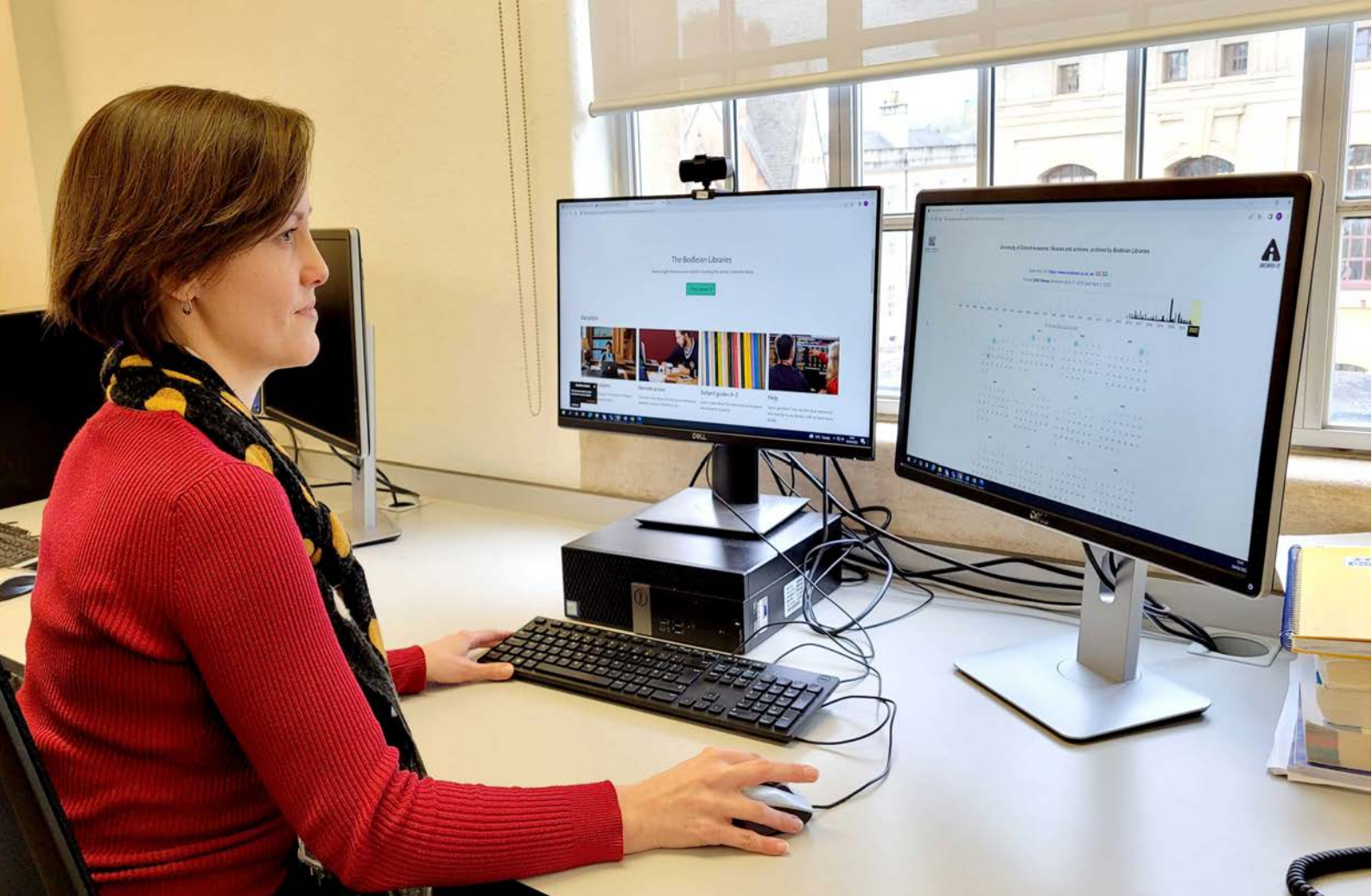


Future Bodleian

Transforming scholarship and enhancing access for people across the globe





Cover image: Bodley's Librarian Richard Ovenden with the Grazer cradle in the Bodleian's imaging studio © Oxford University Images
Above: Trainee digital archivist Francesca Miller © Bodleian Libraries, University of Oxford

Introduction

The Bodleian Libraries, the research libraries of the University of Oxford, have stood at the forefront of the preservation and dissemination of knowledge for over 400 years. Its holdings are drawn from every corner of the globe and include some of the world's rarest and oldest books, such as Shakespeare's First Folio and the Gutenberg Bible. Its extraordinary holdings range from Jane Austen's fiction manuscripts to J R R Tolkien's original sketches for his children to the oldest surviving manuscripts of Plato's dialogues. The Bodleian's collections are international in scope and are an irreplaceable contribution to world scholarship.

Throughout its history, the Bodleian has constantly been expanding and innovating, incorporating an ever-growing corpus of materials to best serve the needs of students, scholars and the public. This pioneering spirit continues today with a mission to bring the vast collections of the Bodleian online and provide a secure digital infrastructure for contemporary scholarship. This bold venture began in the 1990s and the Bodleian has now built a digital library of over 1.3 million pages of manuscripts, rare books, printed ephemera, maps, photographs and other rare materials.

Alongside the Bodleian's immense and historic collections, Oxford's standing as a world-leading university, its contributions to global teaching and research and its convening power make it the ideal location to transform the libraries' digital holdings and open up the Bodleian's enormous collections to global scholarship. The Bodleian has numerous partnerships with other world-leading organisations ranging from the Vatican Library to Google to GitHub.

The Bodleian Libraries are therefore ideally positioned to embrace the opportunities that digitisation presents and to help shape the future of international scholarship.

The Bodleian has launched the Future Bodleian campaign to expand resources and infrastructure to accommodate the needs of digital scholars across the world and to respond to the ever changing nature of how information is created, stored and accessed.



Above: The recent digitisation of early Chinese acquisitions: set-up in imaging studio on Grazer cradle © Bodleian Libraries, University of Oxford

Future Bodleian has five main goals:

1. *Unlocking the library*

By increasing the scale and transforming the scope of digital.bodleian (the Bodleian's digital library collections) the digitisation of materials will be accelerated, allowing the digitisation programme to become more inclusive and meet the needs of contemporary scholars and researchers.

2. *Preserving our digital world*

By creating a world-leading centre for born-digital collections, where the digital 'papers' of high profile writers, thinkers, politicians and scientists are curated and preserved, it will be possible to capture a more complete record of their works, reflecting the multi-channel nature of today.

We also seek to establish a web-archiving centre where ephemeral knowledge on the web can be captured and preserved for future scholarship.

In addition, we will develop the world's first social media archive through collaboration with the tech industry and Oxford's leading data scientists.

3. *Digital stacks*

To deliver an ambitious programme of digitisation, it will be necessary to ensure the long-term accessibility of the Bodleian's collections through an innovative digital preservation programme, a staff training and continuous development initiative, investment in infrastructure and the creation of a research and development section for the Bodleian.

4. *Digital scholarship*

Future Bodleian will not only improve how collections are captured, stored and accessed, it will also require

a transformation in how research and teaching are approached to maximise the potential of the Bodleian's digital collections and how they relate to academia across the world. By building on already established programmes in Digital Humanities, for example, scholars and students will be able to interrogate the full range of the Bodleian's collections.

5. *A global digital dialogue*

In order to both drive use of the digitised and born-digital content, and enable a broader appreciation of the material, a wide-ranging digital outreach initiative is vital. This would enhance understanding and encourage dialogue with communities across the globe, supporting activities such as citizen science and data enrichment.

Conclusion

We are committed to helping transform scholarship and enhance access to the Bodleian's exquisite collections for people across the globe. Such a transformative leap in engagement with digital technologies and data will unlock this unique store of the world's cultural and scientific heritage.

By fully embracing the opportunities that the digital age presents, such as the application of AI to uncover new connections and new insights, scholarship will be revolutionised by shedding new light and making previously unknown connections. Future Bodleian will ensure that the cultural and scientific legacy of the present and future, in digital form, can be preserved, enhanced and explored for generations to come.



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Above: View from a window overlooking the School's Quad, The Old Bodleian © Oxford University Images / Photovibe