digital preservation solutions, and for designing the next generation of its digital systems, aiming for further integration, efficiencies, resilience, and service improvements.

Cybersecurity

The Library continued to strengthen its cybersecurity resilience, with special emphasis on business continuity preparedness, in addition to disaster recovery scenarios. Significant time was allocated to surveying the Library's knowledge estate and to identify data sets critical to operations. The survey recorded those assets which were ready for capture, and those which required project work to align with business continuity requirements. The methodology for the survey, and context for this business continuity planning was presented to the Consortium of European Research Libraries (CERL) Security Summer School 2025 held in Dublin.

Library Services Platform: Update

A project to renew the Library Services Platform, the Library's central nervous system, started in late 2023. Following an initial procurement exercise and a new institutional procurement policy, the Library reviewed the available options and designed a three-tiered approach to ensure continuity and enhance capabilities. Tier One, the database and back-office system, Sierra, was upgraded and migrated to new servers by August 2025.

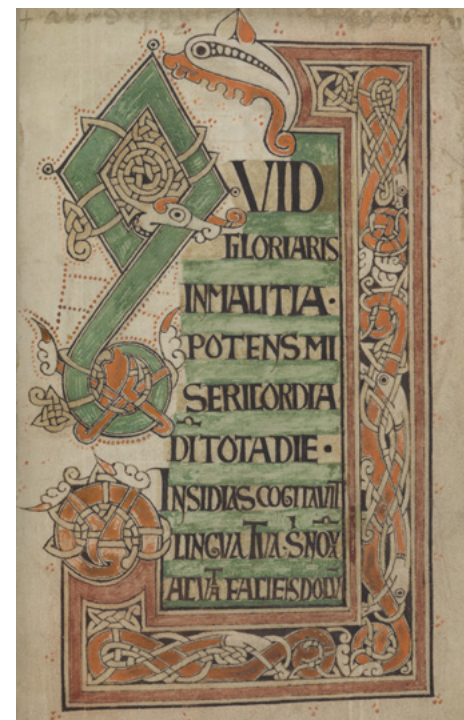


Image: Ricemarch Psalter (TCD MS 50 fol 76r)

In Tier Two, the Library's main catalogue interface replacement of Stella Search was launched in September. Tier Three is an Inventory Management System to improve collection security and workflow efficiency. It is scheduled for 2025/26.

In June 2025, the Library organised a think-in with leaders in Computer Science, Innovation, Digital Technology, and Librarianship from Trinity and abroad. Opened by the Provost, Dr Linda Doyle the group deliberated as to how Trinity should best respond to the vendor-driven, increasingly consolidated market for library systems. The group encouraged the Library to explore a twin track approach, forging new research partnerships and taking advantage of new technologies to prototype innovative modules, as component parts of a new system, or as enhancements to existing ones.

UK E-Legal Deposit: Update

Due to the severity of the 2023 cyberattack on the British Library, its online services could not be restored without their complete replacement — including access to the UK e-legal deposit collection shared with Trinity and the other four Legal Deposit Libraries (the National Libraries of Scotland and Wales, and Cambridge University Library, and Bodleian Libraries, Oxford). The digital files of the e-books and e-journals had to be assessed to ensure they were both intact and unaffected by the cyberattack, which was confirmed by the end of 2024. The content was then transferred to new hosting in MS Azure cloud services and work started to

design an access infrastructure. The mature version, with extensive accessibility and other improvements, was scheduled for implementation from October 2025.

Most mainstream e-books and e-journal issues published since the cyberattack were held by commercial partners until the Legal Deposit Libraries were ready to collect them. In August 2025, the Libraries started a project to develop a deposit portal, focusing on small publishers and publications most at risk of disappearing. This followed a public tender and the appointment of HighWire, a provider of scholarly publishing services.

Work to restore access to the UK Web Archive also started. Due to the size of the archive and the complex architecture of its components, it was projected to take longer than the e-books and e-journals. Harvesting the UK web domain, via generic crawls and targeted collecting for curated themes, continued thanks to interim solutions rapidly deployed after the cyberattack.

TARA: Update

The second phase of a major upgrade project to Trinity's Open Access Institutional repository (TARA) was completed successfully by August 2025. The underlying open-source software was upgraded to DSpace 8.1, and the system was migrated to new servers. As part of this work, eDeposit Ireland was separated from TARA. eDeposit Ireland is the Irish digital repository for Irish electronic Open Access publications managed by the Library.

eDeposit Ireland Development

Set up in 2014 within the TARA repository, with its own user interface, the eDeposit Ireland collections had outgrown their host with over 21,000 publications by 2025. Work commenced in summer 2025 to migrate eDeposit Ireland to a stand-alone repository. The Open Repository platform by Atmire was selected, offering a continuation of the DSpace system, as well as a fully managed cloud-based service.

Digital Preservation

Following the appointment of the new Digital Preservation Librarian in November 2024, work started on two key enablers for a fully operational digital preservation programme. A Library Digital Preservation Policy was drafted, with consultations and governance submissions to Board scheduled for 2026. Secondly, a digital preservation system from the company Preservica was procured and deployed in spring 2025 for a two-year pilot to gain practical experience, test security models, trial workflows and provide secure and configurable user access to born-digital, archival assets. The lessons learned will inform the detailed technical and administrative requirements for a full-scale, long-term system.

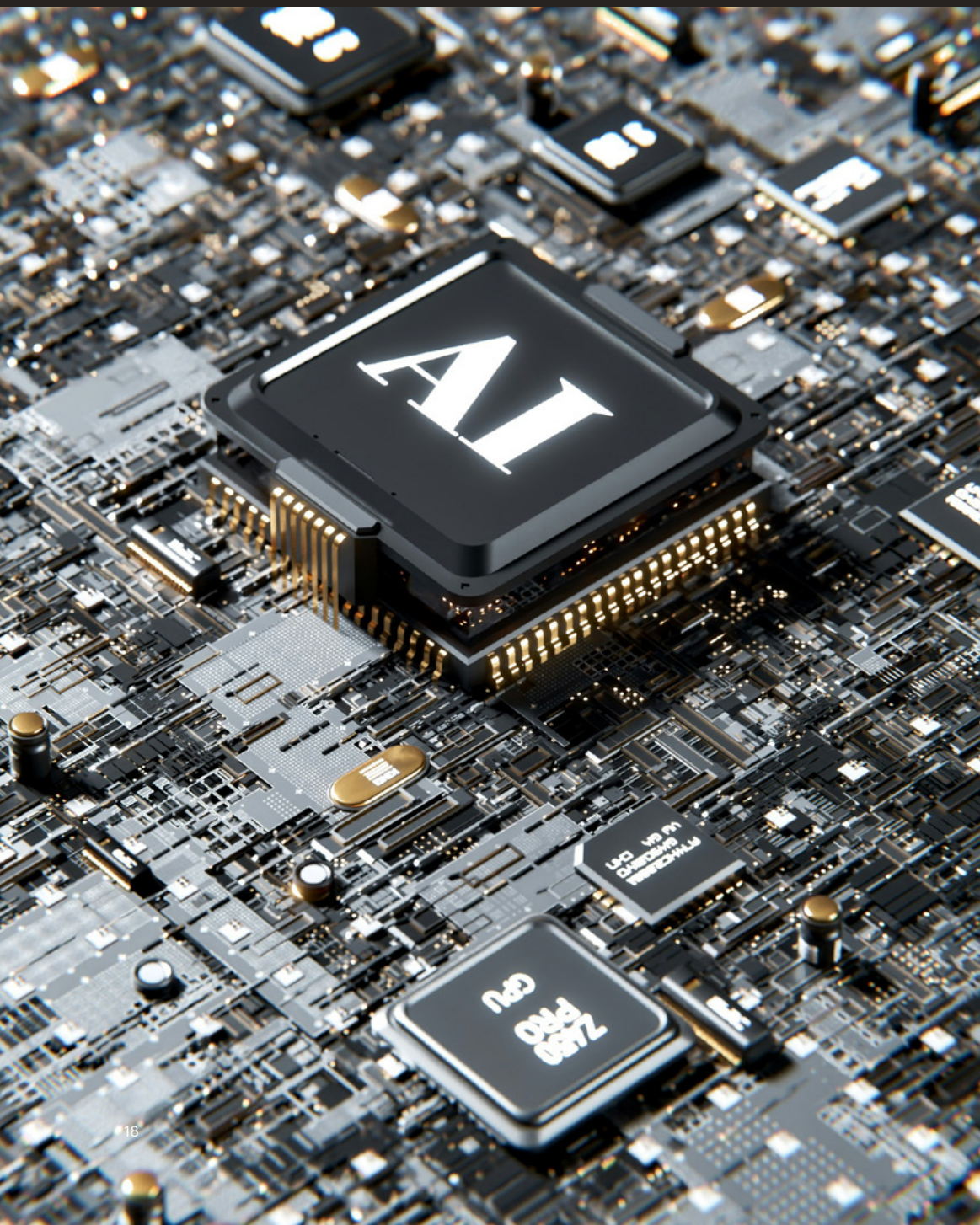
IReL: Update

The Irish Research e-Library (IReL), a consortium funded directly by the Higher Education Authority and the Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science to provide e-resources to Irish universities, consolidated its new governance structure and its strategic foundation. IReL published a new mission statement, as well as new negotiation principles, confirming IReL's key role for Ireland's access to, and participation in, the 'global scholarly network of trusted quality published information', as well as its significant contributions to shifting this network towards open access.

The IReL office appointed a new post of Open Access Monitor Officer and moved to new premises in Maynooth University. It built on its portfolio of open access agreements, strengthening the 'Subscribe to Open (S2O)' model. S2O does not rely on author-facing fees, such as article-processing charges (APCs); instead, once a sustainable threshold of subscriptions is reached the publisher releases all journal issues published in that year as open access. The experience in Trinity with managing APCs for the IReL-negotiated 'transformative' publisher agreements confirms the benefits of S2O.

The IReL office also examined the non-IReL subscriptions of its members, as well as where their researchers publish. It found little overlap between subscriptions, confirming that IReL fulfilled its role well as provider of the scholarly information resources needed nationally.

Image: Image by Igor Omilae (Unsplash)



3. Integration into Teaching, Learning and Research

Navigating Artificial Intelligence

Generative Artificial Intelligence Student Workshops

As the University continued to grapple with the rapidly evolving and ethically fraught world of Artificial Intelligence (AI) and in anticipation of the publication of the College Statement on Artificial Intelligence and Generative AI (GenAI) in Teaching, Learning, Assessment & Research, the Library recognised the need to create a space for discussion and awareness raising about GenAI for students. With guidance from Dr Abeba Birhane, founder of the AI Accountability Lab and in collaboration with the Students' Union and the Student Learning Development service, the Library's Teaching & Research Support team developed two pilot participative workshops. The workshop, *Demystifying GenAI* provided a brief history of GenAI, how it works, who is behind it, and how it affects studies and society, while another workshop, *Applying GenAI* provided a safe space for students to test and critically evaluate GenAI to ascertain its value for learning.

A Library Guide on Acknowledging the Use of Generative AI

To augment the guidance outlined in Trinity's Generative Artificial Intelligence (Gen AI) Hub, and in consultation with the Centre for Academic Practice, the Library developed a Library Guide on acknowledging the use of GenAI.

This guidance includes considerations for using GenAI in study and research and practical guidance on how to cite and reference the use of GenAI appropriately. In early 2025, the University permitted the use of Gen AI for teaching and research, once it was acknowledged and appropriately cited, as per the Library guidelines.



Image: In recognition of her work designing the *Demystifying GenAI* workshop, the then Science and Health Science Librarian, Jessica Leonard was awarded a College Sustainability Leadership award for her work in developing a series of talks and workshops on the geopolitics, ethics and global heating of GenAI. The Students' Union also awarded the Deputy Head of Readers Services (Teaching & Research Support & User Experience) Siobhán Dunne an honorary membership of the Students' Union for her instrumental role in developing GenAI workshops.

AI Working Group for Library Staff

The findings of a 2024 survey by the Consortium of National and University Libraries (CONUL) Teaching and Learning group found that 78% of respondents believed that AI was the number one challenge which necessitated training for Library staff. In addition, the release in early 2025 of the College Statement on Artificial Intelligence and Generative AI in Teaching, Learning, Assessment & Research prompted the Library to evaluate approaches to AI adoption for both students and Library staff. An AI Working Group was established in March 2025 as a space for Library staff to investigate, experiment, discuss and evaluate responsible approaches to AI.

The Working Group focused on AI exploration under two parallel workstreams: Cataloguing and Metadata and Teaching and Research Support. This expands the workshops delivered in 2024 and has facilitated the Metadata team to experiment with specific AI use cases and tools.

Recognising the need for all staff to engage with and learn about AI, the working group hosted a series of expert speaker talks for Library staff in summer 2025 including Dr Andrew Cox of Sheffield University and Johan Philips, Head of Nexus Research Data Management (RDM) Leuven University.

Championing Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Staff Training

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) are key themes in Trinity's Strategic Plan and the Library's Strategy. One of the primary strategic goals is to foster an ever more diverse and inclusive student community.

In response to the findings of the *Library Life Pulse* survey, the Library undertook several initiatives to improve staff training in, and awareness of, the challenges faced by readers with disabilities. Firstly, a survey of students with active LENS (Learning Educational Needs Summary) reports showed that students with disabilities were keen to see improved communication and interactions with staff across all libraries.

Secondly, a dedicated focus group, co-organised with the Trinity disAbility Hub provided an opportunity to improve understanding of the lived experience of readers.

Thirdly, a specially designed Disability Awareness training event was attended by Library staff from frontline services and Library guard teams across all Library sites. The use of personas and importantly, the participation of students with diverse needs who shared their student journeys, provided Library staff with an opportunity to increase their understanding of hidden disability, intersectionality and the power of empathy.

Universal Design for Learning

An Evaluation of the Trinity Inclusive Curriculum (Trinity-INC)

Trinity Inclusive Curriculum (Trinity-INC), which was in operation for five years, strived to embed the principles of Universal Design for Learning (UDL) across all curricula in the University including both the 'intended educational experience' that takes place in the lecture theatre or laboratory and the 'hidden curriculum', the learning experience that takes place in the Library, or outside of the classroom.

In late 2024 a decision was taken by College to mainstream the activities of Trinity-INC within the existing structures and activities of the University. The Library was invited to represent professional services in an evaluation of Trinity INC. The evaluation report noted a commitment in the Library Strategy to EDI principles, and a series of actions informed by Trinity-INC and the Library's *Library Life Pulse* survey.

The third international Universal Design for Learning (UDL) Symposium *Changing Mindsets, Changing Practice* took place in Maynooth University in September 2025 and included a Trinity panel among whom were Library representatives who gave a series of presentations on Trinity's Inclusive Curriculum work.

Supporting Creative Practice in Education

Drama in Education Summer School

Drama is a highly effective teaching and learning methodology, shown to operate successfully in formal and non-formal educational settings. In July 2025 a Drama Summer School, part of the Master's in Education programme, included a Library research skills workshop for incoming students. The workshop focused on critical readings in drama in education and included distribution of a comprehensive reading list prior to the start of formal studies by the students.



Image: Education Librarian, Geraldine Fitzgerald with students at the Education Summer School



Image: Students of the MPhil in Children's Literature view the Pollard Collection in the Research Collections Study Centre

New Digital Acquisitions

A key strategic question in modern library collection development and provision of information is whether to pay annual subscriptions to large bodies of content or to purchase targeted content. There is increasing recognition of the long-term advantages of ownership and control that comes with outright purchases (though mitigated by licence terms)—as shown in a report for Arcadia Fund, *The Preservation of Knowledge in the Digital Age* (September 2024).¹

The Library decided not to continue its subscription to the large e-book package (initially intended as compensation for the loss of access to UK e-legal deposit). This subsequently supported the Library's acquisition of several digital archives, including: *Times Literary Supplement* (1902–2019); *Country Life* (1897–2005),

the medieval prose module of *Oxford Scholarly Editions Online*; and two modules of Gale Cengage's *Archives of Sexuality & Gender* relating to 20th century feminist and LGBTQ organisations worldwide.

Research Collections Study Centre

The newly opened Research Collections seminar room in the Research Collections Study Centre now situated in the Ussher Library has made an enormous difference to the capacity for teaching with collections in a variety of undergraduate and MPhil programmes. Coupled with the creation of a new position of Services and Liaison Librarian in Research Collections, services have been updated to support this unique opportunity for Trinity to offer a fully blended learning experience with original source material. As a result, there has been a substantial increase in use since 2023/24.

Open Scholarship Developments

Trinity put in motion two significant structural changes to better advance Open Scholarship and support researchers. Firstly, following an external review of the unit for Research Informatics Systems and Services in June 2024, the unit's functions and staff were divided between Trinity Research and the Library, with a developer post located in IT Services. Strategic ownership of the Research Support System, as well as metrics for assessment and rankings, was assigned to Trinity Research. Strategic ownership of the institutional repository, TARA, as well as open access transformation, was assigned to the Library. This restructure was completed by summer 2025 and the Library and Trinity Research continue to work closely together.

Secondly, the Research Committee formed a new sub-committee, the Open Scholarship Group. Chaired by the Associate Dean of Research with responsibility for Open Scholarship and supported by the Director of Research and the Head of Content Management & Open Scholarship as Co-Deputy Chairs, the Group had its inaugural meeting in January 2025. The Group identified two areas of priority work: the development of Trinity's action plan for the Coalition for Advancing Research Assessment (CoARA); and the revision of Trinity's 2010 Open Access Publishing Policy. This work will be carried into 2026.

Throughout the year, Library staff contributed to national and international Open Scholarship initiatives and networks, including the League of European Research Universities (LERU) Information and Open Access Policy Group, and many of the projects funded by the National Open

Research Forum (NORF). For example, the Library became a founding member of the new Open Repositories Ireland (ORI) network at its launch in Galway in December 2024. In the summer of 2025, NORF opened a funding round for existing projects to translate their achievements into long-term, sustainable structures. Trinity participated in bids for Diamond Capacity Hub Ireland, Open Repositories Ireland, and Training for Open Research in an Irish Context (TROPIC).

National Open Research Forum (NORF) funded Open Health Research Ireland Network (OHRIN)

In September 2024, the NORF-funded Open Health Research Ireland Network (OHRIN) project moved to Trinity as its institutional home. Co-led by the Library and HSE National Quality and Patient Safety Directorate, the project brings together a coalition of partners, including the Irish College of General Practitioners (ICGP). The project aims to support Irish health and social care practitioners who conduct research outside of academic structures and face financial barriers to publish open access, not being covered by the IReL deals. To address these inequalities, the planned Open Health Research Ireland Network (OHRIN) will provide a peer support network for this researcher group. In addition, the project plans to establish a diamond open access journal to provide a route for these unaffiliated researchers to publish in an open format. An Open Health Research Engagement Officer was appointed in July 2025 to manage the project to a successful conclusion by mid-2026.

¹ <https://arcadia-fund.files.svdcn.com/production/The-Preservation-of-Knowledge-in-the-Digital-Age.pdf>
The lead author, Tony Ageh, has since joined Trinity as an Adjunct Professor.

Image: Nelofer Pazira-Fisk pictured with Minister Patrick O'Donovan, Provost, Dr Linda Doyle and the Librarian & College Archivist, Helen Shenton on the occasion of the announcement of the donation of the Robert and Nelofer Pazira-Fisk Archive and Library.



4. Prioritised Funding

Old Library Redevelopment Project and Virtual Trinity Library

Philanthropic donations are critically important in realising the ambitious and vitally necessary Old Library Redevelopment Project and the Virtual Trinity Library. We would like to wholeheartedly thank and acknowledge all our benefactors and patrons for all their support. The Library continued to work in partnership with Trinity Development & Alumni in securing philanthropic support for the two flagship programmes.

Librarian & College Archivist, Helen Shenton, spoke at a major philanthropic event in Chicago, and met with foundations, city officials, the Consulate General of Ireland (Chicago) and sister Institutions. The visit resulted in substantial support for the Old Library Redevelopment Project. We would like to especially thank Ken O'Keefe and Marion Cameron-Gray for their generosity.

Old Library Redevelopment Project (to date):

Benefactors of the Library:

- The Hilary & Galen Weston Foundation
- Carol & Murray Grigor
- HSH Albert II of Monaco
- The Boucher Family
- Marion A. Cameron-Gray
- Mary P. Clancy
- Frances & Denis Daly
- Thomas Foley
- Martin Frank
- The Stavros Niarchos Foundation
- Denis O'Brien
- Dr Beate Schuler
- Dermot Smurfit
- Trinity Trust
- Stephen & Rebecca Whyte
- Anonymous

Patrons of the Library:

- Trinity College Dublin Alumni
- Fiona Thomas
- The Jerome L. Greene Foundation
- Joseph Linders
- The Manitou Fund
- Michael Nesbitt & Family
- Patrick & Evelyn O'Sullivan
- Gilliane Quinn de Schonen
- Mark Ryan

Benefactors of the Virtual Trinity Library:

- Carnegie Corporation of New York
- Arcadia
- Bank of America Art Conservation Project
- Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands
- The Schooner Foundation
- Anonymous



Image: A frieze featuring the name of a benefactor to the Library, Mary P. Clancy on the Gallery of the Long Room

The Robert and Nelofer Pazira-Fisk Archive and Library

In November 2024, Nelofer Pazira-Fisk donated the Archive and Library of her late husband, journalist and war correspondent, Robert Fisk (1946–2020). The Robert and Nelofer Pazira-Fisk Archive & Library encompasses material from Robert Fisk's first posting in Belfast in 1972 for *The Times* up until the posthumous publication of his final book, *The Night of Power: Betrayal of the Middle East* (2024). Notes from his interviews with Osama Bin Laden in Afghanistan are among the extensive range of notebooks, research notes, photographs, audio files of interviews, drafts for published works, and correspondence of letters and emails. The Library received €200,000 in funding from the Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science (DFHERIS) towards the conservation of the personal archive of the renowned late journalist and Trinity graduate Robert Fisk and his wife, Nelofer Pazira-Fisk. It also received financial support from other sources including an anonymous donor towards the life cycle work to preserve the Archive and make it accessible.

The then Minister for Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science, Patrick O'Donovan announced the funding at Eavan Boland Library at an event with Nelofer Pazira-Fisk, Provost Dr Linda Doyle, and Librarian and College Archivist Helen Shenton in attendance.

Theobald Wolfe Tone Letters



Image: Portrait of Theobald Wolfe Tone
National Gallery of Ireland
Licensed under a Creative Commons
Attribution 4.0 International licence.
<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>

A collection of 52 autograph letters by the founding member of the United Irishmen and Trinity alumnus, Theobald Wolfe Tone (1763–1798), including to his wife Matilda in his final days were donated to the Library in March 2025 by two American descendants of Wolfe Tone. Covering the period in which Wolfe Tone was remote from his family, serving under the Directory of the French Army in his attempt to overthrow British rule of Ireland, the letters document his daily experience with the French generals, as well as his private concern for the health and well-being of his wife. His final letters are from the Dublin Barracks, days before his death where he is seeking preparation for the future sustenance of his children and his legacy. The letters had been available for research in microform form for a number of decades, but the addition of the original copies to the pre-existing extensive Wolfe Tone material in the Library Collections is enormously valuable and complementary to the preservation of the record of Wolfe Tone within the island of Ireland.

Educational Outreach and Civic Engagement



Image: An outreach event with members of the community in Unit 18, Trinity East

With philanthropic support, the Library was able to recruit its first ever Educational Outreach and Civic Engagement Manager in May 2025. Initially for a period of three years, the post is designed to connect communities outside of Trinity with the Library Collections, making them accessible for under-represented groups in society. A wide programme of activities has been developed, promoting equality, diversity and inclusion. Engagement takes place in small group settings to physically showcase collections as well as larger public events that speak to themes of wider interest, utilising the collections.

Manuscripts for Medieval Studies Project

The third funded phase of the Manuscripts for Medieval Studies Project started in 2025, with support from philanthropist, Carol Grigor. This multi-year project is seeking to conserve, describe, digitise and share online, in teaching and research, 600 medieval manuscripts from the Library's collections by 2030—the target date for the reopening of the Old Library. Major manuscripts have been digitised and made accessible under this current phase, including the *Ricemarch Psalter* which is an 11th century illuminated manuscript in the insular style.

Book of Leinster

The intensive two-year conservation treatment of the 12th century *Book of Leinster* was completed in spring 2025. Funding for this conservation was generously provided through a grant from the Bank of America Art Conservation Project. An exhibition showcasing the *Book of Leinster*, the earliest manuscript in the Library's Collections written entirely in Irish was held in the Long Room. An academic symposium was also hosted in the Old Library on 22 May 2025 on the manuscript's rich content and the method of conservation treatment.

Image (top left): Former Project Manager of the Fagel Collection, Dr Anne-Marie Hansen.

Image (top right): Illustrator Annie West with assistant librarian, Shane Mawe on her donation of drawings to the Library.

Image (bottom): Santry Book Repository



5. Suite of Inter-Related Policies and Programmes

New Policy on Open Licensing of the Library's Digitised Content

In June 2025, Trinity adopted a new licensing policy for the Library's digitised collections. This represents a significant change to how the Library makes images of its collection items available to researchers and the wider public. Previously, the Library published these 'digital surrogates' online without a licence. Users were free to use the images available on the Library's Digital Collections platform, downloading them or copying them for their private study. However, in order to re-use them publicly, e.g. for inclusion in a book, they had to contact the Library for a licence. Under the new 'open' policy, while Trinity is still the copyright holder, the digital surrogates get released with a very permissive licence. The default is the Creative Commons Attribution (CC-BY) licence, which only requires an acknowledgement of Trinity College Dublin as source; this includes re-use for commercial purposes.

CC-BY is the recommended licence for public bodies, according to European and Irish directives and guidelines. Trinity's new policy allows for more restrictive licences by exception. The policy applied with immediate effect to newly released digital surrogates and will be implemented retrospectively to the 'legacy' images on Digital Collections over time. In addition, the Open Licensing Policy facilitates more efficient Library operations and contributes to Trinity's commitment to Open Scholarship. The Policy can be viewed online: [Open Licensing of Library Digitised Content Policy](#).

Revised Policy on Donations of Collections and Content to the Library

Continuing a programme of updates to key library stewardship policies, the new Policy on Donations was approved by Board in November 2024. Outlining the value of donations to the growth and depth of the Library's collections, it also details the Library's responsibility in ensuring there is capacity for donated content and collections to be cared for in perpetuity. It signals that not all donations may be accepted on the basis of resource limitations and risks, and also sets out a mechanism to approaches for alternative resourcing such as through philanthropic support. The Policy can be viewed online: [Donations of Collections and Content to the Library](#).

All Board-approved Library policies are added to the University Policies section on the new Policies Hub (<https://www.tcd.ie/about/policies/>) on the Trinity website.

Sustainability

Responding to the creation of a cross-cutting strategic theme in the current Library strategy, the Library established a Library Sustainability Committee to develop and implement a *Library Sustainability Action Plan* aligning with the overall University's *Sustainability Strategy*. The Library trialled a ground-up approach in meeting the sustainability challenge, creating six sub-groups based on the Library's overall Sustainability Framework themes to develop the *Library Sustainability Action Plan* starting in 2026. This initiative successfully engaged over 40 Library

staff members from across different teams and will progress areas ranging from the Library's estate and operations, its content and collections through to support for research and climate literacy.

In February 2025 the Library signed the Green Libraries Manifesto as part of the Green Libraries Partnership (co-founded by CILIP, the UK-based library and information association) committing to becoming a green library. The Library is taking a leadership role, representing the Consortium of National and University Libraries (CONUL), on the Green Libraries Board and has contributed to the development of the Green Libraries Self-Assessment framework being trialled in early 2026.

Partnerships and Collaborations

The Library continued to partner with the University of Edinburgh Library and with the Royal Danish Library (merged with Copenhagen University Library) to investigate effective methods for reducing Scope 3 emissions. Scope 3 refers to the indirect carbon footprint of an organisation, including the supply chain, and is recognised as being the most difficult but potentially the most impactful in its reduction. Scope 3 emissions are typically larger than the direct carbon footprint, and for modern libraries the portfolio of e-resources licensed from and hosted by third parties represents a figure that is very significant. The project achieved a major milestone when the new Danish national agreement with the publisher Elsevier included contract language to bind Elsevier to a net zero aim by 2040. It also included a commitment to give an annual account of emissions relating to Danish usage, e.g. of data centres involved. Trinity relayed this success to IReL with a view to incorporating at an Irish level.

The SustLDL project led by Professor Gobinda Chowdhury of Strathclyde University to create a proof of concept for Sustainable Legal Deposit Libraries ended with the completion of the project report in September 2025. Based on many discussions, desktop analyses, a series of interviews of staff in the Library of Trinity College Dublin and the National Library of Scotland, and a workshop in each institution, the project team mapped the relative carbon footprint of each step in the workflows for print and digital legal deposit, as well as surfacing the key factors that affect the size of emission. These findings provided a most useful starting point for identifying actions under the collections segment of the Library's Sustainability Framework and the work on an action plan.

A significant milestone was reached in the collaboration between research libraries across the island of Ireland: to create a union catalogue, allowing anyone to search across the collections of all participating libraries in a single interface. In August 2025, following a public tender process, the Board of CONUL appointed a company to deliver this interface in mid-2026.

Stewardship of the Library Collections

In January 2025 Sarah VanSnick joined the Library as the new Head of Preservation and Conservation. Previously Lead Preventive Conservator at the Victoria and Albert Museum in London and Conservation Manager at the National Archives UK, she brings extensive experience in sustainability in conservation, environmental management for collections and risk and value-based collection management.

In 2024/25 the Library's Preservation and Conservation team continued to ensure the long-term preservation of, and access to, the Library's Collections. Over 350 modern books from the general collection were rebound or repaired and returned to use for Library users. An extensive audit of the

conservation studio has delivered new standard operating procedures and improved location tracking of general collection materials in conservation. The conservation and mounting of 145 objects for display for ten internal exhibitions and displays in the Old Library, the Printing House and the Eavan Boland Library were carried out. Preparation, conservation and the loan of 22 Library collection objects was carried out for four external exhibitions that spanned Ireland, the UK and USA. A review of environmental monitoring needs of the Library and updating of the disaster response plan took place. A selection of 14 Irish manuscripts was conserved from vellum fragments, ranging from the 15th to the 18th century.

Stock Relocation Projects

Following a review of print periodical materials in the Hamilton Library, a significant stock relocation project was undertaken from May–June 2025 to relocate the material to external storage. A total of 800 linear metres of material was moved, consisting of approximately 10,000 bound volumes and 15,000 loose issues, covering topics in Engineering, Mathematics, Science and Health Sciences. The initial phase of the project lasted eight weeks and was undertaken by Library staff, with assistance from four members of the Library's student shelving team. As with all such stock moves, a data management exercise was completed after the physical move to update records in the Library Services Platform and to ensure this data corresponds with records in the external storage provider's system.

Following the decant, the empty shelves were dismantled and removed to allow the space to be refurbished and re-imagined. A project was subsequently initiated to design and install accessible group study and sensory pods, with accompanying soft furnishings and height-adjustable desks. This phase of the project is expected to be completed in the 2025/26 academic year.

A second major stock relocation and storage improvement project was undertaken in the Library's Santry Book Repository. From July to August 2025, eight project assistants from Glenbeigh Records Management, supervised and supplemented by Library staff, moved 1,000 linear metres of material to external storage, consisting of approximately 14,000 paperback and 24,000 hardback books. This freed up growth space on the shelves in Santry to accommodate new legal deposit and other acquisitions in specific size categories for approximately two years. All materials moved were checked against the Library's catalogue to ensure an accurate inventory and a seamless retrieval process to service reader requests.

Visibility and Access Programme

The Alfred Bole Collection of Oliver Goldsmith

Spring 2025 saw the completion of cataloguing of the Alfred Bole Collection of Oliver Goldsmith. This remarkable collection was assembled by the Irish collector Alfred Bole (1925–2002) in the second half of the 20th century. It contains printed works by the poet, essayist, playwright and novelist Oliver Goldsmith (1728–1774), a Trinity College Dublin graduate. It is particularly strong in early British and Irish editions and there are numerous American and foreign language editions.

Some 740 detailed catalogue records are available, opening up the entire collection to researchers: titles, imprints and edition statements are transcribed; the names of all publishers, printers, illustrators and engravers are indexed; copy-specific details regarding bindings and marks of ownership are described; watermarks and collations for items of the hand-press era are noted; and finally all pre-1801 items have been reported to the [English Short Title Catalogue](#).

Image: Chancellor Dr Mary McAleese and guest of honour, poet Paula Meehan on the occasion of the Eavan Boland Library launch event.



6. External-Facing Events and Communications

Events marking the Historic Naming of the Eavan Boland Library

Trinity College Dublin marked the renaming of its main library after the poet Eavan Boland with a special event hosted in the Eavan Boland Library. The historic naming of the Eavan Boland Library was celebrated on 10 March 2025 by Trinity's Chancellor Dr Mary McAleese and guest of honour, poet Paula Meehan, with an audience of Trinity staff and students, Eavan Boland's family and friends, the Irish poetry community, and representatives from cultural and public life in Ireland.

Poet Paula Meehan said on the evening: 'Eavan understood that her craft, her ancient and lyric art, could shift the concerns of those at the very edge of Irish society into the centre of the conversation about access, about permissions, about the right to be heard. She used the lens of her life as a woman and mother in a post-colonial patriarchal culture to radically change the idea of the poet in our time. I hope the students using this Library will be inspired by her power, her imagination and her compassion'.

The event generated extensive media coverage, including RTÉ Television programme *Nationwide* [CNN](#), [RTÉ 1 Television News](#) and article, [Morning Ireland](#), [Irish Times](#), [Irish Central](#) among others.

A series of events for the wider College community and public were also organised including a permanent **outdoor exhibition**,

Eavan Boland: A Different Light on the Eavan Boland Library podium throughout the academic year, accompanied by an after-dark projection of poetry onto the façade of the Eavan Boland Library during the week of the launch.

There was also an **indoor multimedia display** on the **Denaming and Renaming of the former Berkeley Library** on display in the foyer of the Eavan Boland Library which has also remained as a permanent exhibition throughout the year.

The latter outlined the transparent process involving the College community of students, staff, alumni and the public in the decision by the University to remove its former name — the Berkeley Library — named after the renowned philosopher George Berkeley. This included the details of the 855 proposals with 230 recommendations for renaming received by the Trinity Legacies Review Working Group.

An **In Conversation** event about Eavan Boland also took place with poets Eiléan Ní Chuilleanáin, Katie Donovan and Victoria Kennefick. Chaired by Professor Rosie Lavan it was hosted on 11 March 2025 in the Public Theatre with 300 members of the College community and public in attendance. This was a collaboration between the Library of Trinity College and the School of English.



Image: Winners of a creative competition inspired by author, Christy Nolan's work

In April 2025 as part of another **Library collaboration with Poetry Ireland** there was a very special reading of her poems selected by poet and novelist, Colm Tóibín, Laureate for Irish Fiction. The event ***Pathfinder: the Poetry of Eavan Boland*** which took place in a packed Edmund Burke Theatre on 24 April 2025 coincided with the anniversary of Eavan Boland's untimely death in 2020. Readers included the poet's daughter Eavan Casey, poets Nessa O'Mahony and Nidhi Zak/Aria Eipe, poet and novelist Sebastian Barry and broadcaster and journalist Doireann Ní Bhriain.

Exhibitions

In a series of exhibitions hosted by the Library there was substantial public engagement, media, and social media, and the strategic project of Virtual Trinity Library was widely promoted during the academic year 2024/25.

Oscar Wilde: from Decadence to Despair

The Long Room exhibition in October 2024, was a re-run of *Oscar Wilde: from decadence to despair*. The exhibition marked a continued partnership with the annual Oscar Wilde festival in Dublin, *Oscariana*, and drew media attention on *RTE Radio 1* about Wilde as 'the World's first marketed celebrity'.

Zealous mercurial dreams were about to be realised: new treasures of the Old Library

The Long Room exhibition in January 2025 was a showcase of new acquisitions and donations to the Old Library's collections. *Zealous mercurial dreams were about to be realised* drew its title from a phrase in Christy Nolan's fictionalised autobiography, *Under the Eye of the Clock*. Nolan was a student in Trinity for a year, and his archive was donated to the Library by his family in 2021. Having been born with cerebral palsy

and quadriplegia, Christy's achievements as an accomplished poet and author acted as inspiration for a student competition of creative, *Perseverance through Words*, and the overall winner was celebrated in the Long Room in May 2025, with Aoife O'Donovan's musical score being displayed in the exhibition for the closing weeks, and included in the related online exhibition, *Of Science and the Human Heart*.

Other related events connected to the exhibition — which also featured manuscript drafts by Bram Stoker, Samuel Beckett, John Banville, and Eiléan Ní Chuilleanáin, along with artworks by the Salvage Press, the Blue Print Press, and original drawings by Annie West — included an *In Conversation* between Professor of Irish Writing, Chris Morash, Caitriona Lally and Mike McCormack, on the complexity of literary prize winning at Dublin City Library in collaboration with Dublin UNESCO City of Literature and the Dublin Literary Award; and an *In Conversation* between Mark O'Connell and Professor Chris Morash on John Banville's writing at the Trinity Long Room Hub Arts & Humanities Research Institute, linked to the related online exhibition, *Scratch, scratch, old hand*.

Book of Leinster

To celebrate the culmination of the conservation treatment of the *Book of Leinster*, the Library put on a rare exhibition of this 12th century manuscript in the Long Room in May 2025. Funding for this conservation was generously provided through a grant from Bank of America's Art Conservation Project. An associated online exhibition also continues to provide a deeper insight to this incredible collation of Irish history, mythology and genealogy, along with other Irish manuscripts kept in Trinity's collection, and interviews on *RTE Radio 1* about this 'wikipedia of the Middle Ages'.

Terry Pratchett Project Event

The Library featured again in the *Unseen University* event for Culture Night on 20 September, 2024. Celebrating the works, passions and public campaigns of the humorous British fantasy writer Terry Pratchett, the event brought together a variety of speakers, examining his works from literary, cultural and gender angles, as well as Pratchett's connections to neuroscience research. The talk on the extensive collection in the Library focused on recent examples of how it has catalysed research and inspired public engagement — and how there is still untapped potential for more.

International Engagement

Within cultural diplomacy, the Librarian and College Archivist hosted visits from sister institutions with whom the Library is developing partnerships, for example, the director of the Abbey Library of St Gall and the director of the National Museum of Switzerland, on the occasion of the National Museum of Ireland/National Museum of Switzerland exhibition of Irish Medieval Manuscripts, *Words on the Wave: Ireland and St. Gallen in Early Medieval Europe*; and with the Director of the National Library of Wales. The Librarian had a series of engagements with the Swiss Embassy, and also hosted a visit by the President and First Lady of Lithuania to the Old Library.

The Librarian was invited to the first Dubai International Library Conference in the Mohammed Bin Rashid Library in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and gave a presentation and participated in a plenary panel on *Iconic Libraries and their Treasures* and discussion panels on *A Global Treasure Chest* and *Library Spaces for the Future*.

7. Appendices

FACTS AND FIGURES

Space	2024/25	2023/24	2022/23
Total gross floor area (in square metres)	18,785.29	18,785.29	18,785.29
Reader Spaces	3,317	3,317	3,317
Information Resource Provision			
UK & Irish Legal Deposit print items added (books, maps, sheet music)	38,316	39,627	43,992
Purchased print items added (books, maps, sheet music)	3,365	3,681	3,913
Purchased e-book titles added (various access licences)	570	658	730
Donations & Theses print items added (books, maps, sheet music)	2,134	1,866	2,089
UK & Irish Legal Deposit and purchased print serial titles added to	3,722	3,995	4,912
Total number electronic serial titles subscribed to	39,444 ¹	135,038	143,578
UK electronic Legal Deposit serials — article level added ²	0	0	0
UK electronic Legal Deposit serials — issue level added	0	318	42,547
UK electronic Legal Deposit monographs added	0	18,389	98,718

Library Use	2024/25	2023/24	2022/23
Information skills workshop participants:			
1. Interdisciplinary (open to all)	3,370	3,461	3,517
2. Programme specific	12,076	10,827	11,578
3. Research Collections — programme specific	680	320	130
4. Research consultations	963	851	909
Searches of Library resources	92,753,177	16,540,274 ³	3,929,978
Total loan of items to readers (including renewals)	131,900	138,000	139,100
Full-text electronic article downloads	5,944,619	5,629,375	5,748,540
Electronic book chapter downloads	657,454	725,570	760,612 ⁴
Research Collections reader visits to the reading rooms	2,215	2,324	2,662
Research Collections email queries	2,472 ⁵	9,230	7,154

¹ New method for counting subscription e-journal titles from 2024–25; individual parts, such as reports and supplements are no longer included.

² No additions have been made since the cyberattack on the British Library in October 2023, and, for UK eLD articles, since the previous year due to a technical issue.

³ New metric from 2023–24, to include Stella Search, i.e. the public catalogue, as well as other authorised tools connecting via APIs. Previously recorded for Stella Search only. The new metric includes automatic searches set up by researchers, e.g. for systematic reviews, and, increasingly, 'polite AI' activity, simulating human behaviour.

⁴ The decline in e-book usage continues to be under investigation.

⁵ New method for counting queries from 2024–25; follow-up email exchanges on the same query are no longer included.

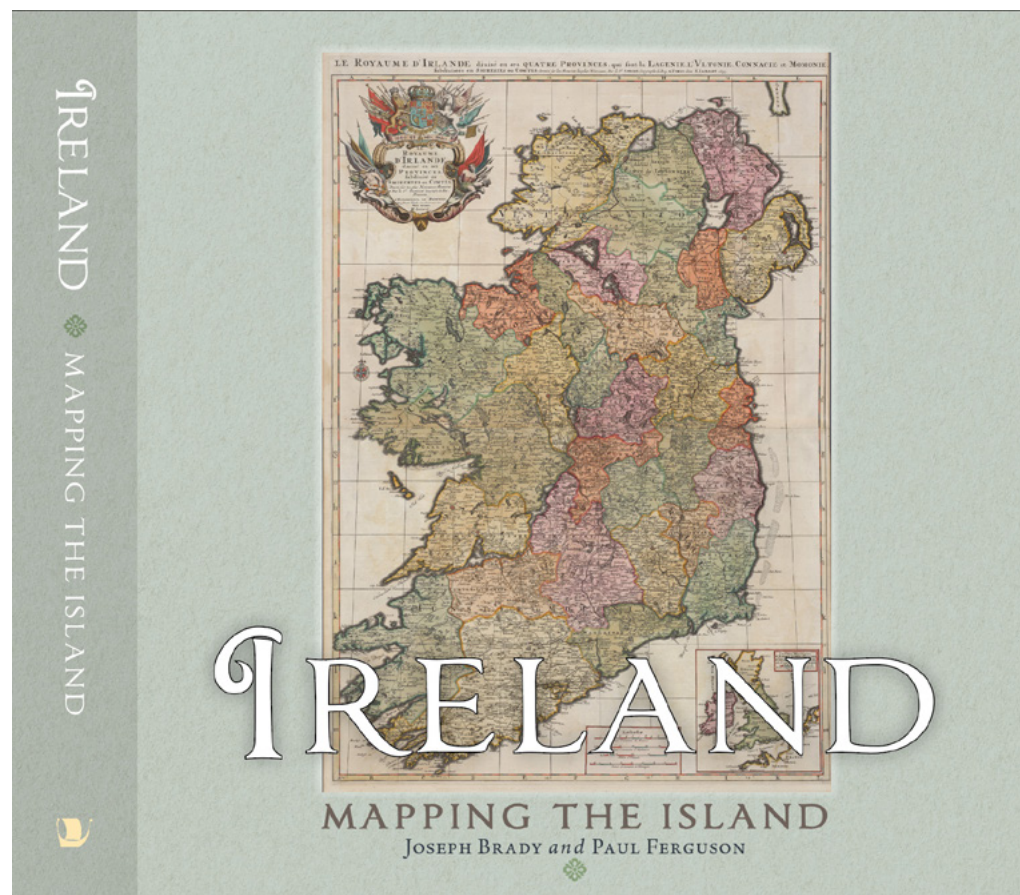


Image: Ireland: Mapping the Island
By Joseph Brady and Paul Ferguson
(Paul Ferguson is Map Librarian at
the Library of Trinity College Dublin)

PUBLICATIONS, POSTERS AND PRESENTATIONS BY LIBRARY STAFF

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Front Cover Image: Outdoor Display on the occasion of the launch of the Eavan Boland Library.

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