The University of Chicago Library
Head of Acquisitions

The University of Chicago Library seeks a Head of Acquisitions to provide leadership for a dedicated and exceptional team of acquisitions specialists. We seek a creative and innovative librarian who is energized by a unique opportunity to design and develop responsive, user-centered acquisitions services at a premier research library.

Situated on a campus rich in architecture and green spaces, only minutes from downtown Chicago, and within walking distance of Lake Michigan, the University of Chicago provides a unique working and learning environment. Employees enjoy easy access to a range of housing and transportation options, cultural venues, culinary experiences, educational opportunities, and recreational activities.

The University Library is the center of intellectual inquiry for the University of Chicago. The Library curates the 9th-largest research collection in North America, with 11 million volumes in print and electronic form, and acquiring as many as 100,000 new print volumes annually. World-renowned for the scope and scale of distinctive print and digital collections, and for its leadership in a variety of national and international collaborative endeavors, the Library employs a staff of approximately 300 FTE across six libraries that serve a diverse community of researchers and scholars.

The University of Chicago Library’s Technical Services Department connects students, faculty, staff, and visiting researchers with resources supporting their scholarly and creative endeavors. The Head of Acquisitions advances this core Library mission through active leadership and collaboration with colleagues across the Library, the region, peer institutions, and the profession at large.

DUTIES

Leadership
The Acquisitions section is one of four sections in the Technical Services Department, along with Monographic Cataloging Services, Serials Management Services, and Data Management Services. The Head of Acquisitions acts as a conduit for effective communication between the ordering and receiving units, as well as other associated departments in the Library. As the librarian in charge of the section, this individual helps sets the overall vision and strategic directions for the section, developing and sustaining effective relationships with the management team in the section, as well as with other section leaders in the department, and collection development colleagues.
The Head of Acquisitions is a member of the Technical Services management team, and actively participates in strategic planning for resource allocation, policy development, assessment programs, procedural changes, staff development, and organizational change. As the leader with expertise in acquisitions, the Head works closely with and advises the management team on matters pertaining to ordering, receiving, and rapid cataloging, and coordinates technical services projects with appropriate sections. The Head serves, as appropriate, on Library committees and working groups, including those specific to the iterative development of the Library’s open source management system, Kuali OLE (Open Library Environment).

Along with other colleagues in the Collection Services Division, the Head will take a leadership role in the analysis of vendor options and performance, and will maintain regular communication with suppliers. The Head will provide a deep and broad understanding of emerging trends and best practices in collection procurement, continual analysis of the complex supply chains for research libraries, changes in the availability of vended products and services (e.g., cataloging; shelf ready), and will be one of several leaders enabling the Library’s active engagement with vendors, publishers, and scholarly communication communities.

Section Management
The Head of Acquisitions oversees the Monographic Orders unit and the Receiving & Rapid Cataloging (“RapidCat”) unit, which together, are responsible for the timely and accurate ordering and receipt of monographs and serials (except for legal materials acquired by the Law Library and materials in Chinese, Japanese and Korean acquired by the East Asia Collection). The Head is responsible for coordinating and managing the activities of the section, monitoring production levels, working closely with a team of section supervisors to ensure the efficient movement of all resources through the department, and that the section’s work is responsive to user needs and the Library’s expectations.

The Head employs an array of assessment techniques to measure, evaluate, and continually improve acquisitions processes in order to optimize the Library’s overall ability to provide quality collection development services and rapid access to scholarly resources.

The Head works with supervisors in the section to set goals and expectations for individual and unit performance, based on the needs and priorities of the Library. The Head is responsible for ensuring that staff members are appropriately trained in assigned responsibilities. Developing an ongoing culture of staff development is a key component to the success of this section. The Head builds upon and enhances staff skills by ensuring that each person has a variety of assignments and challenges in his or her work.

The Head actively mentors and supports supervisors in the section to ensure successful recruitment of new staff, the success and growth of individuals, and the overall effectiveness of
operations. The Head conducts performance assessments for supervisors and provides guidance for expeditious human resources management.

**Coordination with Other Units**
The Head of Acquisitions is a key liaison between Technical Services and the robust collection development activities of the Library. A major role is the cultivation of ongoing communication that facilitates a common understanding of user needs, responds to the priorities of collection development colleagues within the Library, supports decision-making by selectors, and provides regular status updates on acquisitions processes and staffing.

As a part of the Technical Services Management Team, the Head coordinates with other section heads in the department to optimize the flow of materials, to ensure that staff allocations meet evolving needs, and to apply evolving standards for Rapid Cataloging operations. The Head works closely with Data Management Services staff on issues related to the batch loading of order records and invoice data that support efficient acquisitions and payment workflows. The Head also works with the Preservation Department to ensure that standards are met for the physical handling of materials processed through Acquisitions.

The Head collaborates with staff in Serials Management Services to ensure consistency in policies and practices for acquiring monographs and continuing resources alike. S/he works closely with the Head of Collection Support to ensure timely and accurate management of the materials budget, as well as other areas of ordering and receiving processes that impact both payments processes and Technical Services operations. The Head also works with Collection Support to coordinate effective management of gifts processing that is performed in Acquisitions.

In conjunction with the Electronic Resources Management Department, the Head manages the Library’s DDA e-book acquisitions, and coordinates individual monographic purchases with larger sets of electronic monographs. Along with other colleagues in the Library, the Head will provide collaborative leadership to support the growing need for the coordination and application of methods that aid long-term collection assessment and analysis.

**Service to the Library and the Profession**
The Head of Acquisitions serves on the Committee on Collection Development, represents Acquisitions and the Library on various Kuali OLE working groups, and is a member of various other Library and external (regional/national) committees and working groups, as appropriate.

**QUALIFICATIONS:**

**Required:**
- graduate library degree from an ALA-accredited institution;
• experience managing related operations in an academic library, or associated vendors/suppliers;
• minimum of three years supervisory experience;
• working knowledge of business practices related to library acquisitions, including experience with vendors and publishers;
• experience designing and deploying training programs for staff;
• demonstrated ability to perform complex problem solving and decision making;
• experience designing, gathering, and reporting production statistics, as well as analyzing that data to inform decisions about process improvement;
• demonstrated ability to design, achieve, and maintain production levels that meet user needs and Library expectations;
• flexibility and creativity in adapting work to realize efficiencies and to account for the rapidly-changing library and higher education environments;
• enthusiasm for and demonstrated ability to work in a team environment with multiple customer groups;
• working knowledge of at least one non-English language;
• excellent oral and written communication skills, including the ability to construct clear documentation;
• experience working with MARC records.

Preferred:
• formal project management training;
• experience applying formal assessment methods;
• working knowledge of budgeting and accounting practices;
• experience working with electronic resources, particularly patron/demand-driven acquisitions;
• experience working with government documents;
• experience working with serials;
• systems implementation and migration experience;
• experience working with open source software;
• professionally active at the regional and/or national levels;
• experience working with library metadata content standards, Resource Description & Access (RDA) and the Anglo American Cataloguing Rules (AACR2);
• familiarity with emerging library linked data standards and applications (e.g., RDF, BIBFRAME).

Salary and Benefits:
Appointment salary based on qualifications and experience. Benefits include retirement plan, insurance, and paid time off. There is a tuition benefit plan for college age and younger children.
Apply for this position at:
https://academiccareers.uchicago.edu/applicants/Central?quickFind=54490

Applications received by March 31 will be assured consideration. The posting will remain open until filled.

The University of Chicago is an Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity/Disabled/Veterans Employer and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, national or ethnic origin, age, status as an individual with a disability, protected veteran status, genetic information, or other protected classes under the law. For additional information please see the University's Notice of Nondiscrimination. Job seekers in need of a reasonable accommodation to complete the application process should call 773-702-5671 or email ACOppAdministrator@uchicago.edu with their request.