1. Background

This role working within the digital futures division of Jisc leads on developments in digital libraries and in the digital scholarly process.

The digital futures division is the focal point for innovation, research and development within Jisc. Reporting to the deputy CIO (research), and as a member of the wider Jisc leadership team of senior managers, the head of scholarly and library futures will lead our work in support of nudging towards a new digital paradigm for scholarly communication and academic publishing. Much of the work will be project based involving collaboration and partnerships with multiple external organisations and, where necessary, the addition of resources to the digital futures team as part of the project budget and plan.

2. Purpose and scope

The head of scholarly and library futures will provide leadership on medium and long-term trends in the digital scholarly communication process, and the digital library.

The role-holder will be a strong leader and strategist, currently working at a senior level in a library, information services or research support department (or equivalent), who understands all aspects of technology and analytics in the provision of modern and developing research services, including (but not limited to): full research lifecycle; management of research data; resource discovery; citation indices and other measures of research impact; publication and library management systems; standards, protocols and techniques to allow online services to interface in a secure fashion; and researcher behaviour.

A key element will be to apply experience and analytical skills to identify developments with promise and accelerate the process of taking ideas and turning them as quickly and effectively as possible through pilot phases into professionally engineered products. The post-holder will need to work closely with the research and library communities (and associated professional bodies) and colleagues across Jisc to understand customer and stakeholders’ challenges, needs and their feedback on existing products, keeping business goals in mind to determine which ideas have the highest potential to achieve the greatest impact.

Another crucial aspect will be to employ imaginative and creative approaches to enable library and research support services to experiment and evolve to match disruptive changes in user behaviour and add value beyond those services provided commercially by the likes of Google and Microsoft.

The head of scholarly and library futures will sit in the digital futures area; the deputy chief information officer (research) will hold the formal reporting line.

3. Key accountabilities and role outputs

- Leadership of Jisc’s work on the future role and capabilities of digital scholarly communication, digital libraries, and digital scholarship for research and learning.
- Maintain their expertise and experience of cutting edge application of analytics, digital scholarship and library practice by extending and exploiting their existing network of senior library and research support
professionals through productive dialogue and partnership working; as well as engaging with innovators and early adopters.

- Keep a close watch on developments in the library and research support communities, and practices in digital scholarship, and also in digital technology, data, on-line resources and behavioural analytics, liaising as appropriate with futures colleagues, Jisc group colleagues and appropriate professional associations.
- Provide to Jisc leadership team a regular view and analysis of some of the upcoming trends in technologies and techniques in the context of the evolving requirements of professionals engaged in the scholarly process.
- Oversight and responsibility for practical projects and experimentation in that context in areas such as, but not limited to:
  - Digital scholarly communication and publishing
  - Digital preservation
  - Management of research data
  - Resource discovery infrastructure
  - Citation indices and other measures of impact
  - Digital library systems and services
  - Standards, protocols and techniques that allow on-line services to interface securely
- Ensure considerable momentum and purpose in pursuit of practical benefits for Jisc’s customers from this work.
- Develop strong networks with organisations, individuals and associations representing library professionals, both national and international, and creative alliances and partnerships that foster and advance the above.

4. Skills, knowledge and experience

**Essential**

- Track record of work at a senior level in a library, information service or research support function
- Demonstrate a strong understanding of the application of technology and analytics in an information services environment, and an ability to articulate the benefits of these approaches to stakeholders at the most senior levels
- Experience in planning and overseeing a programme of experimental projects with Jisc colleagues and appropriate professional communities, to time and budget, and managing the staff working in these activities
- Strong presentation and interpersonal skills, with the ability to deliver analytical information and data in a way that engages both internal and external stakeholders
- Strong networking, collaboration and partnership skills
- Entrepreneurial skills, able to pitch ideas and concepts for further development with senior management, funders and customers
- The ability to represent Jisc and its interests at global forums and contribute fully to international debates on library and scholarship issues that will directly affect UK education and research
- An understanding of the key standards that relate to resource discovery, resource infrastructure, open educational resources and those applications that enable services to work together in secure and seamless ways
- Ability to work on their own initiative and to be a team player
- Excellent, proven team management skills

5. Key contacts

- Jisc chief executive
- Heads of Jisc corporate functions and senior managers across the organisation
- Funding bodies
- Jisc leadership team members and teams
- Higher education/further education stakeholders
- Customer and sector representatives at all levels
- Jisc partners and collaborators including commercial providers