



**Libraries
Connected**

President Elect recruitment pack

August 2022



1. Welcome from Ayub Khan, President

Dear Libraries Connected member,

I'm delighted that you are interested in helping to shape, grow and lead the future for Libraries Connected. As the membership organisation for public library leaders in England, Wales, Northern Ireland and the Crown Dependencies, we belong to you and the role of President has a vital role in ensuring we remain rooted in our membership.

Our vision is an inclusive, modern, sustainable and high quality public library service at the heart of every community in the UK. We believe modern public libraries should be the cornerstone of the community and should deliver a diverse spectrum of local needs around information, learning, literacy, employment and digital skills, health, culture and leisure.

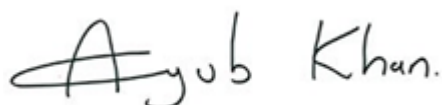
In April 2018 we became a sector support organisation receiving core funding from ACE, which supplements our other funding from membership fees, grants, and earned income. We have applied for a further period of core funding as an ACE Investment Principles Support Organisation for 2023-2026. We have a small paid team, and a robust four-year business plan that will see us diversify our income streams, enhance the sector support we currently offer and bring together the diverse strands of our existing work. This will ensure a strong national voice and a dynamic, forward-looking approach to supporting the public library sector at a time of significant change and challenge.

We are now seeking nominations for President Elect, to serve from **November 2022 to June 2024** and thereafter as President from **June 2024-2026**, and for one more year as Past President. Throughout this period, he/she will also be a member of the Board of Trustees. The term of office for the position of President Elect is slightly longer than usual to cover current Trustee turnover.

The Board of Trustees is responsible for providing the organisation with effective challenge and scrutiny and is collectively responsible for setting and reviewing our strategic direction, in line with Libraries Connected charitable objectives.

Our President is a key role for our organisation, as a confident figurehead with vision, expertise and creativity to help us develop and grow our role as a Sector Support Organisation. It's a role I feel honoured to hold, as well as immensely rewarding and inspiring as I am privileged to see so much innovation and determination across our sector.

This information pack will provide you with information about the organisation's mission, core purposes and future plans and details about the key skills and attributes we are looking for in the President.



Ayub Khan
Libraries Connected President



2. Introduction to Libraries Connected

Our **charitable objects** are to advance the education of the public by assisting in the establishment, maintenance, operation and development of libraries and library services in the United Kingdom.

Libraries Connected (previously SCL) has been supporting and leading libraries since 1993. In that time, we have represented public libraries on national forums, attracted additional funding and partnerships to the public library sector and developed a number of tools and frameworks for service delivery that over 80% of public library services in England and Wales have signed up to, which support a high-quality library service for the public.

As a sector support membership organisation, our mission is to:

- **Represent** the public library sector nationally, regionally and locally and to communicate the value of libraries to decision makers and to a limited extent to the general public
- **Connect** partners to local libraries, by brokering national partnerships with a wide range of partners around the delivery of services and for the attraction of funds, by working together and making optimal use of resources
- **Improve** the provision of local library services by developing and disseminating standards of best practice, provide training and development for library staff and facilitating a network of library leaders across the UK
- **Drive** innovation and new thinking around the important role of libraries in a modern society

We have developed **five strategic outcomes** as a framework for our activities in the period 2018-23. These goals have been mapped onto and will support and enhance the delivery of Arts Council England's goals:

1. Public library services are relevant, well-used services at the heart of communities providing strong benefit to communities and meeting local needs
2. Public library services are responsive and able to adapt to new opportunities and challenges, using sector-wide test and learn approaches, research and evidence to inform approaches to service innovation, development and adaptation
3. The public library leadership and workforce has access to the skills and information they need to respond to changing contexts, deliver high quality service and develop and adapt new services as needed
4. The core offer of public libraries is understood by stakeholders, partners and funders, and this offer is seen as valuable and relevant to the outcomes they wish to achieve, leveraging new partnership opportunities, funding streams and increased investment
5. Libraries Connected is a strong, sustainable sector support organisation which also supports and advocates for the wider sustainability of the sector

We are in a phase of change and development, and our business plan outlines a new approach to delivering sector support activities based on the following principles:



- **'Test and learn'**

Our approach to delivering sector support services will be a “test and learn” approach, informed by intelligence and supported by data collection and evaluation of the effectiveness and impact of our activities and their influence on the sector’s impact as a whole. This kind of approach will require us to flex and change to respond to new challenges and opportunities as they occur.

- **Co-production with the public library sector**

Libraries Connected is a membership organisation that relies on its members to deliver against a mutually agreed approach. Libraries Connected has until recently relied on the voluntary contributions of members to deliver ambitious new work plans and service development approaches across the sector. We plan to build on this way of working, retaining the engagement of Libraries Connected members whilst relieving them of the responsibility to plan and deliver activities on a day-to-day basis.

- **The Universal Offers as a communications framework and organising principle**

Until now Libraries Connected has used the Universal Offers as a delivery framework for sector support services, a tool to help the sector understand its unique contribution to communities and a communications tool to express the value the sector provides to external stakeholders. Going forward we plan to bring together some of the work being undertaken separately by Universal Offer Leads and working groups to avoid duplication and ensure that learning is systematically analysed and presented so that the sector is easily able to use it as a tool for service development and improvement.

- **Partnership**

Libraries Connected values the strong partnerships it has developed with stakeholders and organisations within the library sector and other related and complimentary sectors over recent years. We will use our role as a Sector Support Organisation to strengthen existing partnerships and develop new ones for the benefit of the sector.

3. Libraries Connected’s key areas of work 2022-27

Our focus in 2022-23 is to continue to support libraries to adapt post-pandemic, to complete our suite of major projects and to consolidate our organisation ahead of our new four-year strategic plan which will be published in full later in the year.

The President will have a key role in ensuring the delivery of our new strategic plan (2023-27) and our agreed workplan as an Investment Principles Support Organisation (2022-26) and will lead the Board in developing our new strategic plan for the period beyond 2027 and our bid for the next round of ACE funding.

An outline of our new strategic plan is provided on the next page.



STRATEGY ACTION PLAN



DRIVE

WHAT WE WILL DO	OUR GOAL
Establish a Futures Hub for the libraries sector, a programme of collaborative research on the challenges and opportunities of the next decade including inequality, climate, technology and skills.	The libraries sector has the skills, knowledge and resilience to meet the challenges of the next decade.
Establish a public libraries data and evidence observatory.	Robust data and evidence play a greater role in service design, decision making and learning by public libraries.
Support and promote a Public Library Service Accreditation Scheme.	More library services demonstrate the highest standards in governance, service design, audience engagement and workforce development.
Continue to deliver innovative practical and research projects based on the Universal Library Offers (Health and Wellbeing, Culture and Creativity, Information and Digital, and Reading), underpinned by the Vision and Print Impaired People's Promise and The Children and Young People's Promise.	Library leaders have stronger evidence to demonstrate the core impacts libraries make. Libraries form new partnerships with other organisations. Libraries leverage more funding from statutory, corporate and voluntary sources. Library workers have access to more practical tools and guidance to help deliver high quality events and activities.
Launch an environmental sustainability strategy for the libraries sector through the Green Libraries Partnership.	The role of libraries in achieving net zero is established, understood and embedded throughout the libraries sector. Library leaders can access practical tools, resources and advice to reduce emissions and increase sustainability.
Launch supply chain engagement programme, including series of nationally negotiated deals for all library services to use.	Library services and their users benefit from greater value for money, efficiency and effectiveness in procurement of books, content, digital systems and equipment.
Develop new commercial offers and business case models.	Library services become more financially sustainable by diversifying their income streams.



GROW

WHAT WE WILL DO	OUR GOAL
Establish career pathway research and engagement programme. Develop next generation skills programme.	The existing and next generation of library workers benefit from increased career transparency and more inclusive recruitment and progression.
Expand existing leadership and workforce development programme, including peer mentoring, bursaries, new learning modules and international networking opportunities.	Library leaders are more empowered, skilled, and attuned to the needs of their communities.
Develop codified organisational models for library services.	There is less duplication of work when services are reorganised, and organisational models coalesce around proven types.
Launch an equality, diversity and inclusion learning and development programme for library services.	Libraries become models of inclusive, diverse, and accessible local services.
Hold the Libraries Connected Awards each year.	Successes are celebrated, shared, and documented, supporting a culture of ambition in the libraries sector.



CONNECT

WHAT WE WILL DO	OUR GOAL
Stage three <i>Thought Leadership</i> events each year: seminar, webinar and conference.	The libraries sector has common positions on key issues, increasing profile and influence on policymakers and budget holders.
Provide intensive support to two regions each year.	Leadership of the libraries sector is decentralised and national delivery capacity is replicated at a regional level.
Establish a support and collaboration network for library services serving ACE Priority Places and Levelling Up for Culture Places.	Library leaders and policy makers have robust evidence on how libraries can help tackle geographical inequalities. Library services in levelling up areas have greater access to funding and partnership opportunities.
Continue to support and develop Libraries Connected online networks.	Library workers have stronger peer-to-peer relationships within the sector, which builds resilience and innovation.



ENGAGE

WHAT WE WILL DO	OUR GOAL
Establish a commission on libraries and disadvantage to review the evidence on the role of public libraries in reducing social, environmental, financial and health inequalities.	Leaders and policy makers beyond the sector champion public libraries and invest in their potential.
Strengthen existing partnerships and establish new strategic partnerships with other organisations	Libraries Connected has greater access to expertise, resources and funding to advance the aims and ambitions of the library sector.
Launch a strategic advocacy programme, including toolkit, publications, briefings and roundtable events.	Library leaders can draw on evidence-based core messages around libraries' social impact, to effectively influence local and regional decision makers.
Execute an organisational communications strategy that delivers our key messages internally (to our membership and the libraries sector) and externally (policy makers, wider public and voluntary sectors).	Internal audiences are more involved with the work of Libraries Connected and have a better understanding of the benefits of membership. External audiences have a better understanding of the impact, breadth and reach of modern library services.
Develop and execute a public affairs strategy to influence government on key policy issues relating to public libraries.	The views and interests of the libraries sector are better understood by senior decision makers and reflected in government policy.

4. Our board of Trustees

Our Board of Trustees comprises 13 trustees:

- Two people elected by Libraries Connected Members (Libraries Connected President, President Elect)
- Seven people appointed from Libraries Connected Membership on the basis of their skills and experience
- Four people appointed independent trustees.

Key role of Trustees:

- To ensure the organisation complies with our articles of association and pursues the objectives defined in them
- To ensure the organisation applies its resources exclusively in pursuance of its objectives
- To contribute actively to the Board of Trustees' role in giving firm strategic direction to the organisation, setting overall policy, defining goals and setting targets and evaluating performance against agreed targets
- To safeguard the good name and values of the organisation
- To ensure the effective and efficient administration of the organisation
- To ensure the financial stability of the organisation
- To protect and manage the property of the organisation and to ensure the proper investment of the organisation's funds
- To appoint the Chief Executive Officer and monitor his or her performance
- To ensure equality and diversity is prioritised in all aspects of the organisation's business and operation.

In addition, with other trustees, each trustee must hold the charity "in trust" for current and future beneficiaries by:

- Ensuring that the charity has a clear vision, purpose and strategic direction and is focused on achieving these
- Being responsible for the performance of the charity and for its "corporate" behaviour; ensuring that the charity complies with all legal and regulatory requirements
- Acting as guardians of the charity's assets, both tangible and intangible
- Ensuring that the charity's governance is of the highest possible standard.

As well as the various statutory duties, any trustee should make full use of any specific skills, knowledge or experience to help the Board make good decisions.

The above list of duties is indicative only. Trustees will be expected to perform all such additional duties as are reasonably proportionate with the role.

5. The President's role

The President is a key role for Libraries Connected. As our figurehead, the President provides a confident voice to advocate for public libraries and celebrate their impacts. The President also chairs the Board of Trustees, so provides strategic insights and ensures the organisation is managed responsibly.

The President is a member of Libraries Connected and is elected by the membership.

The full appointment is for the following

- **President Elect** November 2022 to June 2024
This period provides opportunities to work alongside the President as an induction to the role and also chairs the Advisory Committee.
- **President** June 2024-2026
During this period the President chairs the Board of Trustee meetings.
- **Past President** June 2026-2027
Throughout this year, the Past President supports the new President in the role and chairs the Advisory Committee.

The President Elect and Past President are effectively the vice-chair of the organisation so will have particular responsibility to support the President in developing effective governance, to deputise for the President, and will chair the Advisory Committee meetings.

This vacancy is for a candidate from Libraries Connected Membership. All Heads of Libraries (or equivalent) who are members of Libraries Connected may apply. No previous experience on the Libraries Connected Board or the Advisory Committee is required.

This is a voluntary role, but reasonable expenses will be paid.

Location: Board meetings will be scheduled throughout the year and will take place either in person at locations around the country or online. The role will involve travel to other locations across the UK and potentially abroad.

Time commitment: Approximately two days per month.

As a Board member of Libraries Connected, you will be both a director of a company and trustee of a charity. You will, therefore, have duties and responsibilities under company law and charity law. Whilst not onerous these must be taken seriously.

Details about being a trustee and the duties of a trustee can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-essential-trustee-what-you-need-to-know-cc3>

6. Person specification

The role

Person specification

Values and personal attributes and skills

These are general values and attributes that we expect all trustees to possess:

- A commitment to the mission, purposes and values of Libraries Connected
- A passion for public libraries
- A commitment to the organisation and willingness to devote time and effort
- Willingness to challenge and be challenged
- Good independent judgment and strategic vision
- An understanding and acceptance of the legal duties, responsibilities and liabilities of trusteeship
- A commitment to embedding diversity and inclusion across the organisation
- A commitment to Nolan's seven principles of standards in public life – selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership.

Knowledge and understanding

Across our Board we look for the following specific skills (and we have special interest in the areas in bold). We do not expect any the President to possess all of these skills, however any successful candidate must possess two to three of the following:

- Understanding of the role and value of libraries and commitment to supporting and improving library services.
- An understanding of the challenges of leading an organisation in its early development or in periods of significant change
- Excellent financial insight and commercial business development skills
- Strong understanding of digital communications and modern information environments
- Excellent professional communication and marketing skills and experience
- Understanding and experience of the wider cultural sector within which the Arts Council and public libraries operate
- Strong HR skills and professional background
- Professional legal qualifications and experience.

Experience

We expect candidates to able to provide examples of:

- Ability to be a confident advocate and public speaker
- Experience in chairing boards or committees
- Demonstrable experience in any of the above specialist skills
- Demonstrable experience of building and sustaining relationships with key stakeholders and colleagues to achieve organisational objectives



- A proven track record of sound judgement and effective decision-making
- A history of impartiality, fairness and the ability to respect confidences
- A track record of commitment to promoting equality and diversity

Other

- Willingness to attend Board meetings, sub-committee meetings and be available for and respond to telephone calls and electronic communication from senior management of the organisation
- Willingness to attend daytime and evening events

7. How to apply

To apply to be the President, please send a short biography, and a statement about what you would like to achieve as President to Robert Davies at robert.davies@librariesconnected.org.uk

- The deadline for the receipt of applications is 5.00pm on the **26th of September 2022**.
- All applications will be shared with the Libraries Connected membership for a process of online voting on 27st September 2022
- Voting will close on the 11th of October 2022 and the results will be announced the week beginning the 18th of October 2022
- The President Elect will formally take up the role in November 2022
- If you have any questions about applying to be a trustee before submitting your application or if you would like to discuss the role further, please feel free to contact us. Ayub Khan (President) ayubkhan@warwickshire.gov.uk or Carol Stump carolstump@gmx.co.uk (Past President) or Isobel Hunter (CEO) isobel.hunter@librariesconnected.org.uk



Email:
info@librariesconnected.org.uk

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Or join our mailing list at:
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