



## **Associate University Librarian and Director of the Jay I. Kislak Center for Special Collections, Rare Books, and Manuscripts**

The University of Pennsylvania (Penn) seeks nominations and applications for a creative, transformative, and dynamic leader for its next Associate University Librarian and Director of Jay I. Kislak Center for Special Collections, Rare Books, and Manuscripts. This position is an excellent opportunity for a thoughtful and pragmatic leader with an imaginative vision for the field of special collections. Penn seeks an individual who can provide organizational leadership while also collaboratively designing new and innovative services that demonstrate the value of Penn's distinctive collections to the intellectual work of a global community of scholars, teachers, students, researchers, and the broader public.

With a staff of approximately 50 and a budget of \$4 million from a combination of dedicated acquisitions and other endowments, the Associate University Librarian and Director will have the opportunity to create world-class services and collections in support of research and teaching both at Penn and around the globe. Reporting to the H. Carton Rogers III Vice Provost and Director of Libraries, Constantia Constantinou, and working in close partnership with other members of the Libraries' leadership team, the Associate University Librarian and Director will develop and implement Penn's strategic priorities in an exceptionally intellectually stimulating environment.

### **ABOUT THE UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA AND ITS LIBRARIES**

Penn has a proud tradition of translating knowledge into social-minded action that dates back to its founder, Benjamin Franklin. This tradition of active pragmatism, articulated in Franklin's maxim "well-done is better than well-said," lives today through the inclusive policies, innovative work, and impactful engagement of our faculty, students, and staff. Today, the University is guided by the [Penn Compact 2022](#) – the President's vision to focus on inclusion, impact, and innovation.

The Penn Libraries' mission is to provide high-quality information resources – both print and digital – in a manner that is reliable, timely, responsive to the needs of our constituents, and delivered with expertise, while stewarding and preserving the knowledge contained in our holdings. We strive to implement novel programs and services around these resources to create bridges between the Penn Libraries and schools and centers around the University. The Penn Libraries is dedicated to pushing the frontiers of innovation and enterprise to impact teaching, learning and research and to provide a unique environment – one that includes a network of learning spaces that reflect the latest advances in pedagogy – toward the advancement of academics at the University. In response to the increasing diversity and internationalization of the Penn community, we reflect that diversity in our work to attract a cadre of top talent who introduce new skills and fields to the Penn Libraries and to Penn as a whole.

The Penn Libraries lives and breathes the future through a new media ecology, featuring immersive learning and collaborative classrooms that engage the hearts and minds of new generations who

will tackle society's most complex and challenging problems in unprecedented ways. Big data, augmented reality, machine learning, and much more will continue to transform everyday life with increasing velocity. In today's information ecology, the Penn Libraries' transformative influence has already made its mark – and will continue growing and evolving in answer to the world's need to know.

### **The Jay I. Kislak Center for Special Collections**

The [Kislak Center for Special Collections, Rare Books and Manuscripts](#) advances learning and inspires discovery in Penn's community and around the world. The goals of the Kislak Center align with those of the Penn Libraries as a whole: to make our collections accessible; to use technology in innovative and meaningful ways; to enhance teaching and research; and to preserve our cultural resources for future generations.

With approximately 300,000 printed books and nearly ten million pieces of manuscript material, the Rare Book and Manuscript Library is a part of the University's 7 million-volume library system. The Rare Book and Manuscript Library serves faculty and students across the Penn campus and around the world. Special strengths include American literature, drama, and history; English, Spanish, Italian, and German literature; the Edgar Fahs Smith Memorial Collection in the history of chemistry; the Horace Howard Furness Memorial Library devoted to Shakespeare and his contemporaries; and the Henry Charles Lea Library with strengths in Church history, the Inquisition, magic, and witchcraft.

Manuscript collections include materials from the 12th through 20th centuries, with notable archives of the works of such moderns as Theodore Dreiser, James T. Farrell, Lewis Mumford, and Marian Anderson. Highly specialized collections include the works of Jonathan Swift, Aristotle editions and commentaries, both printed and manuscript, up to 1700; the Curtis Collection of Benjamin Franklin's printing; and the output of the Dutch firm of Elzevir from the 16th through the 18th centuries.

In addition to the Rare Book & Manuscript Library, there are important special collections in other Penn libraries. The Center for Advanced Judaic Studies holds thousands of volumes of rare manuscript and printed judaica; the Fine Arts Library contains a large and important collection of books on architecture; and the University Museum Library has notable strengths in rare materials relating to the history of anthropology. The School of Nursing maintains an extensive nursing archive, and the University Archives document the history of the University going back to the mid-18th century.

### **The Schoenberg Institute of Manuscript Studies (SIMS)**

Guided by the vision of its founder, Lawrence J. Schoenberg, the mission of SIMS is to bring manuscript culture, modern technology, and people together to bring access to and understanding of our intellectual heritage locally and around the world. The SIMS mission is advanced by:

- Developing projects related to manuscript studies;
- Supporting the scholarly work of others both at Penn and elsewhere; and,
- Collaborating with and contributing to other manuscript-related initiatives around the world.

SIMS publishes a journal, *Manuscript Studies*, that embraces the full complexity of global manuscript studies in the digital age. It has been conceived with four main goals in mind: first, to bridge the gaps between material and digital manuscript research; second, to break down the walls which often separate print and digital publication and serve as barriers between academics, professionals in the cultural heritage field, and citizen scholars; third, to serve as a forum for scholarship encompassing many pre-modern manuscripts cultures – not just those of Europe; and finally, to showcase methods and techniques of analysis in manuscript studies that can be applied across different subject areas.

Locally, Penn manages the [Schoenberg Database of Manuscripts](#), which enables scholars to trace the provenance of manuscripts from origin to today. SIMS also provides space for the meetings of the Penn graduate student paleography seminar and serves as the host, in partnership with the Free Library of Philadelphia, of the annual [Schoenberg Symposium on Manuscript Studies in the Digital Age](#), which brings scholars from Penn and around the world to present their latest research. Farther afield, SIMS collaborates with [T-PEN](#), a web-based tool for working with images of manuscripts, and the [Shared Canvas](#) initiative at Stanford University.

### **Library at the Herbert D. Katz Center for Advanced Judaic Studies**

[The Library at the Katz Center](#) holds approximately 200,000 volumes, including 32 (17 Hebrew and 15 Latin) incunabula and over 8,000 rare printed works, mainly in Hebrew, English, German, French, Yiddish, Arabic, Latin, and Ladino. The rare Hebrew editions offer specimens from a variety of Hebrew printing houses around the world; particularly strong are holdings of early modern rare books printed on the Italian peninsula, including nearly 20 percent of all Venetian Hebrew imprints. The CAJS Library special collections of non-print materials include 453 codices written in eleven different alphabets as well as in twenty-four different languages and dialects as varied as Armenian, Hebrew, Judeo-Arabic, Syriac, Yiddish and Telugu, a collection of ancient artifacts dating from ca. 2,500 BCE and nearly 600 medieval manuscript fragments from the Cairo Genizah.

The Library's archive holds the institutional records of Dropsie College, its faculty, students, and library, the professional papers of some of its faculty, as well as the personal papers of over fifty Jewish American scholars and community leaders who lived in Philadelphia in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Among them are the papers of Isaac Leeser, Sabato Morais, Mayer Sulzberger, Moses Aaron Dropsie and Cyrus Adler. There are two significant Yiddish archival collections: the papers of B.Z. Goldberg and Elias Schulman as well as a number of valuable multi-media resources, including the Harvard Sheldon Jewish American Research Library and the recently acquired Lenkin Family Collection of Photography, which contains over 4,000 original 19<sup>th</sup>-century photographs of the Holy Land. The most important recent acquisition was the gift in 2012 of the [Arnold and Deanne Kaplan Collection of Early American Judaica](#), consisting of over 11,000 items. It is the foremost collection of its kind in the world, documenting Jewish life around the Atlantic world from the 16th to the 19th centuries.

### **Digital Innovation**

The Kislak Center fosters innovative approaches to making collections available in a digital world, integrating material and digital research and advocating for open data. Collections of digital images from the Kislak Center collections and other Penn Libraries collections can be found on the [Digital](#)

[Penn project pages](#). Detailed information about collection materials may be found in the library's online catalog, [Franklin](#).

SIMS, which focuses on pre-modern manuscripts and manuscript culture, supports an array of manuscript-related digital projects, including the [Schoenberg Database of Manuscripts](#) (SDBM). Other Kislak and SIMS supported projects include [OPenn](#), a resource to make primary digital resources available to everyone, and the [Provenance Online Project](#) (POP), sharing images of ownership marks that tell the history of books and manuscripts.

### **Research, Learning, and Events**

Kislak is a center of collaboration for students, faculty, Kislak curators, and staff. Located in the Van Pelt-Dietrich Library Center, the Kislak Center's award-winning facilities provide a variety of opportunities for learning and research. The Charles K. MacDonald Reading Room can accommodate twenty researchers at a time in addition to small groups in each of three study rooms. Five Kislak Center classrooms provide a space for students to interact with original editions of the works they have been studying and to learn how earlier generations encountered those same books, documents, manuscripts, or codices. Students, faculty, and staff engage in the study of both digital humanities and material culture in the technology-enabled Vitale Special Collections Media Lab.

## **THE ROLE OF THE ASSOCIATE UNIVERSITY LIBRARIAN AND DIRECTOR**

Reporting to the H. Carton Rogers III Vice Provost and Director of Libraries, Constantia Constantinou, the Director serves as a key member of the Libraries' leadership team and contributes to the overall strategic direction of the Libraries. Within the Kislak Center, the Director leads and manages approximately 50 talented staff and a budget of \$4M including dedicated acquisition and endowment funds.

The Director's primary role is developing and implementing key strategic objectives for both the Kislak Center and the Schoenberg Institute for Manuscript Studies as well as setting long-term goals informed by best practices within the profession. The key opportunities and challenges for the next Director include the following:

### Strategic Vision:

- Serving as a leader and change agent, moving the Center and its operations toward an ever-higher standard of excellence, innovation, and access;
- Overseeing the development through purchase and gift of distinctive print and digital materials in order to fulfill the Kislak Center's mission;

### Digital Innovation and Open Access:

- Creating and articulating a digital strategy for special collections that will evolve and expand with the Libraries' needs over time;

- Actively working to advance the creation, use, and visibility of digital content through forward-looking and innovative policies relating to access to the Center's holdings;
- Participating in and supporting University-wide digital initiatives to help promote awareness of digital resources;

Engagement with Faculty and Students:

- Providing practical and intellectual support to scholars at Penn and around the world seeking to access the Center's resources as part of their work;
- Serving as an enthusiastic and expert resource for faculty who may be curious about the pedagogical possibilities of the Center's materials;
- Teaching classes in material book history and digital humanities at the undergraduate and graduate level;

Outreach and Communications:

- Developing public programs and events to promote the Center's collections;
- Contributing to the Libraries' fundraising activities by telling the Center's story in an engaging and relevant way to potential funders and friends;
- Helping garner press interest by working with the Office of Communications to share information both online and in print.

**DESIRED QUALIFICATIONS AND CHARACTERISTICS**

The ideal candidate will hold a doctoral degree in a relevant field and an impressive record of intellectual and scholarly achievement. In addition, they should bring strong leadership skills and administrative experience to the role, as the resources of the Kislak Center are significant. Other desired qualities for the next Director include:

- Strong public speaking skills;
- A cutting-edge perspective on digital technology within libraries;
- A high degree of comfort in building relationships with external partners and potential friends of the Libraries;
- Experience mentoring and developing a talented staff; and
- A demonstrated commitment to creating and maintaining a diverse workplace in which all are welcome and all can thrive.

## CONTACT

For best consideration, please send all nominations and applications to:



**Sue May, Partner**  
**Matthew Bunting, Managing Associate**  
**Storbeck Search & Associates**  
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*The University of Pennsylvania values diversity and seeks talented students, faculty and staff from diverse backgrounds. The University of Pennsylvania is an equal opportunity and affirmative action employer. Candidates are considered for employment without regard to race, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, creed, national or ethnic origin, citizenship status, age, disability, veteran status or any other legally protected class.*