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Opportunity Profile

University Librarian and Dean, University Library



The University

www.usask.ca

The University of Saskatchewan's main campus is located in the vibrant City of Saskatoon on Treaty 6 territory and the traditional homeland of the Métis. USask is dedicated to Indigenous student success, to fostering meaningful relationships with Indigenous communities, and to promoting Indigenous knowledges and scholarship. Through collaboration, innovation, respect and humility, the University fosters a welcoming environment that is grounded in the principles of reconciliation and together we are uplifting Indigenization to a place of prominence at the University of Saskatchewan.

The University of Saskatchewan (USask) is one of Canada's most historic and distinguished universities. Established in 1907, USask is a member of the U15 Group of Canadian research-intensive universities and is one of few universities to hold multiple research chairs. It is ranked in the top 2% of universities worldwide across rankings organization, and is known for its collaborative, interdisciplinary approaches to tackling some of the greatest global challenges of our era — vaccine development and infectious diseases, water and food security, and energy sustainability to name just a few.

USask is a top-tier research-intensive university in Canada. In 2024, USask was awarded \$416 million in research funding, supporting the university's signature areas of research which include agriculture, water security, energy and mineral resources, communities and sustainability, health and wellness, quantum

innovation, “one health” (an integrated approach to animal, human and environmental health), Indigenous peoples, and innovative applications of Canada’s only synchrotron research facility, the USask-owned Canadian Light Source. USask’s Global Institute for Water Security is home to the world’s largest university-led freshwater research program, Global Water futures, a \$301-million investment with more than 475 partners around the world.

More than 26,000 students from 130 countries study at USask which offers over 150 academic programs and has 13 colleges, three graduate schools, and six affiliated or federated colleges. Study is enhanced by world-class research centres, including the Canadian Light Source, Global Institute for Water Security, the Vaccine and Infectious Disease Organization, Global Institute for Food Security, Crop Development Centre, Health Sciences Complex, and Saskatchewan Centre for Cyclotron Sciences operated by the university’s Sylvia Fedoruk Canadian Centre for Nuclear Innovation.

Students, faculty, researchers, and staff enjoy a high level of support typical of a smaller university, creating an environment that inspires collaboration, innovation, and discovery. There are more than 100 student clubs, five on-campus museums and art galleries (Diefenbaker Canada Centre, USask Art Galleries, Museum of Antiquities, Museum of Natural Sciences, St. Thomas More Gallery), the Canadian Hub for Applied and Social Research, a state-of-the-art Physical Activity Complex, and the multi-sports complex Merlis Belsher Place. Each year USask also invests more than \$57 million in the form of scholarships, bursaries, tuition waivers, and crisis aid for domestic and international undergraduate and graduate students.

USask’s more than 170,000 living alumni are spread across the world. Alumni include 73 Rhodes Scholars, two Nobel Prize winners, five Olympic gold medalists, one Prime Minister of Canada, nine premiers of Canadian provinces, three Justices of the Supreme Court of Canada, and one Oscar winner. Its graduates, recognized for their work ethic, resourceful nature, and determination, will continue to build on a long history of success to address the world’s challenges now and in the future.

[Learn more about USask’s mission, vision and values.](#)



The University Library

library.usask.ca

The University Library is one of Canada's leading research-intensive libraries. It aspires to be an intellectual hub where people, information and ideas connect to create and share knowledge. Its core purpose is to advance learning, research and collaborations across the University's diverse community through the unique combination of academic support services, inclusive spaces, and relevant and distinctive collections. With six campus locations, archives and special collections, learning commons, digital research centre and two help centres, the library's 115 full-time (equivalent) faculty and staff serve over 30,000 University of Saskatchewan faculty, staff and students. Access to extensive print, digital, archival and special collections is accessible year-round, and these collections, services and facilities provide support to learners, teachers, researchers, scholars and the community.

The University Library houses several important collections and resources, and provides critical teaching, learning and academic supports.

- [Digital Research Centre](#) and [Projects](#): is committed to advancing research, teaching, and engagement by digitizing resources, improving the digital experience and supporting digital scholarship. Research projects are diverse, from art to science, health and Indigenous studies.
- [iPortal](#) – the University Library's Indigenous Studies Portal is one of the most successful initiatives in the University Library's history and has often been cited as one of the best examples of an Indigenous content-focused information resource. Libraries across Canada and around the world have linked to the iPortal for a decade or more.

- [Leung Far Eastern Studies Collection](#): one of the largest and most significant Chinese book collections in Canada that consists of approximately 45,000 print items relating to a broad range of far-eastern history and culture, including material relating to Japan, Mongolia, Malaysia and Tibet.
- [Neil Richards Collection of Sexual and Gender Diversity](#): a collection of published materials including books (both fiction and non-fiction), periodicals, and videos that cover many aspects of the history and literature of sexual and gender diversity.
- [Student Learning Hub](#): critical academic support services providing diverse teaching, learning, and curriculum resources in a variety of areas.
- [University Archives and Special Collections](#): the valuable records of the university and includes materials related to Saskatchewan, Western Canada, and works by university authors. It includes the Link Gallery as a major exhibition space and rotating exhibitions throughout the Murray Library.

The University Library is dedicated to creating an open and inclusive environment that respects and elevates Indigenous voices and perspectives. The evolving action plan advances the gifted [ohpahotân I oohpaahotaan](#) (the University of Saskatchewan's Indigenous Strategy) ensuring that the library remains a welcoming, responsive and accessible space for everyone.

[Strategic Framework 2025](#) of the University Library builds on the [University Plan 2025](#) and identifies nine key commitments, now falling under four core commitments:

1. Decolonize the Library

2. Build Research Infrastructure

- 2.1 Develop research support
- 2.2 Illustrate the research lifecycle
- 2.3 Intensify preservation

3. Enhance student learning

- 3.1 Enrich academic skills
- 3.2 Strengthen the academic experience

4. Foster Academic Community

- 4.1 Transform library spaces
- 4.2 Delight users
- 4.3 Champion open scholarship

Recent accomplishments that highlight the University Library's commitments in action include:

- [Indigenous Storyteller in Residence](#) an initiative launched in 2021 to support the University Library's goal to be an open and inclusive environment that respects and uplifts Indigenous voices and perspectives. Indigenous artists develop their storytelling in an environment that supports and

encourages creative expression, which is a significant opportunity for the library and wider university to hear and learn from Indigenous perspectives through storytelling.

- The [University Library Master Plan](#) (2017-2027) provides a framework for the continued evolution of library spaces over a 10-year period. This includes initiatives to improve sustainability, enhance learning spaces and preserve distinctive collections. The Murray Library renewal work is a recent, ongoing project, and the renovation of its 5th floor will be the future home of the University Archives and Special Collections.

University Library strategy and plans, <https://library.usask.ca/about/organization.php>

Community Consultation Feedback

Consultation has been a key part of the search process. In the initial stages of this search, we consulted with stakeholders and representatives, including members of the Search Committee, regarding the current priorities, challenges, and opportunities for the new University Librarian and Dean, University Library (University Librarian/Dean). The following represents a summary of key themes that emerged.

- **Strategic priorities** – develop an actionable strategic plan – working in collaboration with senior leaders, library faculty and staff – that enhances library services, reputation and connections across campus. Continue to grow the University Library’s profile, actively building and maintaining partnerships internal and external to the library.
- **Indigenization, decolonization, equity, diversity, inclusion, accessibility** – develop and execute on a strategic plan that ensures continued action-oriented commitment, with clear and measurable objectives, to EDIA, Indigenization and anti-racism, including on-going training for employees.
- **Research** – support and champion library faculty research projects and related endeavours, raising the profile of the faculty’s research. Ensure a clear commitment to working with the VP Research to expand research partnerships and provide innovative library supports for researchers.
- **Culture** – create a shared vision and positive shift in culture. Excellent communication, leadership, change management, and interpersonal skills are critical. Key interpersonal skills identified were inclusive, inspiring, restorative, collaborative leadership, providing supports and initiating change, as needed.
- **Advocacy** – authentic and skilled communicator, relationship-builder and advocate. The University Librarian/Dean will establish trust, respect, and strong collaborative relationships between staff, library faculty, students, researchers, key partners, and stakeholders.
- **Organizational assessment** – evaluate the current organizational structure, and recent restructuring, which has impacted the responsibilities/roles and workload of employees. Consultation with the community is essential as the structure is assessed and change is considered and/or implemented.



The Role

The University of Saskatchewan is seeking an innovative, inclusive and strategic leader as its University Librarian and Dean, University Library. This person has the ambition to advance how the University Library supports USask's unwavering commitment to excellence in research, scholarly and artistic works.

Reporting to the Provost and Vice-President Academic, the University Librarian/Dean serves in multiple and significant academic leadership roles. The University Librarian/Dean is a member of the senior leadership team of the University, the Chief Academic and Executive Officer of the University Library, and the primary ambassador responsible for the presence and reputation of the University Library in the community.

As one of the senior leaders in the University, the University Librarian/Dean plays a central role in setting strategy and overall direction; advises the President, the Provost, and other Vice Presidents; works collaboratively with and supports other leaders to achieve university goals; uses influence to align the University Library with university priorities; and models institutional values and competencies.

The University Librarian/Dean is responsible for ensuring the scholarly quality and integrity of the University Library, in scholarly activity and research, scholarly and artistic works, teaching, outreach and community engagement. The University Librarian/Dean is the highest-ranking official in the University Library with wide responsibility over all aspects of the library's functioning. In this context the University Librarian/Dean is accountable for the creation and implementation of the library's strategic and action plans and directions including comprehensive budget management to support the library's plans and ensuring outcomes are achieved.

Major responsibilities include: leading the University Library planning processes (strategic, people, fundraising); developing principles and initiatives for Indigenization; managing and providing oversight for the University Library budget to align with university priorities and the University Library mandate;

identifying and promoting high standards in research scholarly and artistic works, learning and teaching, outreach and community engagement; monitoring and improving performance to ensure outcomes; promoting positive relationships internally and externally; and identifying and pursuing opportunities to garner financial and other forms of support to enhance the long-term growth and success of research, scholarly and artistic works, and learning and teaching through growth and diversification of revenue sources for the University Library and University.

To carry out these responsibilities the University Librarian/Dean works with a leadership team that complements their strengths to ensure effective outcomes for the University Library and the university. The University Librarian/Dean must lead and manage in a highly unionized environment with multiple collective bargaining agreements.

[University Librarian and Dean, University Library Executive Team](#)

- Associate Dean, Research and Collections
- Associate Dean, Academic Engagement
- Director, External Engagement
- Strategic Business Advisor, Human Resources
- Strategic Business Advisor, Finance

The University Librarian/Dean is the primary spokesperson and ambassador for the University Library. The University Librarian/Dean promotes the University Library and the university by participating in events pertinent to the library and/or university. Events can be local, provincial, national or international and touch on research, teaching or extension of university outcomes into the community. The University Librarian/Dean, in collaboration with senior colleagues, oversees the fundraising, communications, alumni engagement activities and engages in authentic collaboration and consultation with internal and external stakeholders of the University Library.

A university for everyone. The University of Saskatchewan strives to be the university the world needs. Building on its [EDI Framework for Action](#), it is committed to equity, diversity and inclusion and believes equity, diversity and inclusion, and a sense of belonging strengthen the community and enhance excellence, innovation, and creativity in all domains. USask's vision is to be an outstanding institution of research, learning, knowledge-keeping, reconciliation, and inclusion with and by Indigenous peoples and communities. Advancing the gifted [ohpahotân | oohpaahotaan](#) (the University of Saskatchewan's Indigenous Strategy), the University Librarian/Dean will engage with Indigenous communities, respect the significance of Indigenous traditions and knowledge, and support the teaching, learning and research of Indigenous and non-Indigenous students, staff, faculty, and leaders.

Nature of the Work

The University Librarian/Dean is responsible for providing strategic and innovative leadership to the University Library as its Chief Academic and Executive Officer. The University Librarian/Dean will be an innovative and creative thinker with a vision of how to harness opportunities and respond to challenges facing the University Library. They will have a demonstrated record of successful innovation in a changing library environment including proven experience in strategic planning and change management, including effectively managing change. The University Librarian/Dean will have strengths in financial management and budget leadership. Overall, academic values as described in the USask vision, plan and priorities will lead decision making, and budget realities will inform these. Communication is a highly evolved skill for the University Librarian/Dean.

As a member of the senior leadership team, the University Librarian/Dean works in collaboration with academic leaders, senior administrators and staff, and other key stakeholders to implement and proactively advance the University of Saskatchewan's Strategic Plan and objectives. Building off prior administrative experience, the University Librarian/Dean will build effective relationships to promote and advance the Library within the University of Saskatchewan and with key partners regionally, nationally, and internationally. The University Librarian/Dean will think strategically and communicate effectively. They have a proven commitment to mentor and encourage library faculty in scholarly and professional activity. The University Librarian/Dean will contribute to the profession through scholarly works, presentations and research.

The University Librarian/Dean functions in a highly demanding environment that requires constant scanning for issues and challenges against multiple priorities and demands on its limited resources. Prioritization of time and resources, and leadership of teams to achieve important outcomes, including enhanced research and scholarly activity intensity, are central to the role. The work is of high volume and is complex. The University Librarian/Dean is expected to engage in continuous improvement, delegate tasks and decisions, and prioritize the activities that are mission-critical for the University and the University Library. The capacity to multi-process and lead change effectively is required. The University Librarian/Dean will possess outstanding proactive leadership skills, including a commitment to action and a demonstrated ability to inspire and mobilize others to achieve exemplary performance and outcomes.

Accountabilities

Institutional Planning

The University Librarian/Dean holds primary responsibility for developing and implementing University Library-level planning processes. They will ensure alignment of academic and administrative plans, interests, and outcomes with broader institutional plans.

Resource Allocation Alignment

The University Librarian/Dean develops and implements integrated plans and a multi-year budget framework that supports the University's priorities by allocating resources at University Library-level to align and support the outcomes of institutional plans. Achieving institutional objectives while ensuring the long-term growth and sustainability of the University Library for which they are responsible, along with the University's resources is a key accountability.

Academic Strategy

The University Librarian/Dean assumes a leadership role in the creation of the University Library strategy and action plan aligned with the institution's strategic plan including pedagogy, student and faculty recruitment, academic policies and structures, along with research, scholarship and artistic works, advancement, and external engagement missions of the institution.

The University Librarian/Dean will:

- work to ensure advice is provided and actions taken consistent with the ohpahotân | oohpaahotaan strategy;
- engage in practices that contribute to plans associated with the University 2025 plan, including related plans (e.g. international, sustainability, EDI, ICT); and
- take action aligned with the University's Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy and framework for action.

People Leadership

The University Librarian/Dean is primarily responsible for the performance of the University Library by providing leadership to leaders, staff, faculty, and students in their unit. The development of future and current leaders is a key responsibility.



Institutional Leadership

As an academic leader, the University Librarian/Dean is expected to:

- be an effective and co-operative member of the provost's leadership team and related senior leadership forums;
- sponsor to projects that may be outside of the University Librarian/Dean's portfolio; and
- liaise with external bodies on behalf of the provost.

In each of these accountabilities, it is expected that the University Librarian/Dean will:

- take action for Indigenous rights, and for truth and reconciliation;
- take action against racism, oppression; and harassment and discrimination;
- provide credible and complete information regarding the library and identify issues and risks to the provost, the Deans and Executive Directors of Schools, and other relevant roles and committees, as appropriate;
- implement and maintain an effective system of financial management and assets, which includes general safeguarding and stewardship of all resources (financial, physical, and human resources);
- model accountability and transparency of activities, information, and reports; and
- be an exceptional communicator.

External Engagement

In collaboration with the vice presidents, government relations, and the provost, the University Librarian/Dean assumes a leadership role, in advancement and external relations actions, including (where

appropriate for the unit) alumni and donor relations, emeritus faculty and retirees, and towards government investment in research, programming and facilities.

Well-Being Leadership

As an academic leader, the University Librarian/Dean is expected to:

- demonstrate well-being as a leader, through practices attentive to their health, well-being, and life-long learning.

Experience and Education

The ideal candidate will have a strong commitment to academic librarianship, will possess excellent interpersonal skills, and will be a visionary who is able to lead the University Library in all its activities.

- ALA-accredited Master of Library and Information Science degree or international equivalent is required; doctoral degree is preferred but not required;
- Eligibility for appointment at the rank of Librarian is required;
- Proven record of senior administration and leadership within an academic research library system is required; experience in a similar sized academic institution and/or multi-library system is preferred;
- Proven financial management skills with experience administering budgets and leading large teams is required;
- Demonstrated champion, interest and capacity for conducting research, with an existing research portfolio, is an asset.

Competencies

Competencies are the knowledge, skills, and abilities that support success. Each person brings different combinations of competencies to their position. The competencies below are the desired attributes that support the University of Saskatchewan's Strategic Directions and People Values. All are applicable in varying degrees depending on the expectations of the job.

Engage - Committed to advancing the aspirations of the people of the University, province, and beyond.

Include - Building a welcoming and accessible place where diverse students, faculty, and staff feel a sense of belonging.

Collaborate - Intentionally seeking relationships across teams, disciplines, and capacities to achieve results.

Advocate - Developing and supporting each other, innovative ideas, and Indigenous knowledge in pursuit of the University's strategic priorities.



Saskatoon, Saskatchewan

Saskatoon is a growing, thriving community on the banks of the South Saskatchewan River, graced with the vibrant beauty of nature, parks and green spaces. It sits on Treaty 6 Territory and the traditional Homeland of the Métis and is committed to reconciliation with Indigenous communities, working to actively promote reconciliation in the community.

The largest city in Saskatchewan, with a population just over 284,000 (close to 350,00 in the metro area), people choose Saskatoon as their place to live, work and raise a family for a variety of reasons. Saskatoon is a city with a diverse and thriving economic base, a vibrant arts community, and a full range of leisure opportunities. The city's arts and cultural scene includes the Remai Modern Art Gallery, Shakespeare on the Saskatchewan, the Saskatoon Symphony Orchestra, two independent movie theatres (Broadway Theatre and Roxy Theatre), Persephone Theatre, the SaskTel Saskatchewan Jazz Festival, and Wanuskewin Heritage Park. The city has a wide array of restaurants, several local breweries and distilleries, and offers a variety of recreational opportunities such as classes, recreational leagues, and semi-professional sporting events.

The city has a young demographic that welcomes people from all over Canada and the world, a diverse, multicultural city with over half the population under 40. Saskatoon has a strong, diversified economy that serves as an economic engine for the province. In a recent labour force survey, it led Canada with the highest employment growth rate and employment rate. Saskatoon enjoys one of the lowest costs of living among major cities in Canada, combined with low unemployment and a growing economy. Residents of Saskatoon have access to many public walking/biking trails along the South Saskatchewan River and enjoy short commute times. Apartment rental costs and house prices are lower than many other places in the country. Saskatchewan is also known for its world-class outdoor activities such as camping and fishing.

For more information on Saskatoon visit [City of Saskatoon](#) and [Tourism Saskatoon](#).

To Apply

To apply for this significant leadership opportunity with the University of Saskatchewan, send a cover letter and resume in confidence to **Heather Fookes or Shalini Bhatt** at:
saskatoon@leadersinternational.com

The University of Saskatchewan believes equity, diversity and inclusion strengthen the community and enhance excellence, innovation and creativity. The University is dedicated to recruiting individuals who will enrich its work and learning environments and encourages applications from Indigenous persons, persons with a disability, racialized persons, women, persons of a minority sexual orientation and/or gender identity, and all candidates who would contribute to the diversity of its community. We encourage you to self-identify in your cover letter.

For applicants with disabilities, we want to ensure your success. If you require any accommodations throughout the recruitment, selection and/or assessment process, please advise Leaders International and the University of Saskatchewan.

Leaders International Executive Search

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