



Libraries in Leeds Network

Terms of Reference

1. About the network.

Libraries in Leeds is a collaborative network incorporating the libraries and archives based in the city of Leeds who deliver a unique range of services in support of the city's key priorities.

The network, through its unique range of facilities, expertise and resources delivers exemplary information, cultural and digital for local communities, visitors to the city and researchers from all over the world.

2. History of the network.

Members in the network first met pre-pandemic and discovered that although they operated in different sectors across the city they had much in common. In October 2022, an inaugural meeting was held in Leeds Central Library to discuss the vision for this umbrella group of professionals whose expertise and knowledge serves many sectors across the city.

The network was established through a group of volunteers who could see the potential of the libraries sector within Leeds. The network was initially led by an informal steering group comprising of the volunteers and interested parties (representing several of the sub-categories).

In October 2023 it was agreed that for the network to continue to thrive it was necessary to adopt Terms of Reference for effective governance and agree upon a model to ensure financial sustainability.

3. Aims of the network.

- 3.1** Create an exciting and positive narrative around the value that the rich eco-system of libraries bring to the city of Leeds and its surrounding areas by working collaboratively.
- 3.2** Contribute to the three key dimensions of Inclusive Growth Strategy 2023-2030 for Leeds, which are: People, Place, and Productivity.

- 3.3 Power the local knowledge economy by unlocking collections and resources to improve access for local communities.
- 3.4 Promote the development of its members and the professional development of their personnel by exchanging knowledge and openly sharing best practice.

4 Membership, Accountability and Decision-Making

4.1 Membership

- 4.1.1 Any library, archive, or organisation that provides information, cultural, and digital expertise and resources to local communities within the city of Leeds is eligible to become a member of Libraries In Leeds network.
- 4.1.2 Final decision for all membership enquiries reside with the Libraries in Leeds Steering Group.

4.2 Accountability and Decision Making

Libraries in Leeds Steering Group

- 4.2.1 Libraries in Leeds network development and leadership will be provided by a Steering Group comprising the Chair and Vice-Chair. In addition to these two roles, there may be up to five additional members on the Steering Group.
- 4.2.2 To provide a balanced Steering Group, only one person from any organisation can be part of the Steering Group.
- 4.2.3 Steering Group members will be elected for a two-year term, renewable by another 2 years. The exception to this would be the Vice-Chair role, which will automatically move into Chair role for a two-year term.
- 4.2.4 Steering Group members will be represented by its Head of Service, or a nominated person, who holds considerable decision-making authority for their service.
- 4.2.5 Steering Group members are expected to spend an average of around one day effort every six weeks on Network activities, although around events and meetings, this is likely to increase.
- 4.2.6 The Steering Group would be responsible for developing the Annual Plan for the network, which will be formally shared with members in the April network meeting.
- 4.2.7 The Steering Group may create Task & Finish Groups to develop and progress parts of the Annual Plan.

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- 4.2.8** Full meetings of the network will be held four times a year. The four meetings are to be held in July, September, January, and April of each year. The Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the network will be augmented to the meeting in July.
- 4.2.9** The primary purpose of the network meetings is to keep members informed of the wider activities, share expertise and knowledge, seek feedback, provide networking and peer support opportunities, and identify opportunities for working together.

5 Finances

- 5.1** Membership fees support the Libraries in Leeds network to provide network administration, publicity, shared services, and events including the annual Libraries in Leeds festival.
- 5.2** Each member service shall pay membership fees annually due by 31st July. A financial review will be held annually at the April meeting of the network, which will agree through consensus, the level of fee for the following financial year. Membership fee, at a minimal, is expected to increase by CPI every year capped to a maximum of 3%.
- 5.3** If a member wishes to join (or leave) the Network mid-cycle its annual membership fee shall be calculated on a pro rata basis by rounding it to the closest three months.
- 5.4** Membership fee will be calculated on a sliding scale linked with the budgetary power of the organisation, along with a minimal entry point and a maximum cap on fees. This is currently set at 0.05% of the annual overall budget of the member service, with a minimal £100 per annum entry point and £2000 as maximum cap on fees. Fees will be rounded up to the nearest £50.
- 5.5** For members with very small budgets, who may not be able to contribute via membership fees, other forms of in-kind contributions would be expected. This may mean providing support through venue hires, leading on groups, or by providing other forms of support.
- 5.6** Members can (and are encouraged to) become sustaining members by agreeing to a three-year financial commitment to the network.
- 5.7** A budget will be set to support activities identified within the Annual Plan. Fees are held and managed on behalf of the network by the University of Leeds.
- 5.8** An annual report on the financial position of the network will be provided by the Chair at the Annual General Meeting (AGM) in July.
- 5.9** The network may also apply to external funders as agreed in the Annual Plan.

6 Programme of work

- 6.1 Libraries in Leeds festival:** Libraries in Leeds festival is an annual flagship public event that substantially supports aims 3.1 and 3.2 of the network.
- 6.2 Information and health literacies:** A programme of activities from libraries that provide free and publicly accessible information, digital and health literacies to the local communities. Substantially supports aim 3.3 and to a lesser degree aims 3.1 and 3.2.
- 6.3 Sharing of information, knowledge, and expertise:** For members, the network provides a safe space to share information, challenges, knowledge, expertise to develop and forge new alliances and partnerships. This also includes members providing tours and access to libraries to support knowledge and information sharing. Substantially supports aim 3.4.
- 6.4 Development of communities of practice or SIGs:** For members, the network provides a way to initiate specific Communities of Practice or Special Interest Groups that will help network members learn and flourish further. Examples of this include CoPs/SIGs for Library Management Systems like Koha or on the topic of Digital Preservation. Substantially supports aim 3.4.

7 Annual General Meeting

- 7.1** An AGM of the network will be held annually to consider matters such as:
- The Annual Report
 - The Annual Accounts
 - Election of Officers

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Next Review April 2025