

INFORMATION SERVICES

LIBRARY ANNUAL REPORT 2024-2025

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Background

This report to Senate provides an overview of the programmes and achievements across two Information Services Directorates - Library Services and Business Relationship Management.

Introduction from the Executive Director & University Librarian

The Library is undergoing a period of exceptional change in both the physical and digital spheres.

The Library Cladding Project will ensure the long-term sustainability of the Library Annexe, significantly upgrading the external fabric of the Annexe, and providing a better experience for staff and students studying and using the collections in the Annexe.

Project Alex and **Project Muse** will deliver a transformation of the Library's digital environment moving from increasingly outdated platforms to modern, secure and user-friendly systems. The Library has world-class collections and these platforms will enhance discoverability and offer more sophisticated tools to engage with collections online.

The implementation of these projects is challenging, and the Library Cladding Project, in particular, has brought some disruption to the building. We are very grateful for the understanding and collaboration of the University community in delivering these projects. The SRC have been very supportive with communications to our students, and participation in the Boards governing the projects. The Library Committee continues to provide invaluable advice and guidance to Library staff.

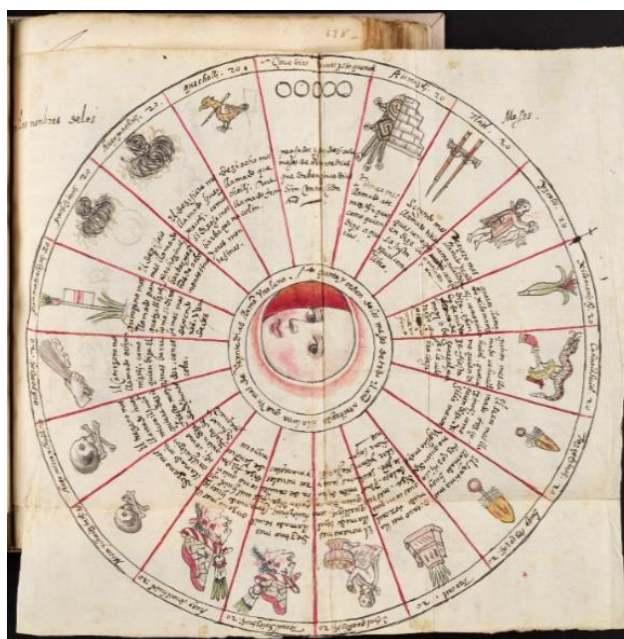
Another significant area of activity this year was working with Jisc as part of a sector-wide series of re-negotiations with five major publishers: Elsevier, Sage, Springer Nature, Taylor & Francis, and Wiley. The sector set out a range of requirements which formed the basis of negotiations, including affordability and maintaining open access options. These negotiations concluded at the end of December 2025, reaching the threshold of 80% agreement across the sector, and we are now finalising contracts. Thanks to Library colleagues who were heavily involved in these negotiations for their contribution to the successful outcome.

Maximising the Value of our Collections

Developing our collections: discovery, processing and acquisitions

Enabling the discoverability of the unique and distinctive collections held by the Library was a key focus of work across the year. Glasgow Collections, the discovery portal for the University's collections across Archives & Special Collections and The Hunterian, continues to build its worldwide user base with a 30% increase in the number of users from the previous year to reach 21,500 across 2024/25.

Online access to digital images from the collections also greatly increased over the year, with a 75% increase in views of the Library's collections made available through JSTOR Collections. Across the year over 1,800 images were published across three collections: *Songs in the James Finlay & Co Ltd Collection*, *Hunterian Library*, and *Whistler Press Cuttings*. The *Historia de Tlaxcala* was the most consulted item across the year, being viewed 850 times. Compiled in 1584-85 by Diego Munoz Camargo, this manuscript is a detailed narrative and illustrated history of the city and province of Tlaxcala (Mexico).

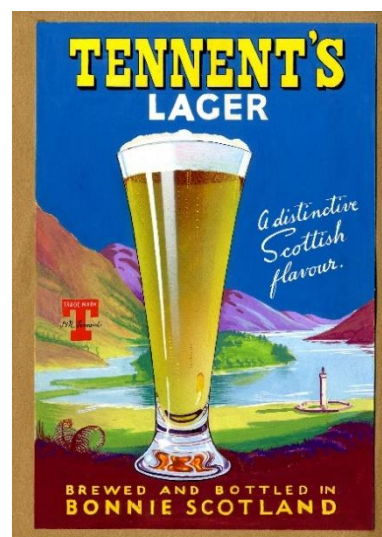


Extract from *Historia de Tlaxcala*, ref: MS Hunter 242

The first stage of processing the archive of the arts organisation, NVA, was carried out this year. NVA was founded in 1992, and for over a quarter of a century it was a major figure in the Scottish creative sector. Its extensive archive documents the wide range of creative projects it took forward, including *Hidden Gardens*, *Speed of Light*, and *Hinterland*. Undertaking the professional activities to manage the NVA archive, including appraisal, description and preservation, posed a challenge given the born-digital format and size of the collection. However, processing this 800GB collection of diverse digital files and formats has now been completed using Archives & Special Collections' Digital Forensics Lab. Enabling access to the NVA archive is a multi-year programme of activity, with work focusing on discovery and access being taken forward into 2026/27.

Projects to maintain the corporate archives of two of Scotland's most famous brewers were taken forward. A project to refresh the description of the archive of Scottish & Newcastle Breweries was completed. This was a major update, building on work last undertaken in the 1990s. Not only were multiple accruals to the archive fully processed and consolidated within the collection, but all existing descriptions were reviewed and updated to ensure compliance with current standards.

In addition, a project to update the Tennent Caledonian Breweries archive commenced. The first phase of this project, a review of the moving image archives held for the Tennent's brand, was completed. The recommendations of this review will be taken forward with Tennent's and the Moving Image Archive at the National Library of Scotland.



*Counter advertisement,
Tennent's Lager, ref: T11/4/1*

Across the year, 56 accessions were made to Archives & Special Collections. As part of his preparations for leaving his University office, Professor Sir Anton Muscatelli ensured the deposit of his papers with the University Archive. These join the significant holdings of papers of University office bearers which are managed and made accessible for research.

Exhibitions, loans & reproductions

The Scottish Theatre Archive provided a rich resource during the development of Tron Theatre's exhibition *Michael Boyd – The Tron Years*, which opened in the Summer of 2025. This exhibition celebrated Boyd's work as Artistic Director, a period in which the theatre established itself within the national and international theatre community.



Dumbstruck, Tron Theatre, May 1995, ref: STA Dx/10/3

Drawing upon its corporate archive held as part of the Scottish Business Archive, the Ben Line group shared the stories of its 200-year heritage in its 2025 anniversary publication, *The Phoenix of the Seas*. The publication is richly illustrated with images from the Archive which were sourced and photographed by the Library's teams.



Bencleuch II, ref: UGC 199/1/7/4

Loans for the *Bet Low, An Island on your Doorstep* (Glasgow School of Art, Pier Arts Centre, Orkney) and *Departures* (The Hold, Ipswich) exhibitions were successfully completed and attracted over 4,000 visitors to both venues.

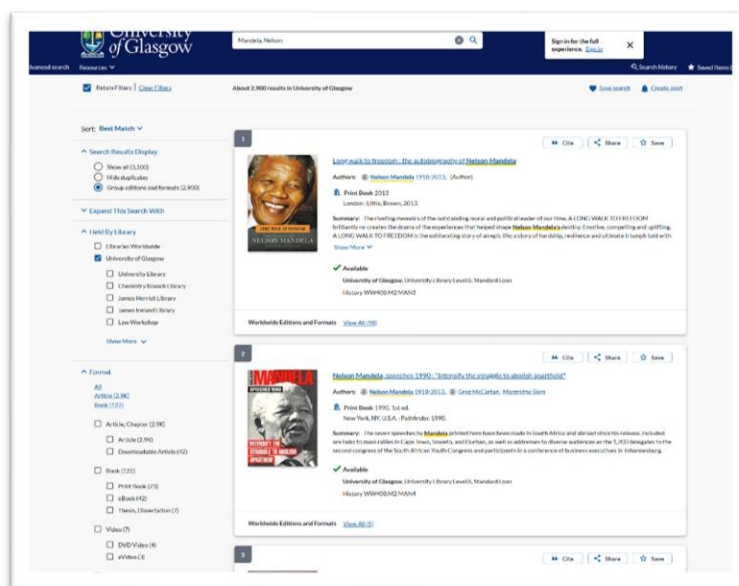
University Library Infrastructure

Project Alex: delivering a next-generation Library Management System

In the 2023/24 report to Senate, the Library set out its intention to procure and implement a new, next-generation Library Management System (LMS). The LMS is the technical backbone of research library operations, underpinning essential functions such as resource description and discovery, acquisition workflows, and circulation management for physical items.

During 2024/25, the Library completed a comprehensive evaluation of LMS solutions through market analysis, vendor demonstrations, and stakeholder consultation. OCLC's *WorldShare Management Services (WMS)* was selected as the preferred platform, with an investment case approved in early 2025 and procurement concluded shortly thereafter. WMS will provide a "best-in-class" digital library experience, delivering towards the digital enabling layer of the University's strategy. Benefits include enhanced user experience for academic staff, students, and library teams; improved discovery of scholarly content across digital and physical

resources, including Glasgow's world-class collections; streamlined back-office workflows; and robust cybersecurity compliance aligned with industry best practice.



Results page from new LMS test environment

Project Alex officially launched in July 2025. Implementation work is currently underway to transition from the legacy LMS to the new solution, with an extensive portfolio of training for staff and students, benefits realisation, and outreach planned. The new LMS will launch in July 2026.

Project Muse: a heritage collections Digital Asset Management System

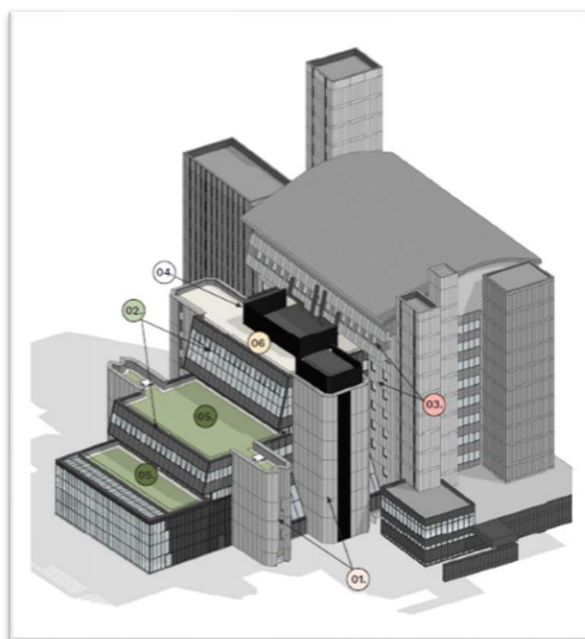
This year also saw a significant step forward in the digital transformation of the Library's heritage collections with the purchase of AM Quartex - a Digital Asset Management System (DAMS). This strategic investment replaces outdated infrastructure with a cloud-based solution, supporting the Library's ambition to deliver a modern, resilient and trusted digital service, and ensuring global access to its internationally significant collections alongside advanced research methodologies.

The introduction of this DAMS will bring major advances for users, offering enhanced digital discovery, streamlined workflows, and improved support for managing and interpreting unique and distinctive collections. **Project Muse** aligns closely with **Project Alex**, reinforcing the Library's commitment to improved discoverability, digital transformation, and collaboration across the academic community. Beyond infrastructure, this investment strengthens the University's position among sector leaders, supports REF-ready digital outputs, and builds staff digital expertise, laying strong foundations for innovation and excellence in research and teaching.

Library Annexe Cladding Programme 2024-26

Significant progress was made on the £23 million Library Annexe refurbishment project during 2024/25. Roof replacements advanced well, alongside the installation of glazed curtain walls and structural framing on the west and north elevations. These improvements will become visible externally from early 2026 as scaffolding is removed on the west side and work moves to the east elevation.

The next phase will focus on upgrading internal systems and spaces, including installation of smart technologies, to improve energy efficiency and sustainability. Projected benefits include savings of 72% in energy use and 83 tonnes of carbon annually. Additional enhancements will deliver wider aisles for better accessibility, lower shelving for better light and reach, and fully glazed north-facing areas to maximise natural light. Power will be provided to all desks, and a sustainable furniture programme will prioritise reuse, recycling, and upcycling to further reduce embodied carbon. The project is on target to complete in Autumn 2026.



3-D architectural rendering showing view of new Library Annexe façade

Supporting the Student Experience

ReachOut expansion

College Library Support and ReachOut IT teams successfully delivered pop-up events at the Dumfries campus, offering in-person ReachOut Library and IT support. These sessions promoted awareness and engagement, encouraging users to connect with ReachOut teams for ongoing support. These visits have been well-received by the Dumfries staff and student community. The James McCune Smith Learning Hub team piloted a new initiative to enhance the experience of students new to campus. For the first five weeks of the academic session, ReachOut Student Ambassadors provided roving support across the Gilbert Scott Building, offering guidance and orientation. Students welcomed this service, with the team providing help with more than 1,000 directional enquiries.

ReachOut teams launched an additional support channel: RO:Bot, a visible and user-friendly virtual chat service available 24/7. The initiative was designed to complement the assistance provided by the Reach Out teams, who operate daily from 08:00 to 20:00. Ask a question and RO:Bot will interrogate the UofG Helpdesk knowledgebase to return an answer. Where additional guidance is required, the service connects users to a ReachOut team member during staffed hours or logs a request for follow-up.

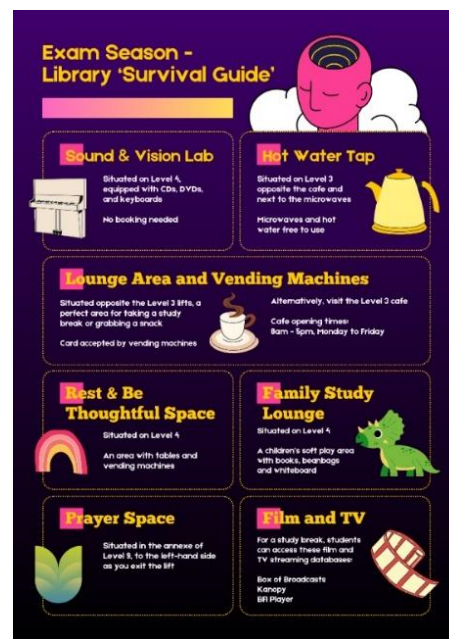


New RO:Bot branding

The TechBar continues to develop as a service, providing ReachOut IT support to students and staff in the Library. In 2024/25, the service expanded its opening hours to mirror the wider ReachOut service and delivered various pop ups at Dumfries, Garscube and Gilmorehill campuses. ReachOut IT TechBar simplifies access to IT support, providing a one-stop shop for general tech support as well as cyber security advice. Student engagement has grown from 8% to 47% of registered students using the service, while user satisfaction grew from 80% to 95%. The service continues to actively seek user input and tailors the service to meet emerging user requirements.

Arts & Humanities Library Associates

The Arts & Humanities Library Associates programme, which gives students the opportunity to collaborate with the Library, expanded over the course of last year, from an initial cohort of 12 students in 2023/24, to 42 students from across the College in 2024/25.



Posters of Arts Associate projects by Lena Kammerer and Kirsty Laverack

Students found this a rewarding experience and the programme will continue to offer these opportunities where possible. Students were also able to work with staff from The Hunterian on projects of artistic significance. Feedback from the 2024/25 cohort of students led to various positive developments, including changes to the Library website and a new information literacy session for Level 1 students in English Literature.

Supporting Learning and Teaching

The Library continues to play a pivotal role in enhancing the student and staff experience through a range of services and initiatives.

Reading Lists at Glasgow

The Reading Lists service continued to grow in 2024/25, with a 2.9% increase in lists available via the online reading list system, Talis Aspire. More than 200,000 items supported teaching, including 20,000 essential book items and over 5,000 digitised book chapters. Overall e-Book usage increased by 14% with almost 5 million item requests across all e-Book collections, while e-Textbook usage rose by 25%, driven by targeted acquisitions of core titles and collections. Access was secured in Summer 2025 to the entire Digital Rights Management (DRM)-free catalogue of Taylor & Francis e-Books (180,000 titles) which boosted usage by 77% increase in the first semester. This strategic procurement complements existing agreements with major academic publishers and reflects a collaborative approach to supporting teaching needs.

Collections Classroom Service

Demand for Archives & Special Collections' *Collections Classroom* service continues to grow, with over 1,700 students taking part in 102 teaching sessions over the course of 2024/25. While in-person teaching reached capacity, there is scope to expand live online broadcasts and pre-recorded sessions. In addition, 125 students benefited from placements working with collections in both a Reading Room and online environment, with activities ranging from practical experience in 2D digitisation, metadata enhancement, to support for exhibitions.



Collections Classroom Service

Alternative Formats Service

Since its establishment in 2024, the Alternative Formats Service has delivered approximately 550 remediated items per semester - including books, book chapters, journal articles, and teaching resources - to students with print disabilities or those using assistive technologies. Turnaround times have improved by 112%, enabling students to now receive content typically one week in advance of teaching need.

The centralised service is available to all Schools and offers two support models: a self-service option for students needing minimal assistance, with access to RNIB Bookshare, SensusAccess, and service alerts; and a full-service option for those needing most materials in alternative formats. These alternative formats are generally produced as tagged PDFs, Word facsimiles, and structured Word documents. Students and staff can also use SensusAccess for self-directed conversion of documents into a range of alternate media, including audio books, e-books, digital Braille, digital large-print, and BeeLine Reader.

In addition to resource remediation, the service introduced a digital accessibility training programme for staff in 2024/25. Topics included THRIVES (Accessibility Guidelines) Core Competencies, Accessible Equations (Accessibility for STEM), Accessibility in Microsoft 365, PDF Accessibility, and bespoke training for service or resource development.

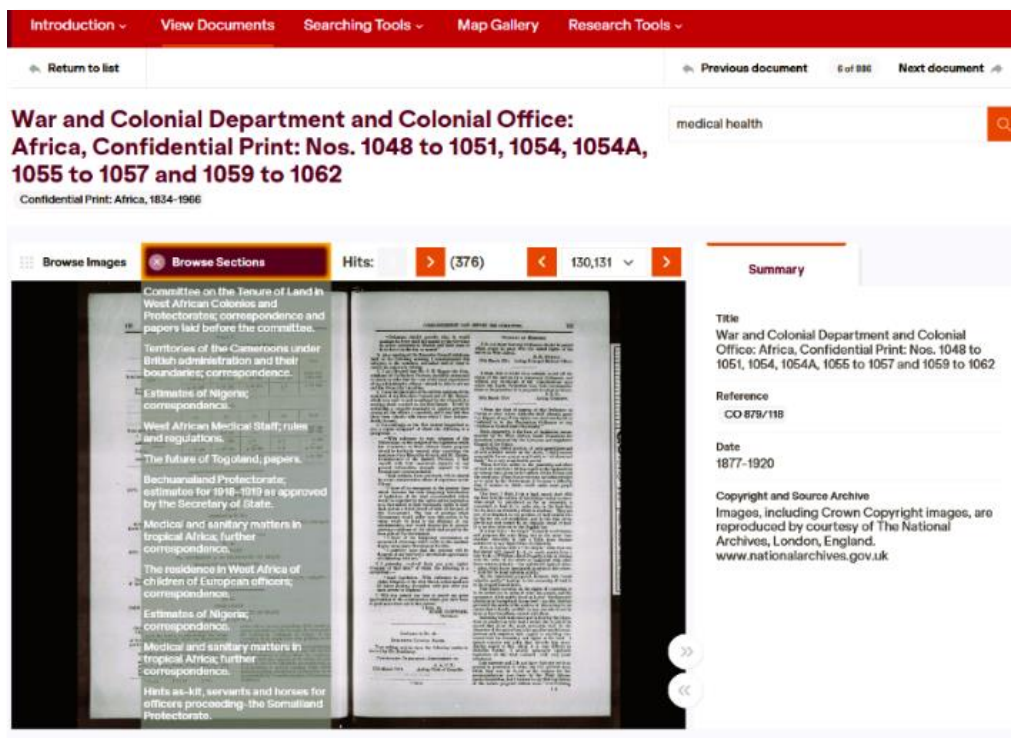
Supporting Research

Major journal negotiations

The Library was a key and highly engaged participant in national negotiations for journal agreements throughout 2024/25, contributing expertise and strategic input to shape outcomes that benefit the wider academic community. These negotiations focussed on securing transitional Read & Publish agreements with five of the largest journal publishers - Elsevier, Springer Nature, Wiley, Taylor & Francis, and Sage - with the aim of having agreements in place by the start of 2026. The objectives of the negotiations are to constrain costs in a challenging financial climate, maintain author choice in open access publishing routes, and establish a clear pathway toward more sustainable pricing models. After extensive sector-wide consultation, proposals from all five publishers have now been accepted and access to this essential content will continue without disruption. These agreements demonstrate the value of the sector working together in collaboration with Jisc.

Expanding access to digital primary sources

In 2024/25, the Library made significant investments to strengthen research support and meet growing academic demand for digital resources. These included securing continued ownership of the comprehensive Springer e-Book catalogue for the next four years, as well as expanding access to digitised historical primary source collections through platforms such as AM Explorer and Gale Digital Scholar Lab.



Example of AM Explorer results page

AM Explorer provides access to millions of pages of digitised primary source material, including manuscripts, government records, newspapers, journals, letters, rare books, maps, and multimedia. It offers comprehensive coverage of all 115 Adam Matthew Arts Primary Source Collections, delivering unparalleled breadth and depth for researchers across arts, humanities, and social sciences.

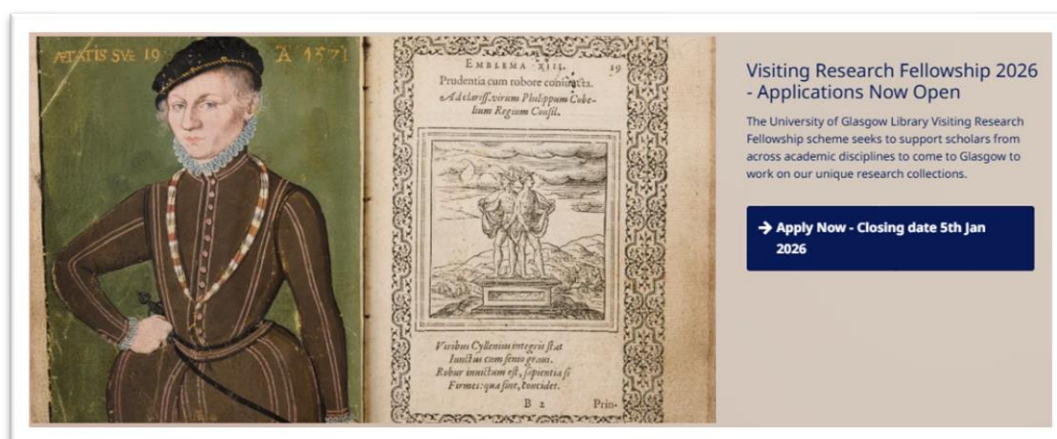
Gale Digital Scholar Lab combines extensive digitised collections with advanced text analysis tools, enabling academic staff and PGR students to apply computational techniques such as N-gram analysis, topic modelling, named entity recognition, sentiment analysis, and clustering to Gale's corpora or their own datasets. Investment in the Gale Accelerate model further expanded owned content, adding collections such as *Archives of Sexuality & Gender* and *Power to the People*.

The Library also subscribed to Policy Commons, restoring access to critical grey literature from leading policy experts, think tanks, IGOs (Intergovernmental Organisations) and NGOs (Non-Governmental Organisations) previously lost when the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development transitioned to Open Access. Collectively, these investments significantly enhance discovery, research capability, and digital scholarship across the University.

Library Visiting Research Fellowships

This year marked the fifth cohort of Library Visiting Research Fellows since the scheme began in 2019. To date, 52 fellowships have been awarded thanks to funding from the Library, the Lind Foundation and the Friends of Glasgow University Library.

The programme's success reflects the global reach and interdisciplinary strength of the University of Glasgow's collections. In 2024/25, research projects were diverse and included studies of medieval Latin medical texts, Scottish Romanticism, gender in early photography, tactile book culture, maritime strategy in the First World War, and the translation of Scottish literature into Chinese. Despite their diversity, what these studies had in common was the use of Glasgow's internationally important collections, whose richness – from medieval codices to corporate records and literary archives – enables innovative scholarship across the arts, humanities, and social sciences.



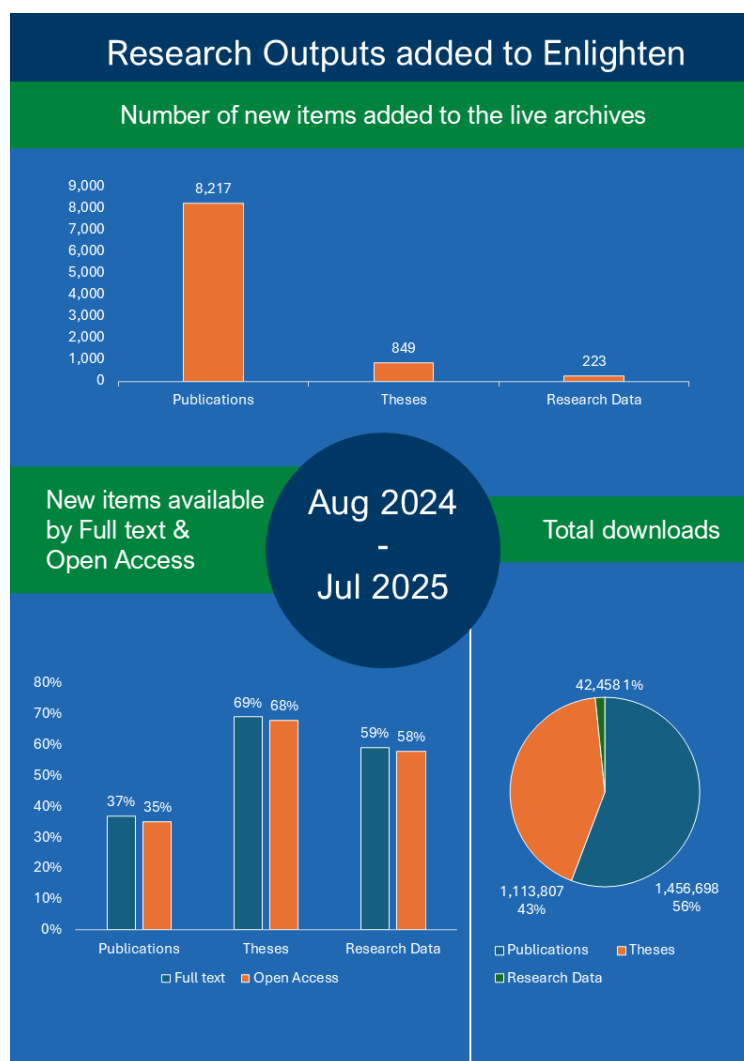
Visiting Research Fellowships web pages

Supporting Open Research

Open Access

The programme of technical improvements to the Enlighten repositories, first reported to Senate in 2023/24, continued throughout 2024/25, with further backend and user experience enhancements planned for *Enlighten: Publications* and *EdShare* by summer 2026.

Enlighten remains central to supporting the scholarly impact of the University of Glasgow's research. This year saw significant growth in usage across the major repositories, measured using *COUNTER* – an international standard for the accurate calculation of 'real world' usage. *Enlighten: Theses* and *Enlighten: Publications* experienced 43% and 26% usage growth respectively during the current reporting period, underscoring the vital roles both these platforms play in research visibility and dissemination.



Summary of item deposits in Enlighten and downloads in 2024/2025

The Glasgow Open Journals service continues to offer a free to staff and students option for publishing a journal. In November 2025, the Scottish Journal of Open Research published its first issue specifically aimed at supporting good open research practice. The University of Glasgow also continues to take an active management role in the Scottish Universities Press, with three books published to date, two including Glasgow authors or editors.

Scholarly grey literature

The importance of scholarly grey literature to communicate research findings has grown in recent years, with some examples generating significant impact. From late 2024, a series of training sessions to improve the publication quality and visibility of grey literature produced at Glasgow was devised. These sessions were delivered in the College of Social Sciences and included training for research staff on scholarly best practice when creating grey literature, its associated metadata, and optimising its publication to ensure discovery. Written guidance has also been produced for those unable to attend training. Training sessions will continue into the 2025/26 academic year and be available to staff across all colleges.

Supporting Research Outputs

The University continues to play an active role in the UK Reproducibility Network, fostering sector-wide dialogue and sharing insights from the work of the open research indicators pilots at national events, including the 2025 Association of Research Managers and Administrators annual conference. These indicators are being used to target support for open research.

Two programmes underline the Library's commitment to promoting good practice in data sharing. In collaboration with peers at the Universities of St Andrews and Edinburgh, it is contributing to a Wellcome-funded Inframe project '*Driving good practice in data sharing and use of data availability statements to support funder requirements*'. In October 2025, a new sensitive data training course was launched, developed with input from teams involved in research governance across the University. The course complements the *Introduction to Research Data Management* training course, and provides researchers with practical guidance on good practice, university processes, and statutory requirements for working with sensitive data presenting challenges for data sharing.

Outreach and Engagement

The Library strengthened its role as a hub for cultural engagement and scholarly collaboration throughout 2024/25, delivering a diverse programme of exhibitions, events, and partnerships that connected academic research with public audiences.

Re:reading exhibition

In early 2025, the Library curated *Re:reading*, an exhibition that explored libraries and collections as dynamic, collaborative spaces. The display highlighted the way evolving scholarship, innovative analytical techniques, and creative interpretations were enabling new insights. It showcased a wide range of collaborative projects between the Library, academic colleagues, and creative practitioners, reinforcing the Library's potential as a catalyst for interdisciplinary engagement.

Creative research

Alongside the exhibition, a range of talks and events took place throughout the year. Transdisciplinary artist Ashanti Harris, supported by Theatre Studies, undertook a research project titled *Looking for Love in the Archives*. This initiative sought to uncover Black Histories within the Scottish Theatre Archive through a "research romance" methodology - an imaginative approach to rediscovering people, practitioners, and performances. Harris presented her findings in a thought-provoking seminar, sparking dialogue on representation and archival interpretation.



Ashanti Harris speaking at a lunchtime talk in the Library exhibition space

Being Human Festival

Archives & Special Collections partnered with academics from the College of Arts & Humanities to participate in the University of London's *Being Human Festival*. Four events held in Glasgow invited the public to delve into the "secret lives" of rare books, fostering rich conversations about the ways in which collections connect people and ideas across generations.

Hispanic Collections symposium

The Library also collaborated with the College of Arts & Humanities' Collections Lab to host a public symposium celebrating the newly catalogued Cruickshank Collection. This rare collection of Spanish playtexts (*suektas*) and multiple editions of Calderón provided inspiration for scholars and enthusiasts alike. The cataloguing project was supported by the Friends of Glasgow University Library.

Spotlight on research impact: Zachary Boyd

Professor Adrian Streete's research into the dispersed library of Zachary Boyd (1585–1653) attracted significant media attention this year. Over recent years, Streete has been investigating this largely forgotten Scottish minister, poet, and academic. Through meticulous work, he has to date expanded the known holdings from six to 91 volumes, shedding light on Boyd's intellectual legacy and illustrating the depth of the University's collections. His forthcoming monograph will deepen understanding of Boyd's contribution to Scottish scholarship and exemplifies how the Library's collections underpin world-class research.



Professor Streete with some of Zachary Boyd's library

Key Library Statistics

