



MIT Libraries Director of Research Data Services Position Description

The Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) libraries seeks nominations and applications for the Director of Research Data Services position. The Director of Research Data Services will be responsible for developing an operational strategy for the Department of Data and Specialized Services (DSS) that entails allocating resources and supporting various activities and services.

The new Director will supervise five full-time team members and co-supervise two team members with limited percentage duties from the Liaison, Instruction, and Reference Services (LIRS) department. Additionally, they will serve as an external collaborator, connecting with other MIT libraries departments and partnering with the broader MIT community and beyond to form lasting relationships and improve the services the department can offer.

The incumbent will report to Alexia Hudson-Ward, Associate Director of Research, Learning, and Strategic Partnerships. She is one of the profession's leading experts in operationalizing inclusive excellence and holds a BA from Temple University, an MLIS from the University of Pittsburgh and is a Simmons University doctoral candidate in managerial leadership in the information professions. Before joining the MIT Libraries in October 2020, Alexia was Oberlin College's Azariah Smith Root Director of Libraries for four years.

The Position

Research data is the essential component of MIT that fuels the actualization of the Institute's mission and vision to “advance knowledge and educate students in science, technology, and other areas of scholarship that will best serve the nation and the world in the 21st century.” The Libraries serves as a key partner within the Institute’s research enterprise by supporting researchers in managing, storing, curating, and sharing data for various research and educational uses.

[The Libraries data services vision and mission](#) affirms research data as a strategic asset and a global public good. The MIT Libraries work to democratize access to data that is ethically created and responsibly managed, in the service of advancing knowledge and solving great challenges. A world where enduring, equitable, and [open access to research data](#) serves to increase public trust in science and other forms of data-intensive scholarship and accelerates solutions to the world’s greatest challenges.

The new Director of Research Data Services (a newly re-envisioned role) will lead and guide the Department of Data and Specialized Services during an extraordinary time of change fueled by new and innovative scientific and technological evolutions. The new Director will continuously engage DSS in ongoing strategic and operational assessment and execution of multi-tiered research data activities such as creating data management plans, the DOI minting service, and GIS support while engaging in data pedagogy with DSS and LIRS. The new Director will also be a Libraries Data Governance group member,

working to continuously align Libraries' data policies and services with funder requirements and best practices.

In addition to managing the day-to-day functions of DSS, which in the last fiscal year included the support of 68 departments, labs, and centers, over 600 unique queries, multiple workshops, and nearly 2,500 logins to the GIS & Data Lab, the Director will promote strategic alignment with other MIT Libraries departments and manage an array of relationships outside of the Libraries. The new Director will be a key collaborator with the newly created Office of Research Computing and Data (ORCD), a team of individuals and resources dedicated to building and supporting the high performance computing and data needs of the MIT research and educational community. The Libraries' Associate Director of Technology and Strategic Planning, Heather Sardis, is the Libraries' representative on the ORCD advisory committee, and will partner with the new Director of Research Data Services to continue developing the Libraries' strong relationship with MIT ORCD towards the aim of growing robust, sustainable, collaborative data services to support the needs of the MIT research community at scale.

Externally, the Director will represent the Libraries' services to the MIT community, from collaborative touch points across other MIT entities, and may be requested to serve on Institute-wide committees and task forces to provide input on MIT initiatives. Additionally, the Director is expected to represent the MIT Libraries in partnerships with entities worldwide, including peer academic institutions and acclaimed research organizations.

MIT Libraries

The MIT Libraries are led by Chris Bourg. As Director of Libraries, Chris also oversees the MIT Press, and is the founding Director of the [Center for Research on Equitable and Open Scholarship \(CREOS\)](#). Before assuming her role at MIT, she worked in the Stanford University Libraries for twelve years. Before Stanford, Bourg spent ten years as an active-duty US Army officer, including three years on the United States Military Academy faculty at West Point. She received her BA from Duke University, her MA from the University of Maryland, and her MA and PhD in sociology from Stanford.

Bourg has extensive experience promoting equitable and open scholarship and advocates for libraries' role in promoting social justice and democracy. She co-chaired the MIT Ad Hoc Task Force on the Future of Libraries and the MIT Ad Hoc Task Force on Open Access to MIT's Research. She is a member of the National Academies of Science, Engineering, and Medicine Roundtable on Aligning Incentives for Open Science and the Higher Education Leadership Initiative for Open Scholarship.

The mission of the MIT Libraries, as articulated in depth through its [Enduring Vision](#), is to advance knowledge at the Institute and beyond by providing a trusted foundation for the production, dissemination, use, and preservation of—and creative engagement with—information. As a digital-first library with an essential core of physical resources, the Libraries provide access to tens of millions of items and to the collections from partner libraries worldwide. Campus locations—including five library locations - Barker, Dewey, Hayden, Lewis Music Library, Rotch, and the Distinctive Collections Reading Room—serve as intellectual crossroads where the MIT community connects with ideas and each other. Library experts help students, faculty, researchers, and staff navigate resources, manage data, and think critically as consumers and creators of information.

The MIT Libraries lead in promoting and supporting open and equitable scholarship through a combination of education, outreach, advocacy, infrastructure, research, and innovative agreements with scholarly publishers. In addition, the Libraries play a critical role in supporting data-intensive and

computational research across the Institute. Given that MIT is a decentralized entity of various independently managed departments, labs, and centers (DLCs), the Libraries serve as a central and key collaborator within the Institute. Sitting in the middle of these disparate stakeholders, the Libraries distribute resources and services and, more broadly, provide space and structure for community engagement and collaboration that support the Institute's long-term goals.

Situated within the MIT Libraries, the Department of Data and Specialized Services (DSS) is a hub for researchers, faculty, and students that provides expert services related to creating, using, and managing data and other digital content in their research, teaching, and learning. DSS offers data curation support, data management consultation services, data-related education, statistical software services, and training, including the MIT Libraries' GIS and Data Lab oversight. As one of the most experimental spaces within the MIT Libraries, DSS works to find innovative solutions to many researchers' data-related challenges.

The Massachusetts Institute of Technology

MIT ranks among the nation's top five research universities. Since its founding in 1861, it has been the preeminent research and educational contributor to engineering, technology, and scientific innovation. Rooted in its [motto and values](#), the Institute comprises five schools and one college: Science; Engineering; Architecture and Planning; Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences; the Sloan School of Management; and the Schwarzman College of Computing. With an enrollment of more graduate students than undergraduates and over 12,000 employees, the Institute has produced 100 Nobel laureates, 60 National Medal of Science winners, 30 National Medal of Technology and Innovation winners, 81 MacArthur Fellows, and 16 A.M. Turning Award winners. The Institute's research expenditures for 2022 surpassed \$780 million, and its endowment is currently over \$27 billion.

MIT is building and scaling toward a more equitable algorithmic future through pioneering computational methods. MIT aspires to solve humankind's greatest problems through science and engineering. As the world's preeminent STEM university, MIT is a research-centered enterprise whose "community is driven by a shared purpose: to make a better world through [education, research, and innovation](#)." The Institute "revels in a culture of learning by doing" as reflective of its motto - "mens et manus," or "mind and hand," signifying the synergies of academic knowledge for practical purposes. MIT embraces "pushing the boundaries of knowledge and possibility is our joyful obsession, and we celebrate fundamental discoveries and practical applications alike."

Qualifications

With a Master's degree in a related field required and at least 7 years of relevant experience (5 years management and supervisory experience), the new MIT Libraries Director of Research Data Services must possess the ability to work with the Institute's staff and partners, to navigate the rapidly evolving research data policy landscape successfully. Collaborating across the Libraries to ensure that MIT's open data is findable and reusable in support of equitable open scholarship is essential. Partnering with the Libraries and Institute stakeholders to ensure compliance with research data privacy, security, and sustainability regulations is also crucial.

Internal to the Libraries, expectations are high that the new Director will serve as an authority on current and new opportunities within research data services and data governance standards. Equally

critical is a person who will bring leadership balance to quantitative, qualitative, scientific, and strategic inputs that harmonize operations and relationships. As a result, the successful candidate must possess a high degree of leadership maturity, social intelligence, a growth mindset, and change management acumen to support and advance [the new MIT Libraries' data services mission and vision](#).

The new Director must exude infectious enthusiasm for the complexities within the research data landscape that will inspire and engage constituents throughout the Institute. It is also important for the new Director to embrace inclusive leadership principles that center workplace belonging by supporting and welcoming people from all backgrounds, experiences, ideas, and viewpoints to develop an integrative approach to research data services.

Candidates are expected to have leadership experience that demonstrates the ability to partner with researchers, students, and staff across an organization and should also possess the following:

- Personal academic excellence or evidence of using and/or supporting data for impactful original research as demonstrated by an advanced degree in a relevant field to MIT Libraries;
- A "teaching spirit" while enacting a high degree of diplomacy and social equity;
- Ability to cultivate relationships with a wide range of experts and stakeholders within and outside the Libraries and understand and support their evolving data needs;
- Demonstrated ability to execute high-quality research data management practices, including data management plans, data curation, and data preservation standards;
- Experience creating guidance on data documentation, metadata standards, and data preservation to ensure long-term compliance with federal funding agencies' requirements;
- Portfolio management skills with the ability to launch, deliver, and measure the effectiveness of multiple research data services and projects simultaneously;
- Technical knowledge and implementation experience with cross-disciplinary metadata standards, as well as knowledge of web standards and accessibility;
- An ability to recruit, retain, and develop a diverse, equitable, and inclusive staff;
- Excellent communication skills (oral, presentation, and written);
- Experience in managing complex budgets and general financial sophistication;
- Experience with SPSS, Python, R, Stata, SAS, JMP, or similar tools; and,
- Engagement with the global research community to promote awareness and adoption of open data standards.

SALARY AND BENEFITS

Salary will depend on qualifications and experience. MIT offers excellent [benefits](#) including a choice of health and retirement plans, a dental plan, tuition assistance, and fully subsidized MBTA passes for local bus and subway service. Flexible work arrangements, including flex-time and telecommuting, are considered for positions that meet established criteria. The MIT Libraries is a collegial and supportive working environment and fosters professional growth of staff with management training and travel funding for professional meetings.

The Search

The Search Inquiries, nominations, and applications are invited. Although the search will remain open until the position is filled, priority will be given to applications received January 22, 2024. Candidates should provide, in confidence, a curriculum vitae, and a letter of application that highlights administrative acumen and leadership experience, and the names and contact information of five references. *References will not be contacted without prior knowledge and approval of the candidates.*

Materials should be sent electronically via e-mail to the university's consultants, Mr. Kyle Meingast and Dr. Jonathan Fortescue of Park Square Executive Search, at MITLibraryDirector@parksquare.com

Documents that must be mailed may be sent to Jonathan Fortescue, Ph.D., Managing Partner, or Kyle Meingast, Partner, Park Square Executive Search, LLC, 225 Franklin Street, 17th Floor, Boston, MA 02110. Phone: 617-401-2991.

MIT is an equal employment opportunity employer. We value diversity and strongly encourage applications from individuals from all identities and backgrounds. All qualified applicants will receive equitable consideration for employment based on their experience and qualifications, and will not be discriminated against on the basis of race, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, pregnancy, religion, disability, age, genetic information, veteran status, or national or ethnic origin.

BACKGROUND CHECKS

Employment is contingent upon the completion of a satisfactory background check.

VISA SPONSORSHIP

This position is eligible for visa sponsorship. MIT sponsors visas only for certain academic and research positions. MIT does not sponsor the following individuals for employment-based visas or for exchange visitor visas: students; technical, administrative, library, or support staff members; individuals with inadequate funding, insurance, or credentials; or those whose particular visa history precludes sponsorship.