

MARSH'S MISSION, VISION, VALUES AND STRATEGIC PILLARS

Background

In 1710, three years after Marsh's Library first opened its doors to the public, a now-obscure writer named Ninian Wallis praised it as “this golden fleece” of learning. Over the intervening three centuries very little has changed internally at Marsh's Library, and it stands today as a rare survival from a world long past. The inclusion of the Library in Massimo Listri's sumptuous book *The Most Beautiful Libraries in the World* (Cologne, 2018) is an acknowledgement of the cultural significance of this small institution on the edge of the Liberties of south, inner-city Dublin.

Marsh's Library is both a museum of what a library looked like in the early-eighteenth century *and* a dynamic and welcoming space for tourist visitors, students and scholars. We aim to preserve our historic buildings and collections and make the Library relevant to new and diverse audiences in the twenty-first century. This document reflects our core values, our ambitions for the Library as a site of intellectual and cultural significance, as well as our determination to protect for future generations the buildings, books and artefacts under our care.

Mission

To preserve and maintain our rare books and manuscripts, to acquire similar by donation, to cherish our distinctive building heritage, and establish Marsh's as a cultural and intellectual hub for visitors, students and scholars.

Vision

To secure the place of Marsh's Library among the great small libraries of the world.

Values

- Welcoming to a variety of users, including local communities, tourists, students and other interests
- Dedicated to a belief in the cultural and societal value of learning and knowledge and providing a secure and stimulating environment for study and research

- Dynamic in using new and emerging technologies to shed light on the treasures of the Library
- Ambitious in terms of making Marsh's Library a learning studio for the most influential scholars and the best students of the early-modern period from around the world
- Collaborative in working with other libraries, cultural and tourism institutions and academic partners nationally and internationally on a variety of research projects, events and initiatives.

Our priorities / strategic pillars are built about four themes

Collections

- to protect and conserve our significant collections of rare books and manuscripts
- to acquire similar collections by donation
- to augment the catalogue records with provenance and ownership information for each item in the collections
- for security purposes, to digitise all unique printed items and manuscripts in the collections

Engagement

- to sustain and improve tourist visitors' experience through enhanced facilities
- to develop the Library as a “learning lab” for national and international students and researchers
- to secure a consistent, positive message across all European and international guide-books and online sources which reference Marsh's Library

- to deepen feedback from visitors, students and scholars about their experiences in the Library

Discovery

- to encourage exploration of the collections through offering annual Visiting Research Fellowships to national and international scholars
- to develop expertise in the French and European context of our collections, with a particular emphasis on our Huguenot holdings
- to improve the interpretative tools for our major exhibitions, both physically and online
- to use digitisation to deepen opportunities for discovery across key areas of our collections

Built Heritage

- To preserve the original eighteenth-century building and its furnishings
- To protect the collections with modern security infrastructure which is sensitive to the architecture of the building
- To refurbish key areas within the Library and its precinct, so as to enhance its eighteenth-century character and improve our ‘tourist offer’.
- To provide appropriate office space for staff, and quality teaching and reading facilities for scholars and students.