This is an incredibly exciting time for the research library and scholarly communities. RLUK is committed to working with, and on behalf of, its members to enable them to face shared challenges and seize collective opportunities.

This document outlines the ways in which RLUK harnesses the collective voice, experience, and expertise of its members, its determination to support them as they face current and emerging challenges, and its ability to act as a confident voice on behalf of the community.

This document is also an invitation, to likeminded stakeholders, to work with RLUK and its members as we work to reshape scholarship and the role of the research library.
RLUK'S VISION  
Our network of distinctive research libraries will be recognised as influential leaders of research and scholarship through their outstanding collections and services.

RLUK'S MISSION  
RLUK is a consortium of major research libraries in the UK and Ireland, whose purpose is to shape the research library agenda and contribute to the wider knowledge economy through innovative projects and services that add value and impact to the process of research and researcher-training. We also contribute to the health of society through the preservation and sharing of knowledge: one of the pillars of an open society.

RLUK'S ROLE  
RLUK is here to convene its 37 members around the issues that affect them, to represent their collective voice, to support them as they face shared challenges, and to be an effective advocate on their behalf. It is these four roles that define our work and around which our membership offer is shaped. They enable us to promote the research library community as a vibrant and integral element of the scholarly landscape.
RLUK is here to convene its members around the issues, challenges, and opportunities that affect them. Our size is a key strength: we are large enough for a critical mass, but small enough for a coherent collective voice to be established between our members. Whether through our networks, working groups, or events, RLUK provides routes through which members can explore their common experiences, share knowledge, and develop and embed collaboration. It is through RLUK’s convening power that it is able to establish and harness the collective voice, experience, expertise, and capacity of its members, providing both the opportunity and framework for members to work together for the collective benefit.

RLUK’s convening power goes beyond its membership, and RLUK is well placed to bring together its members with key national and international stakeholders within the information, cultural, and heritage communities. RLUK has built highly visible and successful relationships with organisations such as The National Archives (Kew), Jisc, OCLC, and its counterpart research library consortia around the world. In doing so, RLUK is able to bring together large and diverse communities of practice to facilitate knowledge exchange, further collaboration, and promote innovation.

RLUK convenes its members...

**Through its networks:**

**RLUK member networks**: RLUK has five member networks which act as closed member fora through which to explore areas of professional or strategic interest to RLUK members. Member libraries nominate or elect their representatives to these networks and each network holds events throughout the year and communicates via closed jiscmail lists. They are governed by terms of reference, are led by two elected convenors from within their membership, and have dedicated budgets in order to support their activities for the benefit of members. They are highly visible and successful elements of RLUK’s member offer, each enabling for knowledge exchange and tangible programmes of work to be developed for the collective benefit of members.

RLUK’s member networks are:

**Associate Directors Network (ADN)**: is a professional network for RLUK members in a Deputy Librarian or Associate Director role. It acts as a forum for discussion and sharing of experience, the opportunity to participate in the business of RLUK and to aid succession planning.
Collections Strategy Network (CSN): is a professional-peer network for colleagues who are responsible for collection strategy within an RLUK member library. It fosters and supports collective approaches to collection management, of both physical and digital collections.

Digital Scholarship Network (DSN): is a professional peer network for RLUK members involved in the development and provision of Digital Scholarship services within member libraries. It provides a forum for knowledge exchange and has led the creation of a series of member resources and case studies.

New Directors Network (NDN): is a forum for discussion, peer development, knowledge sharing for RLUK colleagues who have recently been appointed as library directors, those in interim positions as directors, or for directors who have recently been appointed to an RLUK member institution.

Special Collections Leadership Network (SCLN): is a professional peer network for RLUK members in a senior special collections role. It provides a forum for discussion and sharing of experience, and the opportunity to participate in the business of RLUK by helping to shape the strategic direction for RLUK around special collections work.

RLUK working groups: in addition to its member networks, RLUK also convenes dedicated working groups which deal with an area of specific strategic interest.

Digital Shift Working Group: The Digital Shift working group leads the development and delivery of RLUK’s programming under the Digital Shift Strand of its strategy. It meets regularly and consists of nine colleagues drawn from across RLUK’s five member networks.

Open Access Publisher Processes Group (OAPP): The OAPP focuses on the challenges, barriers, and other issues in relation to publisher OA practice and processes.
Through its events:

**RLUK Conference:** held annually every March, the RLUK conference attracts over 250 delegates from the library, information, and research communities, from across the UK and around the world. The conference showcases RLUK convening power and the thought-leadership of its members around many of the pressing issues facing the scholarly and research library communities. It acts as a shop-window for RLUK’s activities and those of its members, a sounding board to test new ideas and approaches within the community, and a springboard to identify new and emerging areas of collaboration, both within and outside of the RLUK membership.

**RLUK Members’ Meeting:** is an annual meeting for RLUK member representatives held every November within a member institution. The meeting provides a place for members to explore key issues affecting them and to identify areas of work for the consortium to undertake collectively. External speakers are often included within the programme to bring a wider perspective.

**DCDC Conference:** is a collaborative annual conference between RLUK, The National Archives, and Jisc. DCDC conferences attract over 400 colleagues from across the gallery, library, archive, and museum sectors (GLAM) alongside members of the academic community. DCDC champions collections, wherever they are held, and the immense value they bring to our communities.
RLUK is here to represent the voice of its members. Through its ability to harness the collective experience and knowledge of research libraries, RLUK is able to provide a clear, consistent, and confident voice to the community around the key issues that face it. RLUK is at the centre of a number of highly successful stakeholder relationships and research partnerships, and is well represented on sector-wide panels and forums. RLUK’s presence and participation in these enable it to represent the views and opinions of its members to a wide constituency including publishers, funders, and policy makers. Members of the RLUK Executive and Board frequently speak at cross-community events on behalf of its membership, amplifying the reach and visibility of RLUK members.

RLUK represents...

Through its members:

**Board membership:** The RLUK board consists of directors from its member libraries. Members of the board act as champions for the different priorities of RLUK’s strategy and member networks. As directors of internationally significant research libraries, RLUK’s board members are recognised as important influencers within the research library, information, and cultural and heritage sectors. RLUK board members play an important and active role in raising the profile and visibility of RLUK’s activities, represent RLUK and its membership to a wide constituency of influential stakeholders, and act as prominent advocates for its work.

**Panels, bodies, and boards:** RLUK is here to represent the views and opinions of its members. As a result, members of the RLUK Board, Executive, and individual members sit on a wide variety of panels and boards in order to represent the opinions of the wider membership. RLUK’s convening power enables its representatives to confidently present its collective voice to a wide variety of constituents and amplify the voice of individual members in areas of key strategic interests.

With our stakeholders:

**RLUK Funders’ Network:** RLUK represents the interests of its members to major research and cultural funders from across the UK via its funders’ network. This network meets two to three times a year to share developments, ideas and common challenges and opportunities and includes representatives from RLUK, Jisc, Leverhulme Trust, The National Archives, The National Lottery Heritage Fund, Wellcome, Wolfson, Arcadia, Arts Council England, and the AHRC.

**International research library landscape:** RLUK plays a prominent role within groups such as the International Alliance of Research Library Associations (IARLA), European Alliance of Research Excellence (EARE), and LIBER to represent the views and opinions of its members within an international landscape.
RLUK is here to actively support its members meet the challenges they face and seize the many opportunities available in response to these. Through its convening power and ability to represent its members, RLUK is able to harness the joint experience and knowledge of its members, and those of its stakeholder partners, for their collective benefit. It works to proactively support members in their development and delivery of their activities through its strategic research, benchmarking, facilitation of knowledge exchange, and development of tools and resources.

RLUK supports its members...

**Through its research:**

**Member benchmarking and statistics:** RLUK regularly undertakes surveys of its members to gather up-to-date information regarding the services they offer and to enable benchmarking between member institutions. Recent publications have included those relating to the impact of special collections, the development of digital humanities tools.

**Research and guidance:** RLUK frequently undertakes major pieces of research which explore key strategic areas of research library activity and disseminates the results of these in published reports, conferences papers, and member resources. Research undertaken includes that in regard to the impact of special collections, the development of Digital Humanities tools, the development and delivery of Digital Scholarship services and initiatives, and the costs to members of a move to open access. RLUK publishes the results of the research it undertakes, either in its own right, or in partnership with stakeholders. While the majority of our research outputs are open to the wider community and published on the public-area of the RLUK website, some research is made available exclusively to members.

**Case studies:** RLUK collates and shares up-to-date case studies charting member experiences around a wide variety of topics. These highlight best-practice and lessons’ learnt, and enable qualitative benchmarking between members. They are published either on the open RLUK website or within a restricted members’ area depending on the subject matter.
Through shared resources:

**Negotiated member access to external resources**: RLUK periodically negotiates access for its members to closed international resources to support them in their core functions and enable enhanced benchmarking and knowledge exchange.

**Discounted access**: RLUK membership entitles its member libraries to discounted access to OCLC’s cataloguing services.

Through its programmes:

**RLUK Professional Fellowship scheme**: A joint fellowship programme developed and delivered by RLUK and The National Archives (TNA). The Professional Fellowship scheme enables colleagues from within an RLUK member to be mentored by a colleague from TNA around a defined research or professional practice question, including an opportunity to undertake a short exchange with The National Archives.

**RLUK Space Programme**: is a flexible programme of events and resources for the benefit of members undertaking capital build or spatial reconfiguration programmes. Regular events are held throughout the year through which members are able to share their experiences of recent work undertaken or planned.

Through a shared community:

**Directors list**: RLUK maintains a closed JiscMail list for the directors of its member libraries. This acts as an exclusive forum for debate and discussion between senior library representatives and is used for confidential knowledge exchange and sign-posting of opportunities and strategic developments.

**Virtual assemblies**: are closed discussion forums held virtually via videoconference for RLUK member representatives. They enable members to explore and discuss issues of strategic importance without the need for a physical meeting.

**RLUK website members’ area**: this is a closed area of the RLUK website which is open only to members. It contains member-generated resources and materials including case studies, reports, and notices of forthcoming events. RLUK envisages that this will represent a growing and established resource as more content is added and larger numbers of member representatives subscribe to the members’ area.
RLUK is here to advocate on behalf of its members around many of the major issues affecting them to policy makers, funders, publishers, and the wider research and scholarly communities. RLUK’s ability to convene and represent the collective voice of its members, the strength of its stakeholder and strategic relations, and its membership of wider bodies and consortia, enable it to maximise its voice for the benefit of its members.

Recent areas around which RLUK has advocated on behalf of its members include around open access, transformative deal and subscription costs, scholarly communications, copyright and licensing and the future of the research library collection.

RLUK advocates on behalf of its members by...

**Statements, briefings, and opinion pieces:** RLUK proactively formulates and publishes statements regarding key issues facing its members on a diverse range of topics. Whether in its own name, or via groupings and associations such as the Libraries and Archives Copyright Alliance and Copyright for Knowledge, RLUK seeks to influence policy makers and highlight the value work of research libraries across a range of disciplines, areas, and activities.

**International advocacy:** RLUK advocates on behalf of its members as an active participant in international fora such as the International Alliance of Research Library Associations (IARLA), the European Alliance for Research Excellence (EARE), and the Association of European Research Libraries (LIBER). In doing so, RLUK showcases the work of its members and their contribution to overarching trans-national initiatives.

**Ministerial letters:** RLUK regularly adds its signature to letters to ministers and policy makers regarding key issues facing research libraries.

**Critical friendship:** RLUK advocates for its members when responding to organisational or sectoral consultations undertaken by its stakeholders and partners.

**Public presentations:** Members of the RLUK Executive and Board frequently present at major-cross sector conferences and events aimed at influencing decision and policy makers, and in order to showcase the role of research libraries in supporting key public-policy, government, and societal agendas.

**Internal advocacy:** RLUK is also there to support members with their own internal advocacy, and to act as an external voice highlighting the role that research libraries play within their home institutions.