# **National Library of Scotland**

## **Our Strategy: The Next Chapter**

Libraries change lives. They are equalisers, empowering individuals and communities to create, connect and understand the world and each other, through rich and diverse stories. Public libraries were created for the public good. Just as Andrew Carnegie supported the creation of public libraries, our founding donor, Sir Alexander Grant, the Faculty of Advocates and the Government shared a vision that:

'Scotland will have a national library where everyone will get access to any book they desire.'

For 100 years, the National Library of Scotland, through successive Acts of Parliament, has been tasked with collecting, protecting and sharing the printed and recorded memory of the nation for the benefit of all.

As we enter our centenary in 2025, we look not only to the next five years but to the next one hundred and beyond and ask: how can we be good ancestors and lay the foundation for an accessible and relevant national library for everyone, for today and for the future? How can we make the most impact and bring the most value?

This strategy is a map that will guide us on our journey up to 2030, building on the success of previous strategies. It has been drawn through conversations with a wide range of people across the country over the last year. In common with all travellers, we also need to navigate and be prepared for the 'parts unknown'.

Society has seen seismic changes in the last century, and the speed of change is accelerating. The last five years since our Reaching People strategy was launched have seen geopolitical, technological and environmental change of a scale we couldn't predict. In the next one hundred years, we can be sure that the terrain, the obstacles, opportunities and even the travellers might change, but our mission remains.

## Our vision

The National Library of Scotland is a vibrant, inclusive, connected and creative part of Scotland's landscape, adding value to the lives of those who call Scotland their home and those who visit us.

## Mission

We will develop, protect and share the national collections widely and to a diverse range of users, for education, research and enjoyment.

## Our strategic priorities

Our strategy comprises three key strategic priorities and our underpinning values. The result will be a library building on strong foundations and successes, continuing to transform to meet present-day challenges and be relevant to people's lives.

### Responsible stewardship

The National Library of Scotland has existed since 1925, but the collections we look after date back more than 1200 years. Everyone who works at the Library has a responsibility to be a responsible steward, so the Library can support Scotland, not just for the next five years, but long into the future.

To support this work over the next five years we will:

1. Develop the nation's collections in a way that is sustainable, accessible and relevant to a changing society.
2. Invest in secure infrastructure and processes to protect our people, buildings, data and collections.
3. Ensure that the national collections and data are responsibly and appropriately described and discoverable.
4. Make ethical choices to maximise the lifespan of the national collections, balancing the needs of present and future audiences.
5. Invest in and share technology, skills and research to ensure that the nation's collections are conserved and preserved for the future.

### Connection

National libraries can offer a bridge between the past and the future and between individuals and communities. They also have an important leadership role across the library sector. Despite global connectivity, the world can seem increasingly divided and disparate. Through the rich and diverse collections, accessible online and physical venues and strong partnerships and networks, we will invite curiosity, build trust and combat disinformation and division.

To support this work over the next five years we will:

1. Put users at the heart of creating accessible, welcoming and inspiring online and physical spaces to engage with collections and services.
2. Create meaningful partnerships with a diverse and wide group of stakeholders across the country to deliver services for all of Scotland, including supporting Scotland's languages.
3. Build strong global networks to research, discover and uncover stories of Scotland's past and present creating new knowledge for the future.
4. Uncover and tell diverse stories through our exhibitions, outreach, events and programmes.
5. Connect with future and existing audiences, seeking their views and empowering them through access to knowledge.

### Sustainability

The Library must become a sustainable organisation in all its forms, including having staff with the skills and experience to support our work and a funding model to support the delivery of our ambitions and our mission to serve the people of Scotland.

We are committed to reducing our footprint on the world, and supporting research, engagement and discovery to help mitigate the impact of the climate emergency.

To support this work over the next five years we will:

1. Progress towards the target of being net zero by 2045 and embed carbon literacy across the organization.
2. Work in partnership with other heritage organisations to manage our immediate and future shared storage challenges.
3. Develop our digital infrastructure and services in a secure, sustainable and scalable manner.
4. Foster entrepreneurship, creativity and innovation to increase our income generation potential and our financial resilience.
5. Use and embed new technologies, such as Artificial Intelligence, in a sustainable and ethical way, working with research, industry and creative partners.

## Our values

Integrity

We will always act responsibly and be mindful of our duties to each other and to our collections. As responsible stewards of public resources, we will be transparent and accessible.

### Inclusion

Our people, Board and audiences will be representative of Scotland's diverse and vibrant communities. We will collaborate internally and externally to work with and empower people and communities.

### Innovation

We will seek to be creative, curious and entrepreneurial. We will develop new ways of working and seek partnerships and opportunities that challenge us to do our best.

Inspiration

We will play to our strengths, be passionate, committed and learn from others. We will bring energy to our work and be both generous and ambitious.