



H. Carton Rogers III Vice Provost and Director of Libraries

The Penn Libraries partners with communities at Penn and beyond to produce, preserve, and provide access to knowledge. Together we build dynamic resources, tools, and expertise that inspire critical inquiry and creative expression.

— Penn Libraries Mission Statement

THE SEARCH

The University of Pennsylvania (“Penn”) seeks an accomplished and collaborative library professional to serve as the H. Carton Rogers III Vice Provost and Director of Libraries (“Director”). This is an opportunity to lead a research library system at the highest level and at one of the world’s leading teaching and research universities. The Director will be part of a leadership team at an institution home to innovative and revolutionary educational opportunities, functioning as a hub for human connection and operating at a crossroads where ancient inspiration and future innovation meet today’s brightest minds. Among its peers, Penn Libraries leads the way in collections development, transformative service impact, and effective campus communication. The next director will extend this record of leadership to the campus, the local, national, and global communities, and across the library profession.

The University of Pennsylvania is among the nation’s oldest and most storied universities. With 12 schools located on a single, compact, urban campus alongside the University’s flagship hospital and medical center, Penn is recognized for its integrated and collaborative approach to teaching, research, service, and patient care. Penn champions and advances impact, innovation, and the public good through the efforts of more than 5,500 faculty, 15,200 staff, and 28,700 students.

The Penn Libraries are central to this mission. Nineteen physical libraries, approximately 9.8 million volumes (print and electronic), and 350,000 e-journals—as well as millions of digitized images, physical audio and video, microforms, maps, graphic materials, and streaming audio and video—inspire discovery and insight. Libraries personnel (313 FTE) provide counsel, support, and infrastructure that fuel research and knowledge at the leading edge of evolving technology and academic exploration. Penn Libraries’ endowment is \$159 million, and its annual budget is \$87 million.

The Director will be a visionary, collegial, entrepreneurial, and courageous leader who will nurture, sustain, and extend the record of strength established by Penn Libraries and its personnel. This is a liminal moment for the University and the Libraries: a new university strategic framework, [In Principle and Practice](#), was released in Fall 2023 and sets forth a vision of an institution anchored in the campus, local, and global communities; interwoven and interconnected; inventive in confronting society’s great challenges and opportunities; and engaged in service and collaboration. The Libraries themselves are in the midst of a [strategic plan](#) for building technical, structural, and human capacity, which includes a

[digital strategic plan](#) that presents a broad vision to plan, implement, scale, and sustain digital technologies and practices.

The Director reports to the Provost, who has formed a consultative committee for this recruitment effort. Isaacson, Miller, the national executive search firm, has been retained to support the work of the committee. Inquiries may be directed to the firm as indicated at the end of this document.

THE UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA

One of nine colleges chartered prior to the Declaration of Independence, the [University of Pennsylvania](#) was founded by Benjamin Franklin and began admitting students in 1751 as the Academy of Philadelphia. Franklin, who served as the institution's first president, envisioned a college that prepared students for lives in academia, commerce, and service. The pragmatic thrust of Penn was innovative at the time, insofar that other colleges of the period focused primarily on the education of clergy. Penn is home to the first medical school in America, the first university teaching hospital, and the world's first collegiate business school. It was at Penn that ENIAC, the first large-scale general-purpose programmable digital computer, was developed and constructed, and where the American Medical Association was founded.

Penn's institutional ambition, commitment to free inquiry and expression, intellectual diversity and breadth, and emphasis on impact are among its most salient characteristics. With 12 schools and more than 170 research centers and institutes, Penn's research programs generate over \$1.37 billion in annual R&D awards and expenditures in the fields of medicine, technology, business, physical and social sciences, and more, with consequential improvements for the lives of individuals and communities locally, regionally, and globally. Among Ivy Plus institutions (Brown University, the University of Chicago, Columbia University, Cornell University, Dartmouth College, Duke University, Harvard University, Johns Hopkins University, the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, the University of Pennsylvania, Princeton University, Stanford University, and Yale University), Penn ranks second in total research and development expenditures; it is fourth among national universities in NSF R&D expenditures, eighth in NIH funding, and first in NIH training grants.

Penn Medicine, the \$10.06 billion umbrella organization consisting of the Perelman School of Medicine and the University of Pennsylvania Health System, represents one of the largest, most diversified, and well-integrated academic medical centers and health systems in the country. The University of Pennsylvania Health System includes eight hospital facilities.

Penn's fiscal year 2024 consolidated operating budget, including the health system, is \$14.4 billion; the academic operating budget for the university is \$4.4 billion. The University adheres to a budgeting model that combines targeted central support and largely decentralized Responsibility Center Management (RCM), which Penn invented and adopted in 1974. The development and alumni relations program is one of the largest in the nation; more than \$5.4 billion was raised in the University's last campaign, which concluded in 2021.

As of June 30, 2023, Penn's endowment was valued at \$21 billion. Over the past five, ten, and twenty years, the endowment has returned 9.5%, 9.7%, and 8.8% per annum, respectively; Penn's performance consistently outpaces a composite benchmark.

PENN LIBRARIES

The size and scale of the educational enterprise at Penn call for a sophisticated, comprehensive library system: the Libraries' service population includes about 54,000 regular faculty and staff and 28,000 enrolled students. [Penn Libraries](#) does not disappoint. University leaders, faculty, staff, and current and former students consistently cite the richness of the collections, the strength across the disciplines, and the superb expertise and service that Libraries personnel provide. Penn Libraries supports learning, discovery, and research in the arts, humanities, and social sciences, as well as engineering, mathematics, clinical medicine, veterinary medicine, dental medicine, nursing, and the physical and life sciences. Special Collections is another area of distinction. In addition, the University Archives and Record Center, which delivers a unified archival and records management program for Penn and its health system, transitioned administratively to the Penn Libraries in 2022 as part of the Kislak Center for Special Collections, Rare Books and Manuscripts.

Along with the physical and electronic materials found at the University, Penn Libraries has a number of critical institutional partnerships, including with the [Center for Research Libraries](#), an international consortium of more than 250 college, university, and independent research libraries that acquires and preserves materials in support of teaching and research in the humanities, sciences, and social sciences; [HathiTrust](#), a partnership of academic and research institutions, offering millions of titles digitized from libraries around the world; and the flagship program of the [Ivy Plus Libraries Confederation](#), [BorrowDirect](#), which enables faculty, students, and researchers to discover, request, and rapidly receive materials. Penn Libraries also has reciprocal borrowing agreements with [PALCI](#) (Partnership for Academic Library Collaboration and Innovation); Drexel University; Bryn Mawr, Haverford, and Swarthmore Colleges; St. Joseph's University; and Villanova University.

The Penn Libraries are recognized for their contributions to the library field. They are at the vanguard among peer institutions in scholarly communications and well respected for research data and scholarship and research services (including systematic reviews). Penn provides the Ivy Plus group with business intelligence analytics for BorrowDirect. Penn Libraries is a leader in digital library strategy and design. And, at a time when other libraries are pulling back on collecting materials from Russia and Eastern Europe, Penn is aggressively building its global collections, including about Ukraine, Russia, and Eastern Europe, supporting area studies in significant ways and enabling engagement with cultures and societies around the world.

Closer to home, Penn Libraries embraces the responsibilities of community citizenship. On campus it maintains the learning management system, has close connections generally to the [Center for Excellence in Teaching, Learning, and Innovation](#), the office of Information Systems and Computing (ISC), and the Price Lab for Digital Humanities, and is the institutional repository for faculty publications. The Libraries connect to the surrounding community through the [Community Engagement Initiative](#), which works with Philadelphia public schools and the West Philadelphia Alliance for Children to reopen and build West Philadelphia public school libraries; provide adult literacy sessions; and share the Penn Libraries with Philadelphia public school students.

The Libraries boast 500,000 square feet of space for campus events, classrooms, and group study. Recent and beautiful renovations include the [Holman Biotech Commons](#) and the [Moelis Family Grand Reading Room](#) (which was featured in [Architectural Record](#)).

Penn Libraries benefits from the support, guidance, and advocacy of three leadership groups: the [Board of Advisors](#), which works and meets with the Vice Provost and Director of Libraries and whose members

serve as ambassadors for the Libraries; the [Orrery Society](#), which promotes awareness of the Libraries and provides term and endowed support expands, annual gifts, and gifts-in-kind; and the [Young Alumni Board](#), which builds awareness of the role of the Libraries among fellow Penn graduates.

Additional facts and figures

- The work of Penn Libraries is enabled by 313 (FTE) professional librarians and staff. About 33% of the staff is represented by AFSCME Local 590.
- Penn Libraries' annual budget is \$87 million of which nearly 87% is covered by allocated costs from the schools and centers. Seven percent of the budget comes from endowment income and 2.3% is self-generated. Gifts and grants account for about 1%.
- Penn Libraries' endowment is \$159 million. In fiscal year 2023, \$8.85 million was raised in support of the libraries; in recent years philanthropic support has grown dramatically.
- Penn ranks 8th among Association of Research Libraries (ARL) in the ARL investment index, 8th in information expenditures, 8th in total library expenditures, and 8th in wages and salaries. These ARL indicators suggest that Penn's ability to weather challenges and changes in the field is strengthening relative to other research libraries, based on rising and careful investment of University resources.

CURRENT OUTLOOK

Penn Libraries operates from a position of considerable strength, having invested significantly in major areas. Its collections, including special collections, have been and will continue to be a priority. Facilities have received targeted attention; most recently, the Libraries launched a [renovation of Van Pelt-Dietrich Library](#) that will transform the fifth floor and create a dedicated, state-of-the-art space for the [Center for Global Collections](#), and the Libraries are also currently expanding Penn's off-site facility, adding environmental controls and increasing space. Previous library leadership was very successful in ramping up fundraising activity, including gifts for capital projects, endowed giving, and annual giving. The Libraries continue to receive significant support from the central university allocation—an allocated cost pool to which each of the schools contribute.

Two documents—the [Penn Libraries Strategic Plan \(2020-2025\)](#) and the associated [Penn Libraries Digital Strategies 2022-2024](#)—have guided the Libraries of late. With the approach of their concluding years, the Vice Provost and Director will have a singular chance to consider future directions, activities, and investments, in consultation with campus leadership, faculty, and Libraries personnel. Among likely areas of attention are digital preservation and the sustainability of digital technologies and practices; systems infrastructure; the scaling up of technical services staff and processing as collections expand; and attention to workplace culture and the recruitment, development, and retention of employees.

As the University works to recruit and retain faculty with major data storage requirements, the Director must serve as a thought partner to campus leadership. Current and future needs of the academy, particularly in light of emerging technologies, are top-of-mind across campus. The Libraries will continue to be one of the most vital spaces for faculty to theorize and operationalize multi-, cross-, and interdisciplinary research.

Given these developments, and the decentralized and entrepreneurial nature of the institution, the Penn Libraries must continue to anchor and support Penn's intellectual energies. This will require active partnership, effective collaboration, and communication—both across campus and within the Penn Libraries, whose personnel must be cultivated and empowered.

ROLE OF THE VICE PROVOST AND DIRECTOR OF LIBRARIES

The Vice Provost and Director of Libraries is a senior academic officer and a member of the Provost's leadership group and the University's senior planning group. The Director participates in meetings of those groups and is also expected to maintain independent and meaningful ties with individual campus leaders, in support of the University's strategic aims.

The Vice Provost and Director's senior team includes the:

- Gershwind & Bennett Family Senior Associate Vice Provost for Collections and Scholarly Communications;
- Associate Vice Provost for Operations, Access Services and Strategic Partnerships;
- Associate Vice Provost for Technology and Digital Initiatives;
- Associate University Librarian & Director of the Jay I. Kislak Center for Special Collections, Rare Books and Manuscripts (who also is Director of the Schoenberg Institute for Manuscript Studies);
- Associate University Librarian for Impact Assessment & Organizational Analysis;
- Chief Financial Officer and Senior Director for Organizational Effectiveness; and the
- Director of Strategic Communications.

The University Archivist is a dotted-line report to the Director (and a direct report to the AUL for Special Collections). The Director of Advancement has a dual report to the Vice Provost and Director of Libraries, and to the University's Office of Development and Alumni Relations.

The Director reports to the Provost and Richard Perry University Professor, John L. Jackson, Jr., who came to Penn as the first Penn Integrates Knowledge (PIK) Professor and served as the fifth dean of the Annenberg School. A filmmaker and urban anthropologist who works at the intersections of visual culture, race studies, media anthropology, and the ethnography of diasporic religions, he was previously Dean of the School of Social Policy and Practice, and Special Adviser to the Provost on Diversity. Dr. Jackson earned his B.A. from Howard University and his Ph.D. from Columbia University.

KEY OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

The Vice Provost and Director of Libraries will:

Advance a bold and galvanizing vision for Penn Libraries, capitalizing on this strategically poignant moment and continuing the evolution of the Penn Libraries. The Director will capitalize on the historical strengths of the Libraries, apprehend emerging needs, and identify areas for attention and growth. The Director must consider the future-state institution and meet growing demands for research support and methods, research data, data management, and digital research; artificial intelligence; and continued and deepening engagement with the global community. In this work the Director will be proactive and evince ambition for the leadership role that Penn Libraries can play on campus and in the library field.

Sustain and accelerate the momentum of Penn Libraries, extending the Libraries' sound record of investment in facilities, global cultural heritage, research services, and open access, among many other areas. The range of activities is broad and the pace of change is swift; the Director will ensure that efforts are coordinated, communicated, and celebrated. Within the Libraries, organizational shifts such as the transition of the University Archives and Records Center into Special Collections await full and strategic integration. Across campus, Penn Libraries has significant awareness and social capital, and the Director will expand the Libraries' influence and impact by evincing deep familiarity with the needs and landscape of the individual schools, and through close collaboration with researchers and faculty.

Attract, grow, and manage resources, cultivating and garnering support and philanthropy. The scale and sophistication of Penn's development office—and the existence of three powerful and highly informed volunteer groups—separate Penn Libraries from many of its peers. The Director will present an irresistible case for support of Penn Libraries; partner meaningfully and substantially with the Libraries' board and councils; and simultaneously evince advanced skills in securing support from across campus.

It should be noted that the Libraries are the second largest resource center on campus; with 87% of its support coming from the allocated cost pool, the University's commitment to the Libraries is deep. At the same time, the costs of collections, central university services, and infrastructure and technologies continue to rise. The Director must be able to manage these challenges, make strategic choices, and work productively and collaboratively with the deans and schools to find solutions.

Strengthen and nurture organizational culture, championing and supporting a stellar team. Penn Libraries' employees possess deep expertise, have demonstrated their individual and collective abilities to adapt as user needs change, and have an abiding service mindset. The Director will take care to ensure that Libraries have sufficient human capacity to steward the physical collections while scaling up expertise around data, publishing, and tools. With many new hires of late, the Director must attend to building community by communicating, making connections, being visible, acting with transparency, and fostering connection. The Director will also value and nurture a collaborative relationship with the leaders of and employees in Penn Libraries' collective bargaining unit.

Build, support, and nurture community and communities, through visible commitment and action with respect to equity, diversity, and inclusion. The next Director will have the opportunity to stake a leadership position in fostering a culture of belonging, justice, and inclusion, across campus and within Penn Libraries. The Director will demonstrate subtle and nuanced awareness of issues of workplace morale, climate, and respect and recognition. The Director will also ensure that the Libraries continue to promote and provide a forum for open and respectful dialogue.

Looking beyond campus, the Director will ensure that Penn Libraries' commitments to community and community service are strengthened and enhanced and pursue strategic partnerships that enable that work. The Director will also sustain and deepen Penn Libraries' consortial relationships, contributing thought leadership in service to the field.

QUALIFICATIONS AND CHARACTERISTICS

The ideal candidate will possess many of the following professional and leadership competencies and personal qualities:

- Deep understanding of university library systems and universities and the challenges and opportunities facing both, including the changing nature of collections, technologies, facilities and information management;
- Intellectual curiosity and appreciation of the range of disciplines and the forms of creative work across the fields; familiarity with requisite infrastructure and investments;
- Outstanding leadership and management abilities, including strategic vision, knowledge of best practices, superb organizational skills, bias to act, and the proven ability to attract, nurture, retain, motivate, and manage excellent staff;
- A record of successful resource management, understanding of RCM budget environment, and aptitude for fundraising and resource generation;
- Proven success working in an atmosphere of diffuse and shared governance with key partners-- fellow administrators, researchers and faculty, bargaining units, and community stakeholders. A mindset that leans heavily toward teamwork and collaborative strategizing and decision-making;
- Excellent interpersonal gifts, including an engaging and approachable style, the ability and will to be present, openness to the ideas of others, and clarity and courage in communication and decision-making;
- Dedication and ability to embody and represent the values and ideals of the University of Pennsylvania, including but not limited to academic excellence; free inquiry and expression; commitment to support and advance equity, diversity, and inclusion; and the highest ethical standards of conduct;
- Qualities of mind and character that demonstrate warmth, receptivity, self-reflection, humor, respect, discretion, and trustworthiness and trust;
- Credentials appropriate to the leadership of a modern research-intensive library; a record of accomplishment in an academic discipline and/or library/information science.

TO APPLY

Confidential inquiries, nominations/referrals, and applications (CVs and letters of interest) should be submitted electronically to:

Anita Tien, Partner and Andy Marshall, Managing Associate
Isaacson, Miller

[University of Pennsylvania, H. Carton Rogers III Vice Provost and Director of Libraries search](#)

Penn adheres to a policy that prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, creed, national or ethnic origin, citizenship status, age, disability, veteran status, or any other legally protected class.