



Policy on Donations of Collections and Content to the Library

1. Context

Donations to the Library of Trinity College Dublin have significantly contributed to the development of its collections for over four hundred years, supporting the University's teaching and research mission. The Library is grateful for the many offers it continues to receive and welcomes all enquiries from potential donors, both individuals and organisations. Any offer to donate material, including digital content, will be seriously considered.

Those interested in making a donation to the Library's collections should email: library@tcd.ie.

This Policy will be revised in line with any review of the Library's Content and Collection Development Policy.

2. Purpose

The purpose of this Policy is to assist potential donors by outlining the Library's selection criteria and terms of acceptance.

3. Scope

This Policy applies to all potential donors and bequeathers of material to the Library of Trinity College Dublin. It applies to all types of material suitable for the development of the Library's collections, for example archives, published books, maps, and music in printed, digital and other formats.

This Policy does not apply to financial donations or monetary gifts.

4. Principles

The Library's Content and Collection Development Policy is to acquire such materials that:

- Support and advance the teaching and research activities of Trinity College Dublin
- Complement publications acquired under UK and Irish Legal Deposit legislation
- Foster Trinity College Dublin's role as a custodian of national heritage material

The Library acknowledges that not all offered materials falling under these broad criteria can be acquired and retained, for practical and resourcing reasons. The Library is active in national and international networks of university libraries and cultural heritage institutions and may on occasion recommend an alternative potential beneficiary to the donor.

5. Definitions

In this Policy the term 'donation' means the legal transfer of ownership of the donated material from the donor to Trinity College Dublin, the University of Dublin.

The Library does not accept temporary loans or deposits without transfer of ownership.



6. Policy

The Library's acceptance process is normally based on an initial evaluation of the materials on offer. Library staff review an inventory provided by the donor, or, in exceptional cases, examine a collection in situ. Their evaluation is driven by three considerations:

- Suitability according to the Library's Content and Collection Development Policy, as outlined by the broad criteria in Section 4 above
- The physical condition of the material; or the digital characteristics (such as file formats)
- The conservation and lifecycle costs (cataloguing, storage, and long-term preservation), as appropriate to the material (physical or digital)

Following this evaluation, the Library engages with the donor on next steps. In some cases, the Library will need to secure external funding to cover lifecycle costs: to make the material and content accessible and to steward it over the long term. If appropriate, donors may be invited to contribute to such funds and/or help with fundraising opportunities.

The Library applies the following terms and conditions to accepted donations:

- 1) The donor must have the legal authority to transfer ownership of the material to the Library. The donor may be asked to provide proof of provenance and may be asked to sign a Donation Agreement.
- 2) Applicable copyright remains with the copyright holder unless agreement is made to transfer it to the Library. The Library may, by agreement, administer copyright on the holder's behalf.
- 3) The Library makes every effort to process (catalogue, etc.) and make available the donated materials as quickly as possible. However, it normally cannot give an absolute commitment as to when this will be completed.
- 4) The Library reserves the right to dispose of duplicates and other unwanted items from donated collections.
- 5) Donated material will be subject to the standard rules and procedures applied by the Library to its collections.
- 6) Special conditions may be agreed, but these are usually confined to a limited closure period for materials of a confidential nature.
- 7) Donated material may be used in many ways (within copyright law), including consultation by individual researchers; in classroom settings; inclusion in publications; display or loan for exhibitions; digitisation for preservation and access; and presentation online.

7. Responsibility and Implementation

The Librarian and College Archivist has overall responsibility for this Policy, ensuring it aligns with the Library's Strategy and the University's strategic goals and values. Members of the Library Leadership Team monitor its implementation.



8. Related Documents

Related policies can be viewed on the Library's Policies webpage:

[Policies - The Library of Trinity College Dublin - Trinity College Dublin \(tcd.ie\).](#)

This Policy should be considered in relation to the Library's Strategic Plan ('Library Strategy – 2015-2020'; 'Continuity & Development of the Library Strategy – 2026'):

[Library Strategy - The Library of Trinity College Dublin - Trinity College Dublin \(tcd.ie\)](#)

9. Version Control

Date of initial approval: previous Library Donations Policy was last revised in 2017

Date revised policy approved: 6 November 2024

Revision approved by: Board

Date policy effective from: 6 November 2024

Date of next review: Academic Year 2027/2028

Officer responsible for review: Librarian and College Archivist