



Department of
Knowledge & Information Stewardship
University of Cape Town



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for the

Department of
Knowledge &
Information
Stewardship

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1. Introduction

The Department of Knowledge and Information Stewardship (DKIS) is located in the Humanities Faculty of the University of Cape Town (UCT). The Department's programme offerings include: the Postgraduate Diploma in Library and Information Studies (PGDipLIS); two Masters by coursework (the MLIS and the MPhil (specialising in Digital Curation)); Masters by research (MPhil(Res)); and, the PhD. In 2024 DKIS offered, for the second time, a Faculty-approved undergraduate service course, Introduction to Social Informatics, to first-year students across the Humanities Faculty.

DKIS began 2024 with six full-time academic staff members: a Head and Deputy Dean (substantive post) at full Professor level, a Deputy Head at Lecturer level, a Senior Lecturer, three Lecturers. DKIS has a full-time permanent Administrative Assistant (payclass 7). Emeritus associate professors (two in total), who have over the years played a mentoring role towards the Department's younger academics, continue to assist with supervision of research students, where necessary, but now more for reasons of required expertise or to cope with increasing numbers of students requiring research supervision. In 2024, DKIS made use of teaching and supervision support from PhD students in the Department to cope with increasing numbers as well as teaching replacements for staff on sabbatical and relocation to the Deanery.

There have been eleven meetings of the Advisory Board/Committee of the Department since the establishment of the Board in 2012 when Library and Information Studies (LIS) was re-instated at UCT within the organisational structure of UCT Libraries and with the Humanities Faculty having academic oversight of its programmes (while an annual report was produced in 2015, an Advisory Board meeting was not held due to #RhodesMustFall student protests). With DKIS fully integrated (organisationally and academically) into the Humanities Faculty from 2019 and governance structures firmly located within the Faculty, the Dean (Professor Kessi) in 2020 dissolved the Advisory Board (formerly chaired by the Dean of the Faculty) but encouraged DKIS to continue its annual stakeholder engagement in a form that it saw fit. Hence the establishment in 2020 of an Advisory Committee for which Terms of Reference had been drawn up and shared with members of the Committee at the first meeting of the newly constituted Advisory Committee held in November 2020.

This, the thirteenth DKIS Annual Report, is the fifth for the Advisory Committee of the Department of Knowledge and Information Stewardship. The approach taken in this report is that of succinct and accessible presentation in the form of tables, figures and bulleted lists instead of detailed narratives (except where necessary). For historical and background details, the reader is referred to DKIS [Annual Reports](#) from 2012 to 2023, on the Department's [website](#). Similar to past reports, this annual report too highlights the activities of DKIS, for the 2024 academic year, in response to its *Strategic Directions*.

2. DKIS Strategic Directions 2023-2027

Figure 1 represents strategic planning for the five years (2023-2027) building on earlier strategic planning documents as well as regular review of operational plans within the current strategic plan for implementation, currency and relevance checks. [DKIS Strategic Directions 2023-2027](#) which is summarised in Figure 1 and available on the DKIS [website](#), was developed in response to UCT’s [Vision 2030](#). DKIS Strategic Directions serve as a tool to guide the Department’s aspirations for transformative curriculum development, innovative and socially engaged teaching and learning, research excellence, collaborative relationships, and social responsiveness.

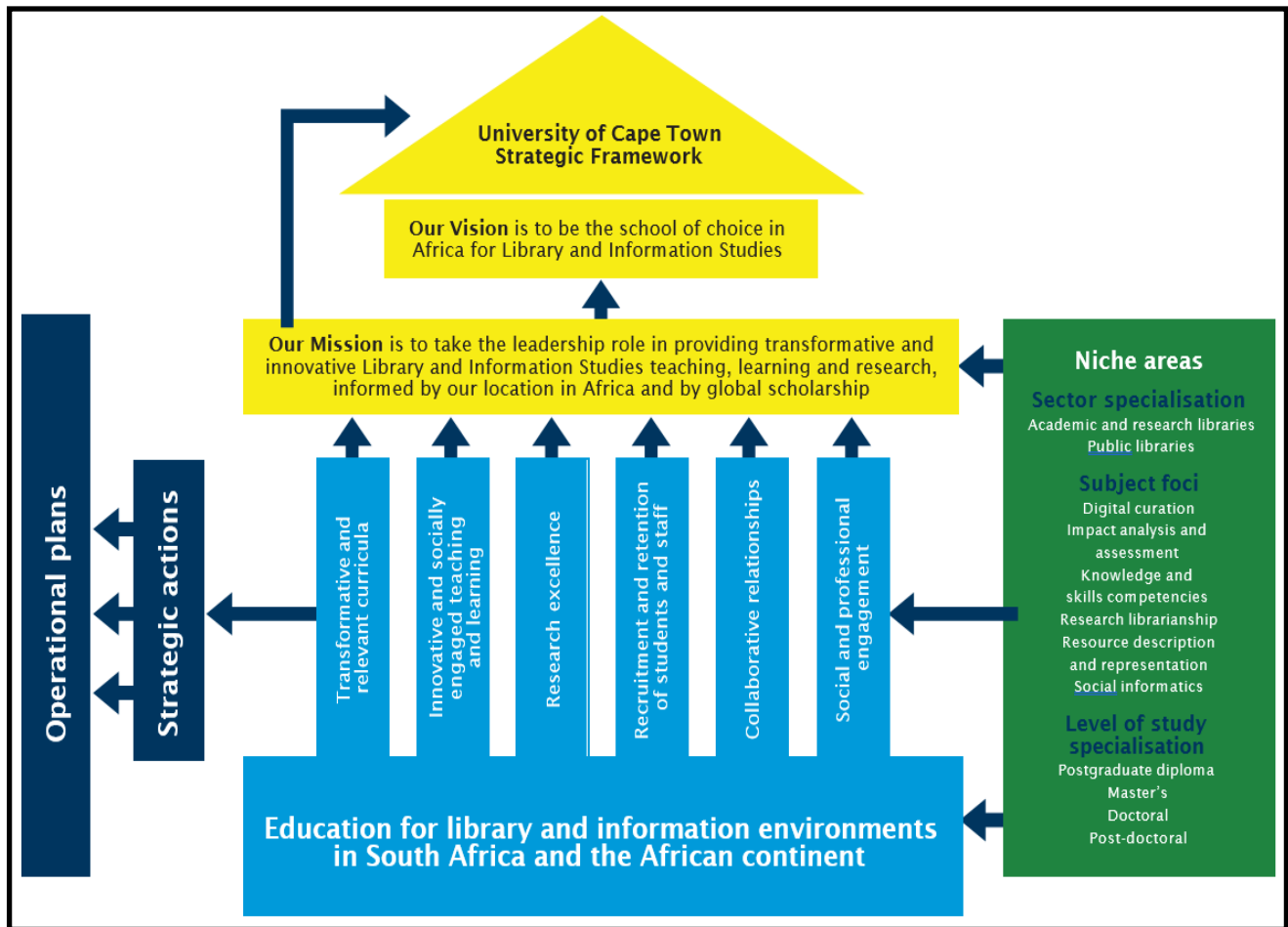


Figure 1: Graphic representation of DKIS Strategic Directions

3. Curriculum relevance and renewal

DKIS continues to make tangible efforts in the curricula of all three of its coursework programmes as well as in its recently introduced undergraduate service course offering, to respond to issues of transformation and decoloniality. Course content continues to be constantly under review for

alignment with the objectives and supporting theories of decoloniality and transformation in themes and aspects covered. Teaching exemplars are intentionally chosen for local contextual relevance and to critically illustrate contemporary problems in knowledge and information stewardship. Topics such as information accessibility, discoverability and critical use of different content types; ontology (cataloguing, classification and taxonomy systems); language hegemony; multi-modal literacies; leadership and management, all actively question dominant cultures and western assumptions/ways of knowing that tend to permeate LIS practice, and they require students to think critically about the position and agency of information institutions and practitioners in the contemporary global south, where indigenous knowledge systems and other ways of knowing abound. DKIS continues to seek opportunities to relate curriculum content and classroom engagement (face-to-face or virtual) with the lives of learners.

PGDipLIS

In terms of programme offerings, DKIS is a postgraduate-only academic department. The PGDipLIS serves as its ‘tap-root’ qualification and, as an entry level professional qualification, offers a conspectus of the field of LIS. DKIS remains cognisant of trends re-defining the LIS sector and especially the impact of technology on information and information-related services in a rapidly evolving information environment. Trends ingested into the PGDipLIS curriculum since its re-curriculation in 2012, include:

- Digital curation
- Research support
- Research data management
- Scholarly communication and digital publishing (institutional repositories, open data repositories and services, open journal publishing, open book publishing, open educational resources (OERS), digital humanities, data analytics, etc.)
- Digitisation and preservation
- Bibliometrics and altmetrics in research impact analysis
- Social media in the information service space
- Resource description and access standards (RDA; FRBR)
- Web Dewey
- Metadata for large data sets
- HTML (HyperText Markup Language) and XML (Extensible Markup Language) in digital bibliographic control
- Web content management
- Intellectual property
- Knowledge organisation and representation (taxonomy, ontology, folksonomy, topic maps, linked data and semantic web)
- Knowledge mobilisation and brokering
- Knowledge management, knowledge sharing, indigenous knowledge systems
- Web 3.0/4.0 and Library 3.0/4.0

- Competitive intelligence
- Virtual reference
- Digital scholarship
- Web archiving
- Strategic planning
- Teaching and learning in LIS services
- 4th industrial revolution (4IR) in LIS services
- Artificial intelligence (AI) in the context of LIS
- Entrepreneurship and libraries
- Performance evaluation
- Programmes/project management
- Change management
- Financial resources management
- Space planning
- Diversity, equity, inclusion and accessibility (DEIA) and LIS services
- Epistemological, ontological and theoretical approaches informing the research process
- Decoloniality and libraries

MLIS

The MLIS continues to address deeper level knowledge and skills specialisation required by the modern LIS sector in the areas of Digital Curation, Research Librarianship, LIS Leadership & Management and Teaching & Learning for LIS Professionals. These specialisation offerings at Masters level are particularly directed to the academic and public library sectors that are identified in the DKIS strategic framework as sector specialisations (see *Figure 1*). Ongoing curriculum review and renewal to address emerging knowledge and skills requirements of the LIS sector and beyond in cognate disciplinary areas, have included:

- Curation of digital objects and the associated challenge of developing archiving and governance infrastructure for the description, management, access and sharing of digital content
- Pedagogical theory and practice for instructional roles of LIS professionals in equipping users with knowledge and skills to mediate a technology-driven information environment
- Theoretical understanding of and practice in research librarianship to support national, regional and institutional research agendas
- Research landscape analysis
- Macro and institutional knowledge production policies
- Scholarly publishing and open access
- Library as publisher
- Changing patterns in scholarly communication
- Understanding the research process in various disciplinary domains

- Research data management
- Big data imperatives
- eResearch, eScience & Digital Humanities
- Research impact assessment
- Bibliometrics, altmetrics and alternative measures of impact
- Transformation/decolonisation and Africanisation/indigenisation in LIS leadership and management
- Information as capital and issues of access: COVID-19 and SDGs
- Diversity, equity, inclusion, accessibility (DEIA) and social justice
- LIS and the 4th industrial revolution (4IR) and AI (artificial intelligence)

MPhil (specialising in Digital Curation)

DKIS continues to contribute to the fast-maturing discipline of Digital Curation and its sub-discipline of Research Data Management by offering (since 2015) a full Masters coursework programme specialising in Digital Curation. The programme is designed to attract LIS and non-LIS applicants and hence its location within UCT's generic MPhil suite of Masters offerings. This means entry into this Masters specialisation stream can be from a HEQSF Level 8 qualification in any discipline, and not necessarily in LIS, providing DKIS with an opportunity to use LIS's inherent interdisciplinarity to diversify its offerings and thus widen its potential markets. While more recently the programme has been drawing applicants largely from the LIS sector because of the growing digital curation competency needs of this sector, the programme has over the years also attracted individuals from disciplines such as Media Studies, Journalism, Fine Arts, Education, History, Public Administration, Marketing, Philosophy, Psychology, Information Technology and Accounting. The curriculum is principles-based, engages solidly and critically with theory, and provides heuristics to support a rapidly and dynamically changing technology environment. A strong emphasis is placed on theory, as well as the epistemological context of Digital Curation, incorporating Philosophy of Science, Information Theory and Information Technology Theory, particularly in constructivist, critical and postmodern paradigms. Theories used draw widely from diverse disciplines including Management, Physics, Sociology, Fine Arts, History, Education and Computer Science. DKIS continues in this specialisation stream, to maintain curriculum content currency in areas such as:

- Theory and philosophy underpinning Digital Curation
- Information architecture and metadata
- Research data management
- Curation for digital media and formats
- Technology enablers for digital curation
- Impact of digital transformation, including AI
- Linked open data to support electronic resources and democratisation of knowledge

Since 2022, a teaching collaboration with UCT's Centre for Theatre, Dance and Performance Studies (CTDPS) in the foundation Principles of Digital Curation course has stimulated interdisciplinarity in teaching and research.

Undergraduate service course (LIS1000S – Introduction to Social Informatics)

As per recommendation from its 2018 Academic Review, DKIS worked on expansion of its offerings into the undergraduate space via an undergraduate service course in the Humanities, on the epistemologies and stewardship of managing data, information and knowledge. The curriculum for the new undergraduate service course (LIS1000S – Introduction to Social Informatics) was completed in 2022 and in the same year received Humanities Faculty approval for first offering in 2023.

The course aims to provide entry level general degree humanities students with critical understanding of multi-modal literacies and information stewardship principles for the discoverability, accessibility and critical use of information content available in different formats and mediums. It also provides students with an understanding of the research lifecycle, and within this, an understanding of research data management and analysis using basic statistical and computational approaches relevant to digital humanities. This course critically explores computational applications and data science use in decolonised social sciences and humanities contexts. The course uses content that engages the diversity of UCT's students' life worlds and in its curriculum is cognisant of our African location.

4. Teaching and learning

In a post-pandemic period, DKIS continued in 2024 with on-campus teaching and learning. In this core area (teaching & learning) too, DKIS has continued to address issues of transformation and decoloniality, as detailed in previous annual reports. DKIS academics allow their teaching to be informed by relevant learning styles and theories (cognitivism, connectivism, constructivism/social constructivism, critical theory - as applicable) and match learning styles to the classroom needs of their students. DKIS is sensitive to a constructivist approach to teaching and learning where students, coming from a diversity of backgrounds, are considered to be significant role players in the co-construction of knowledge in the classroom (physical or virtual). In such a learner-centred context, the following curriculum delivery methods are used to promote collaborative learning and critical thinking: debate and discussion; group engagement; peer learning; case-study; self-directed learning; reflective practice; work-integrated-learning; on-site engagement; hands-on computer laboratory sessions involving exposure to a variety of information resources in a state-of-the-art academic library as well as to Web 3.0/Web 4.0 technology (wikis, blogs, Google docs, tag clouds and other crowd-sourcing content instruments). DKIS is a champion user of the Leganto tool, which seamlessly integrates course reading material with UCT Libraries' discovery tool to allow ease of access for students. The use of blended learning in all DKIS coursework Masters programmes since 2015, has allowed for interactive virtual learning in

online chat rooms and opportunities to contribute content to wikis and other crowd-sourcing content instruments. Blended delivery (online plus contact sessions) has provided a transformative learning experience for learners and DKIS educators alike in an e-learning higher education environment (placing DKIS somewhat ahead of the curve, not just during 2020-2021 pandemic-induced online/hybrid higher education teaching and learning, but also in this post-pandemic phase in which blended/hybrid delivery appears to have become a popular option). Blended delivery has also contributed to increased registrations for the coursework Masters programmes, drawing from markets outside of Cape Town and beyond (e.g., Namibia, Zimbabwe, Lesotho, Eswatini, Botswana). A variety of formative and summative assessment methods are employed in DKIS coursework programmes, depending on the nature and content of the course.

PGDipLIS

- Was offered in full contact mode in 2024
- Constructive approach to teaching and learning, consistently cognisant of diversity in cognitive, age, cultural, social and language backgrounds of students and the implications of this for learning styles and different levels of intervention required
- Course conveners continued to provide a variety of formative and summative assessment methods
- Continues to be offered full-time (1 year), part-time (2 years) and by block release (1 year) – providing an array of options for those with a bachelor’s degree wishing to attain a LIS professional qualification
- Block release option is now established as a niche for UCT. DKIS is the only of the ten L/IS schools in South Africa with this delivery method for the PGDipLIS. It provides DKIS with an opportunity to draw students from across the country. In 2024, the block release class was made up of students from the Eastern Cape and the Free State as well as from Cape Town
- Conscious decision not to go blended (online in combination with face-to-face teaching and learning) because of the nature of some of the course content as well as the professional preparation involved
- 2024 registrations: 9 part-time; 15 full-time; 4 block release (total=28)
- 2024 PGDipLIS registrations saw a decrease of eight from 2023. The block release offering still seems to be a viable option for employers sponsoring formal LIS studies of their staff; however, in 2024 the block release class was small at just four students. Expenses related to travel, accommodation and tuition as well as the costs associated with releasing an employee from work for a number of weeks in a year may have influenced the block release registrations this year.
- Students registered in 2024 are all from South Africa having previously graduated from local higher education institutions (CPUT, CUT, DUT, NMU, SUN, UCT, UFH, UKZN, UL, Unisa, UP, UWC). Eight registered students are already employed in the LIS sector and studying as part-time or block release students.

- Work-integrated-Learning (WiL) placements (for purposes of relating theory to practice) took place mid-year and in the September short vacation. This year, our students were again hosted by a variety of libraries and information services, to whom we are grateful for their contribution to our students' learning. These institutions were: African Legal Information Institute (AfricanLII); City of Cape Town Library and Information Services (Wynberg, Kuyasa); CPUT Libraries (Mowbray campus); Harry Molteno Library (Kirstenbosch); Herschel Girls' High School; Iziko Museums; King Dinuzulu Public Library (KZN); National Library of South Africa (Cape Town campus); South African Astronomical Observatory; UCT Libraries; University of Mpumalanga Library (Mbombela Campus); University of Venda Library; Western Cape Archives and Records Services; and Western Cape Education Library and Information Services (EDULIS).
- Academic orientation (for extra-curricular support) included: Vula orientation (UCT's online learning platform); library orientation; citation management (facilitated by UCT Libraries); plagiarism & Turnitin; and AI and academic writing (facilitated by the Centre for Innovation in Learning and Teaching).
- Personal and Professional Development Programme (PPDP), developed and delivered by UCT's Careers Service, was once again offered in the PGDipLIS programme and, incorporated into the scheduled LIS4052W (Resource Planning & Use) lecture periods as a means of emphasising the synergy between PPDP, the course and the overall programme, as well as to reduce students' timetabled commitments. CV preparation and other career-related assessments counted 5% to LIS4052W and required 80% attendance for students to benefit from the programme. Students who complete all elements of the programme successfully receive a Certificate of Completion from the Careers Service
- In 2024, DKIS awarded one Hilda Buyskes Bursary valued at R51, 000.00. Academic performance and commitment to further study in the LIS discipline were among the main selection criteria.
- Our annual Prize-giving Ceremony, which brings the PGDipLIS academic year to a close, was held on 16 October 2024. Departmental prizes (R500 book vouchers) for Best Academic Performance in the PGDipLIS and Dedication & Perseverance in the PGDipLIS as well as other certificate and specialist awards, including the MaNel Trust Awards sponsored by a past graduate of the Department, were awarded. The event is intended to provide students with an incentive to strive for quality in their performance in preparation for delivery in the work environment and/or for the pursuit of further postgraduate studies.
- Projected 2024 graduations: 23, with 5 part-timers targeting 2025 for completion.
- As of 21 October 2024: 110 PGDipLIS applications for 2025 (57 firm offers; 3 provisional offers; 9 declined; 9 withdrawn; 32 in progress) – applications closed 31 October 2024

MLIS

- 2024 registrations: 56 (23 new registrations and 31 returning students)
- Of the 56, 31 were registered for the minor dissertation in 2024 and 2 repeating a course each; 2 MLIS graduations in 2024
- Delivery since 2015 has been by blended format (online with contact weeks twice a semester) – has contributed to increased registrations drawing, over the years, from markets outside of Cape Town and across the continent (e.g., in 2024 from Gauteng, KwaZulu Natal, Eastern Cape, Eswatini and Namibia) at no additional cost to the university
- Digital Curation and Teaching & Learning for LIS Professionals are also offered as occasional courses – responding to growing knowledge and skills needs in these areas among individuals who already hold Masters degrees but who are seeking continuing professional development. There was no occasional course registration in the MLIS for 2024. Fee cost and early closing date for applications in the preceding year are likely influencing factors in the slow uptake of occasional courses
- As of 21 October 2024: 62 MLIS applications for 2024 (20 firm offers, 10 conditional offers, 29 declined, 3 in process) - applications closed 31 October 2024

MPhil (Digital Curation)

- 2024 registrations: 53 (15 new registrations and 38 returning students)
- Of the 53, 22 were registered for the minor dissertation in 2024 and 5 repeating a course; 4 MPhil(DC) graduations for 2024
- Delivery since 2015 has been by blended format (online with contact weeks once/twice a term/semester, as applicable) – has contributed to increased registrations drawing, over the years, from markets outside of Cape Town and from across the continent (e.g., Zimbabwe and Namibia), and again, at no additional cost to the university
- Research Data Management is also offered as an occasional course – responding to knowledge and skills demands in this area. There were no RDM occasional course registrations in 2024
- As of 21 October 2024: 46 MPhil(Digital Curation) applications for 2025 (11 firm offers; 11 conditional offers; 3 declined; 15 in process) – applications closed 31 October 2024

MPhil (Research) & PhD

- 2024 MPhil (Research) registrations: 9 (7 returning and 2 new)
- 2024 PhD registrations: 10 plus 1 on leave of absence (7 returning and 3 new); 1 PhD graduation in December 2023; 1 PhD graduation in September 2024; 1 PhD candidate is confirmed for April 2025
- In 2024, DKIS had its first MPhil (Research) student Masters study upgraded to a PhD
- With the appointment of academics with PhDs since 2019, DKIS is gradually increasing its capacity for PhD supervision. While currently Emerita Associate Professors Nassimbeni

and De Jager are supporting PhD supervision, this is now shifting towards permanent staff in DKIS

- DKIS continues to hold an Annual Research Day (this year on 29 November 2024 - virtually) at which Masters and PhD students (including minor dissertation students) present their research-in-progress; this annual event provides research students with an opportunity to share their progress as well as their challenges, with DKIS academics and fellow research students
- DKIS continued in 2024 with its Research Seminar Series aimed at supporting the growing number of DKIS students engaged with dissertation preparation as well as academics growing supervision skills. The Series, held virtually (using Zoom), worked well in involving students and presenters located outside of Cape Town and enjoyed good attendance. To encourage attendance by coursework Masters students in preparation for their minor dissertations, as of 2021 it has been made mandatory for these students to attend at least four (4) core and one (1) theory seminar in the Series. The Research Seminar Series is held over 18 weeks (on Friday afternoons) and runs from May until September. The research seminars target theory integration in research and the broader epistemological, ontological and methodological issues informing the research process. In the closing session of the 2024 Series an award in the form of a 2024 published research text was made to a student for the ‘most impactful participation in the Series’ – the 2024 Award went to an MPhil (Research) student
- As of 21 October 2024: 8 MPhil (Research) applications for 2025 (0 firm offers; 6 declined; 2 in process)
- As of 21 October 2024: 11 PhD applications in 2024 (0 firm offers; 11 declined; 0 in process)

Undergraduate service course (LIS1000S – Introduction to Social Informatics)

LIS1000S was offered for the second time in 2024. It employed innovative teaching and delivery methods, including digital literacy modalities, aimed at affording more time for active engagement and the development of critical skills in the humanities:

- Second semester, first-year, undergraduate offering
- Offered as part of the Umthombo Center for Student Success (UCSS) Khanyisa suite of courses introducing humanities undergraduate students to critical thinking and literacies
- Delivered in a blended mode with lectures online via Microsoft Teams, which are also recorded (3 times a week – Monday to Wednesday)
- Tutorial and practical sessions delivered in-person (once a week – on Thursdays). The course has 5 tutorials and 5 practical sessions
- In 2024, 48 students (from 37 in 2023) enrolled for the second time offering of the course

- Humanities undergraduate students, from 2024, were required to take two courses from UCSS’s Khanyisa suite of courses. This is expected to increase LIS1000S course enrolment in the coming years
- In 2024 the course made use of teaching assistants and tutors (five senior postgraduate students from DKIS) to facilitate online lectures, tutorials and practical sessions – thus providing an opportunity for DKIS postgraduate students to develop teaching and assessment capacity
- A variety of formative (tutorial responses, practical exercises, quizzes) and summative (written 2-hour examination) assessment methods, are used

5. Research

DKIS staff are encouraged to balance both teaching (including supervision) and research, namely, conducting independent research and writing papers for conference presentations and journal publications. Refer to *Table 1* for 2024 research output (including conference presentations and papers with students). DKIS academics are encouraged to present papers at useful forums (in-person or virtual) and to use the feedback to develop their papers for journal publication.

Table 1: 2024 DKIS publications and conference presentations/proceedings

Journal publications/book chapters/proceedings and other	Conference/Webinar presentations/Panel presentations
Xaba, S.S.G. & Shongwe, M.M. The implementation of resource description and access (RDA) in the Gauteng province. <i>South Africa. South African Journal of Library and Information Science</i> [in press]	Mfengu, A. 2024. Thriving in the AI Age with a Library Science . African Library and Information Associations and Institutions (AfLIA) , 25 July 2024 [virtual]
De Young, T. & Raju, J. 2024. Histories intertwined - tracing the evolution of the South African Astronomical Observatory library and information service within the historical development of astronomy in South Africa. <i>Journal of Astronomical History and Heritage</i> . 27(3): 605-634. DOI: https://doi.org/10.3724/SP.J.1440-2807.2024.03.11	Higgs, R. 2024. Digitisation for Archives and Records Management, Western Cape Archives Records Management Symposium , 4-6 September 2024, Cape Town
Mfengu, A. & Raju, J. 2024. Challenges with measures used for assessing research impact in higher education institutions. <i>South African Journal of Science</i> . 120(7/8): 1-6. DOI: https://doi.org/10.17159/sajs.2024/14934	Raju, J., Chu, C.M. & Cunningham, C. 2024. Strengthening the quality of LIS education: implementing the <i>IFLA Guidelines for Professional LIS Education Programmes</i> . University of West Indies Department of Library and Information Studies Seminar, 9 October 2024 [virtual]

<p>Ndinoshiho, J. & Nassimbeni, M., 2024. Factors influencing the incorporation of web technologies by university libraries in Southern African Development Community. <i>South African Journal of Libraries and Information Science</i>. 90(1): 1-13. DOI: https://doi.org/10.7553/90-1-2311</p>	<p>Mfengu, A. 2024. Keynote address: Re-envisioning library and information services in the age of AI: opportunities and concerns. UNISA Library Technology Event, 7-8 November 2024 [virtual]</p>
<p>Mfengu, A. 2024. South African universities need to rethink how they evaluate research: social impact counts too. <i>The Conversation - Africa</i>. 16 September. Available: https://theconversation.com/south-african-universities-need-to-rethink-how-they-evaluate-research-social-impact-counts-too-237251 [2024, September 17]</p>	

Scholarly editing

Professor Jaya Raju:

- Continued in 2024 to serve as inaugural Co-editor (with Professor Wolfram Dietmar, University of Wisconsin- Milwaukee) of the ALISE ([International] Association for Library and Information Science Education) **Book Series on LIS education and research** – published by Rowman & Littlefield

Dr Mzwandile Shongwe:

- Copy editor of the *South African Journal of Library and Information Science* (SAJLIS)

DKIS Conference

DKIS will host a two-day scholarly event as part of the [2nd Global Summit on Diamond Open Access: Centering Social Justice in Scholarly Communication to Advance Research as a Public Good](#). A core goal of the Global Summit is to develop capacity through centering scholarly communication in LIS education curricula. Hence, the theme of the DKIS conference: **Advancing Social Justice Through Curriculum Realignment: Centering Scholarly Communication in LIS Curricula**. The centering of scholarly communication in LIS curricula is critical in growing the next generation of scholarly communication leadership. The two-day scholarly event will run from 8-9 December 2024; convened by Dr Andiswa Mfengu with co-convenor, Prof. Jaya Raju and Reggie Raju (Convener and Chair of the Global Oversight Summit Committee). The DKIS conference includes six sessions and a panel discussion, and over 20 speakers from South Africa, Botswana, New Zealand, North America, Nigeria, United Kingdom, Namibia, India, Netherlands, Brazil, Egypt and Mexico (see conference programme [here](#)). The peer-reviewed papers presented at the two-day conference will be published in an open access edited book of papers. The published book will be launched at the Diamond Open Access Conference on 11 December 2024.

Independent research and collaboration

Professor Jaya Raju and Dr Mzwandile Shongwe are currently NRF-rated researchers. *Table 2* reflects 2024 independent research and/or collaborations in DKIS.

Table 2: Independent research and/or collaborations

Principal investigator	Project	Funding	Collaborators
Prof. Jaya Raju (Principal Co-Investigator)	Towards development of an international quality assessment framework that promotes quality in LIS education programmes	IFLA (International Federation of Library and Information Associations and Institutions) project funding – 2017 -	IFLA’s Building Strong LIS Education (BSLISE) – an active global network of LIS academics and researchers under: IFLA Section on Education and Training; IFLA Section on Library Theory and Research; LIS Education in Developing Countries SIG
Prof. Jaya Raju	Book project: <i>Decolonizing Library and Information Science research methodology</i> (contracted by Rowman & Littlefield/Bloomsbury publishers)	Post-doctoral fellowship from the Humanities Faculty (R200 000.00 x 3 years – 2023-2025)	Sole author

Research output from independent research and collaboration captured in *Table 2* are reflected in *Table 1* as well as in previous years’ [Annual Reports](#). DKIS academics have also accessed UCT development, start-up funds and other grants (see *Table 3*).

Table 3: Development and start-up grants (2024)

DKIS academic	Grant	Amount
Dr Andiswa Mfengu	NRF Black Academic Advancement Programme (BAAP) for 2021-2023; but had funds carried over from 2023	R168 000 (2024 - carry-over funds from 2023)

Dr Mzwandile Shongwe	Six months sabbatical research leave (1 July - 31 December 2024)	Leave replacement funds from the Humanities Faculty, UCT
Theresa De Young	UCT Early Researcher Programme Start-up Fund UCT New Academic Professional Programme Completion Grant UCT Building Research Active Academic Staff (BRASS) Grant (UCT)	R20 000 (2024) R5 000 (2024) R168 000 (2024 but deferred to 2025 to allow time to gain supervision experience and exposure)

DKIS academics are encouraged to look beyond the DKIS budget to fund research travel and study visits and hence DKIS academics continued in 2024 to consider funding applications (based on their publications) from funding sources such as the **University Research Committee (URC)**, **Faculty Block Grants** and the **NRF’s Knowledge Interchange and Collaboration (KIC) International Travel Awards**. In a post-pandemic global environment, DKIS academics have reverted to in-person conference presentations (national and international) and international study visits.

6. Staff and students

Staff

DKIS has a permanent Administrative Assistant (at payclass 7). UCT’s Development Dialogue process frames the annual performance evaluation and monitoring of development paths for the Administrative Assistant post in DKIS.

Table 4 reflects current DKIS academic staff and their teaching/supervision loads. DKIS follows the Humanities Faculty’s academic performance review process in the assessment of academic staff performance. Departmentally, on an annual basis, development areas are identified, interventions put in place, where necessary, and progress is monitored to feed into the Faculty’s four-year cycle in academic performance management.

We would like to congratulate Professor Jaya Raju who is now in a substantive Deputy Dean role in the Humanities Faculty, and Dr Mfengu for heading the department in 2024. To accommodate these changes, the Faculty provided funding to employ a lecturer replacement (Dr Lena Nyahodza) and graduate assistants to assist with teaching.

The average number of lectures per week is shown over two years in *Table 4*. This applies to the supervision display as well.

Table 4: DKIS academics' teaching/supervision load

Academic (and year of first appointment and status)	Average no. of lectures per week (26 teaching weeks)		Current supervision (sole/main supervisor) as of November 2024	Completed supervision (sole/main supervisor) as of November 2024
	2023	2024		
Michelle Kahn (MK) (Lecturer) – 2014 (Permanent)	1.28 – a lower than norm average due to MK's sabbatical leave in Semester 1 (2023) towards completion of a PhD	4.92 - plus repeat lectures for block release, as required	2024: 14 (minor dissertations) 2023: 10 (minor dissertations)	1 minor/d (2017) 1 minor/d (2018) 3 minor/d (2019) 1 minor/d (2020) 3 minor/d (2021) 2 minor/d (2022) 3 minor/d (2023) 2 minor/d (2024)
Richard Higgs (RH) (Lecturer) – 2014 (Permanent)	2.21 - a lower than norm average due to RH's sabbatical leave in Semester 2 (2023) for purposes of working on a PhD	4.12 - carried an additional Masters programme convenership of MLIS programme while MS was on sabbatical Semester 2 of 2024	2024: 17 (minor dissertations) 2023: 15 (minor dissertations)	1 minor/d (2015) 2 minor/d (2017) 3 minor/d (2018) 5 minor/d (2019) 1 minor/d (2020) 2 minor/d (2022) 2 minor/d (2024)
Prof. Jaya Raju (JR) (HoD and Deputy Dean) – 2012 (Permanent)	1.9 plus repeat lectures for block release, as required plus headship responsibilities	0.08 – JR in 2024 moved to a substantive Deputy Dean role but was still involved in mentoring DKIS academics as a co-supervisor in 4 PhD studies	2024: 12 (5 PhDs; 5 MPhil(Res); 2 minor dissertations) 2023: 13 (4 PhDs; 6 MPhil(Res); 3 minor dissertations)	2 PhDs (2015) 1 minor/d (2015) 1 MPhil(Res) (2016) 1 minor/d (2016) 2 minor/d (2017/18) 1 MPhil(Res) (2018) 1 PhD (2018) 1 MPhil(Res) (2019) 1 minor/d (2020) 1 MPhil(Res) (2021)

				1 PhD (2022) 1 minor/d (2022) 1 PhD (2023) 1 PhD (2024)
Dr Mzwandile Shongwe (MS) (Senior Lecturer) – 2019 (Permanent)	6 plus repeat lectures for block release, as required (teaching assistance provided again as MS teaches two lecture-intensive courses in the professional programme as well as carried an additional Masters programme convenership while RH was on sabbatical leave in Semester 2 of 2023	2.54 plus repeat lectures for block release, as required - a lower than norm average due to MS's sabbatical leave in Semester 2 (2024)	2024: 15 (2 PhDs; 1 MPhil(Res); 12 minor dissertations) 2023: 13 (1 PhD; 1 MPhil(Res); 11 minor dissertations)	1 MPhil(Res) at UniZulu (2019) 1 MPhil(Res) at UniZulu (2020) 1 minor/d (2022) 1 minor/d (2023)
Dr Andiswa Mfengu (AM) (Lecturer and Deputy HoD) – 2019 (Permanent)	4.42 plus multiple tutor support and management for DKIS's new undergraduate service course (Introduction to Social Informatics) offered for the first time in 2024 across the Humanities Faculty	2.50 plus repeat lectures for block release, as required; plus headship responsibilities (teaching assistance provided to support AM for first-year servicing course)	2024: 14 (2 PhDs; 2 MPhil(Res); 12 minor dissertations) 2023: 18 (1 PhD; 1 MPhil(Res); 16 minor dissertations)	1 minor/d (2020) – in mentored capacity 1 minor/d (2023) 1 minor/d (2024)
Theresa de Young (TDY) (Lecturer – 2023 (Permanent)	4.07 – as a new appointment, TDY has been allowed some settling-in time with a relatively lighter teaching load	5.00 plus repeat lectures for block release and convening of Work Integrated Learning (PGDipLIS)	2024: 9 (minor dissertations) 2023: 5 (minor dissertations)	-

Note: Two Emeritus Associate Professors supplemented Masters and PhD supervision in 2024. This is being progressively lessened with full-time academics taking over most of the research supervision. DKIS used two external supervisors in 2024 (as was done in the past) – a good

indication of the department approaching a point of in-house independence in its supervision capacity.

Students

Previous [Annual Reports](#) capture student enrolment figures across DKIS programmes since the reinstatement of LIS at UCT in 2012. *Figure 2* reflects student numbers across all five of its programmes from 2020 up to and including 2024 (past five years). Rigorous marketing is used to ensure buoyancy of enrolment figures. The research degree totals need to take into account completions. Section 4 of this annual report provides student application statistics for 2024 across all five programmes as DKIS works towards meeting 2024 enrolment projections. DKIS's student demographics across all its programmes are reflective of the country's national demographic profile. Like with many other disciplines, LIS too is acutely aware of, in a context of transformation and decoloniality, drawing into its research (MPhil(Res) and PhD) programmes more South African Africans. Every effort is made to do so, particularly at the level of support (funding and otherwise) and intervention once students are accepted into the research or other programmes. While occasional course registrations at HEQSF Level 9 (mentioned in Section 4) are used to ease individuals who have had a hiatus from academic study into senior degree programmes, the COVID-19 years (2020-2021) and the immediate post-COVID-19 period (2022-3) have not seen much uptake on occasional courses. *Figure 2*, however, shows a healthy increase in enrolment numbers in 2024 across almost all programmes. This return to the past trend (pre-COVID-19) of a steady increase or maintaining of enrolment numbers is a welcome relief after a drop in enrolment numbers experienced in 2022, the immediate post-pandemic period. Higher education enrolment seemed to have stabilised after a period of uncertainty induced by pandemic-related challenges and restrictions and/or could be the result of DKIS's rigorous marketing via various means, particularly via social media. However, we acknowledge a drop in 2024 in PGDipLIS enrolments from 36 (2023) to 28, we will increase our marketing efforts to ensure steady growth in the coming years. Our PhD numbers have increased despite DKIS having graduated a PhD student almost every six months - this augurs well for the Department's graduate output and subsidy earning capacity for the university. In addition, one international PhD student took a leave of absence (LOA) in 2024 for financial reasons. DKIS is highly selective in its PhD intake, because of capacity requirements needed for PhD supervision as well as commitment to and/or potential for quality and timeous completion.

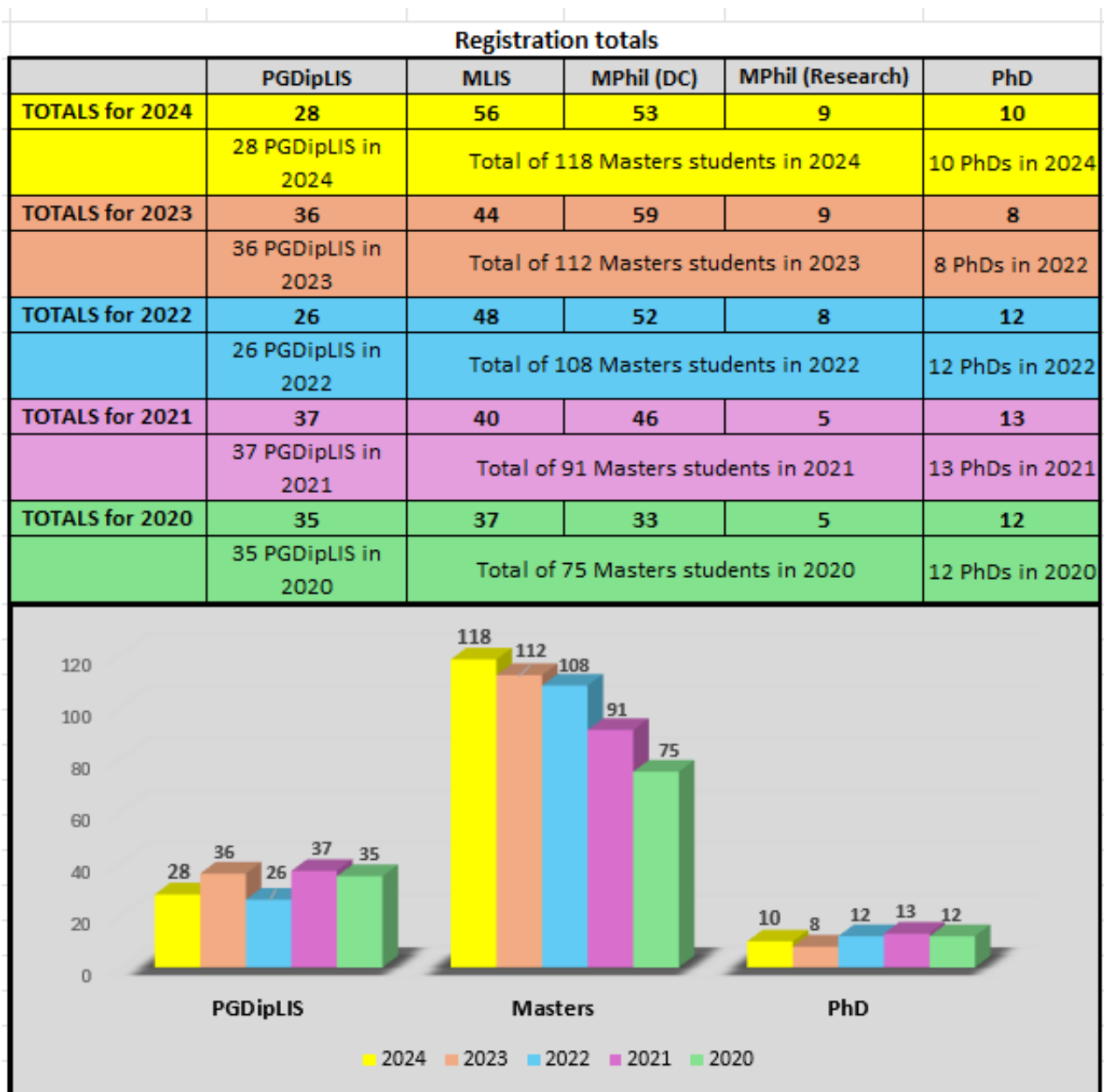


Figure 2: DKIS Student registrations (2020-2024)

Marketing

The DKIS logo (re-designed in 2019 when the Department had a name change and was integrated into the Humanities Faculty), includes in the imagery concepts that reflect the extended scope of the Department’s offerings. Advantage was also taken of the branding change to make the logo more web-friendly and more scalable for print.

The following DKIS branded promotional material, and other marketing strategies, continued in 2024 to form the basis of the Department's marketing drive:

- Annually updated A/5 flyers, together with A/4 flyers, were distributed on the UCT Campus, at other relevant institutions and at important LIS related events. E-versions were also used in 2024 for advertising electronically
- *DKIS Strategic Directions 2023-2027* has been made available in print form and is also on the DKIS website
- DKIS table overlays, folders, flyer holders, PowerPoint presentations and banners (used for special events, as appropriate) - all re-branded with the new logo – have been in use in 2024
- e-Copies of flyers have been distributed throughout the year via listservs such as LIASA's listserv, irtalk as well as on Vula (UCT)
- Annual bursary advertising (ca. R51 000 – one in 2024) from the Buyskes and Spilhaus Funds
- PGDipLIS and Masters programmes were actively advertised in 2024 on rotating banners on the UCT Vula and Amathuba homepages
- DKIS participated in the following City of Cape Town Library and Information Service promotional events: online presentation at the City of Cape Town Education, Training and Development Workshop (5 July 2024)
- Sadly, the Department's placing of 1500-2000 copies of a double-sided A/4 flyer with content details of DKIS courses in its various programmes, as inserts in the popular professional body magazine, *Liasa-in-touch (LIT)*, came to an end in 2022. *LIT* is now distributed electronically and the cost of the e-insert is beyond the financial means of the Department. DKIS has replaced this advertising with frequent distribution of e-copies of flyers via various electronic lists (mentioned above)

DKIS makes every effort to present the department and the delivery of all its programmes (coursework & research) with quality and excellence as it believes that this is the ultimate marketing tool for attracting high quality students, PhD candidates, post-doctoral fellows, research collaborators, visiting scholars, and for achieving national and international recognition.

The Department [website](#) continues to serve as a useful information and branding platform for the Department, profiling publications, news, staff and academic offerings, with closer integration and cross-population with social media to drive reciprocal traffic. As per university-wide website development, the DKIS website was migrated to an upgraded platform in 2023. Through the concerted efforts of DKIS staff led by Dr Mzwandile Shongwe and supported by DKIS Administrator, Nicole Rajman, the DKIS website was updated and now has an improved look-and-feel. Challenges were experienced during the migration, leading to a decreased viewership and visitors in 2023. The challenges continued in 2024 but to a lesser extent than in 2023. For the period between 1 January to 25 October 2024, there were 7 280 active users and 22 105 views. This is a gradual increase from the same period in 2022 (as 2023 statistics are not an accurate

reflection due to website platform migration challenges). This is attributed to migration to a new platform, which has improved the website's performance. Most active users visited the website in May/June and September/October months of 2024. Generally, users during these times are looking for programme entrance requirements. Users spent an average of one minute and 46 seconds on the website. Most users were from South Africa, followed by the Netherlands and Botswana. The Postgraduate Diploma in Library and Information Studies page was viewed the most (3 437 views), followed by the applications page with 1283 views and Masters programmes page (1 249 views). It is worth noting that in 2023, the Masters programmes page was viewed the most, which might be the result of the increased registrations in 2024. Overall viewership of the website has increased compared to 2022. DKIS continues to be cognisant of its social media presence. It has a continued presence on Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn and Instagram, which DKIS added in 2024 to its suite of social media platforms. As of October 2024, DKIS had 2 485 Facebook followers (up from 2 273 in 2023) and 711 X (Twitter) followers. DKIS has 555 followers on LinkedIn. On Facebook, the most popular post was September graduation celebration pictures, which had one PhD graduate (3 968 **People reached**, 4 291 **Impressions** and 867 **Engagements**). The second most popular post was a full-time Masters scholarship post, with 3 612 **People reached** and 4 205 **Engagements**. DKIS also explored paid advertising on Facebook for 2022 and 2023, which might have contributed to the increased Masters student registrations in 2024. Unfortunately, in 2024 there was no funding to pursue paid marketing due to budget cuts. [Note: **Reach** - The number of people who saw any of your posts at least once. Reach is different from [impressions](#), which may include multiple views of your posts by the same people. This metric is [estimated](#). **Engagement** - the number of times people engaged with your post through reactions, comments, shares and clicks. **Impressions** - the number of times that your post was on screen.]

7. Collaboration

Table 5 reflects current collaborative efforts in order to build research and other partnerships at the national and international levels; and to cultivate a healthy research environment in which to build research projects that attract funding, strong LIS academics, good postgraduate students and post-docs - particularly in the research niche areas identified in the DKIS strategic framework.

Table 5: Collaborative relationships

DKIS academic	Collaborators/Institution	Targeted outcomes
Prof. Jaya Raju	International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA) BSLISE Working Group (27 members from 15 countries; 13 languages) – involving IFLA’s Section on Education and Training (SET); Library Theory and Research Section (LTR); and, LIS	Framework for quality assessment of LIS education internationally; Global collaborative work; International data collection/Global consultation; White Paper published; International conference/panel presentations;

	Education in Developing Countries Special Interest Group (LISEDG)	Journal publications and book chapters; Key foundational knowledge areas in LIS education - published; Guidelines framework for LIS education programmes globally – published IFLA Guidelines Stewardship Committee – stewarding global implementation of the Guidelines which includes presentations on the Guidelines at various national and regional and international forums, and the development of a resource guide for implementation of the Guidelines
Richard Higgs	Centre for Theatre, Dance and Performance Studies (CTDPS), UCT	Masters teaching collaboration (Dr Mbongeni Mtshali) with potential research collaborations
Richard Higgs	ICOM-SA and South African Museums Association Bulletin	Profiling of Digital Curation academic offerings in Heritage and Memory Institutions practice
Richard Higgs	Dr Grant McNulty; Prof. Carolyn Hamilton - Five Hundred Year Archive (FHYA) Project	Funding for DKIS research students
Dr Mzwandile Shongwe	University of Zululand	Committee participation – Annual Information Studies Conference
Dr Andiswa Mfengu	Dr Linda Mtwisha (UCT’s Executive Director: Research) to collaborate on an interdisciplinary project by UCT’s Research and Internationalisation to develop an impact framework for UCT	UCT’s Impact Framework
Theresa de Young	National Research Foundation - National Facilities’ Librarians	Collaborative framework for future of their library services

8. Social and professional engagement

DKIS staff continue to provide input into forums contributing to L/IS professional development as well as advancing community development and social justice. Social and professional engagement is one of the strategic themes (*see Figure 1*) informing the Department’s programmes and activities and is also part of its contribution to addressing issues of transformation and

decoloniality. Examples are captured in *Table 6* and are an indication of DKIS as a source of intellectual guidance for policy-making and professional and community development.

Table 6: Social and professional engagement

Social/Professional engagement	DKIS academic
Reviewing for local and international journals; serving on Editorial Advisory Boards	DKIS academics
Members of professional bodies: LIASA; ALISE; ASIS&T; ALA; ACRL; IAKM; ICOM	DKIS academics
Serving as members of various Humanities Faculty (UCT) committees	DKIS academics
Serving as members of various university (UCT)-wide committees/structures	DKIS academics
Keynote addresses and invited speaker engagements at higher education-related and professional meetings/conferences/webinars	DKIS academics
External examination of courses, thesis and dissertations	DKIS academics
Subject Chair on the Scopus Content Selection & Advisory Board (CSAB) for LIS and multidisciplinary journals – reviewing LIS and related journal applications for Scopus listing: 2018 -	Prof. Jaya Raju
Co-Editor – ALISE (Association for Library and Information Science Education) Book Series	Prof. Jaya Raju
Member of the International Academic Board, HUMA (Institute for Humanities in Africa), UCT	Prof. Jaya Raju
Founding member of the L/IS Heads of Schools Forum	Prof. Jaya Raju
Co-Chair of IFLA’s Building Strong Library and Information Science Education (BSLISE) Working Group	Prof. Jaya Raju
Chairing and/or participation in academic reviews (UCT and other universities)	Prof. Jaya Raju
Member of the CHE National Reference Group for developing a national benchmark standard for LIS education (2018-2020) – continuing consultation	Prof. Jaya Raju
Short course development and facilitation for the LIS community in emerging skills areas	Michelle Kahn
Member of the Department of Environmental Affairs <i>Marine Information Systems</i> Steering Committee (Data Curation Project)	Richard Higgs & Michelle Kahn
Member of Western Cape Archives Advisory Committee	Richard Higgs
Language and Literacy Programme (LLP), Cape Town	Dr Mzwandile Shongwe
Chair (2023/2024) Africa Chapter, Association for Information Science and Technology (ASIS&T); Chapter Assembly Representative (2020-2023) ASIS&T	Dr Andiswa Mfengu
Member of the Literature Services Advisory Board for Europe PubMed Central (PMC) and European Molecular Biology Laboratory European Bioinformatics Institute (EMBL-EBI) (2024-2026)	Dr Andiswa Mfengu

Vice-Chair (2019-2021; 2021-2023): LIS Education and Training, African Library and Information Associations and Institutions (AFLIA)	Dr Andiswa Mfengu
Chair of ASIS&T Publications Committee (2022-2023)	Dr Andiswa Mfengu
Member of DORA (Declaration on Research Assessment) Tools to Advance Research Assessment (TARA) Advisory Group: 2022 -	Dr Andiswa Mfengu
Member of International Board on Books for Young People (IBBY) South Africa	Theresa de Young
Advisor to the local organising committee for the National Research Foundation's Library and Information Services side event (Open Access Encounters, 7 August 2024) to the International Astronomical Union Conference	Theresa de Young

9. Conclusion

DKIS continues to be physically located on the Hlanganani Level of the Chancellor Oppenheimer Library Complex, until it moves to a Humanities building. The COVID-19 (2020-2021) pandemic has delayed this move. Space has been identified for DKIS in a Humanities building and DKIS will relocate to AC Jordan Building by end of 2024. Once again, DKIS thanks UCT Libraries for support in terms of comfortable working space and for their patience regarding the pending relocation. UCT Libraries also generously provides DKIS with two dedicated teaching venues. Bigger classes are taught in venues that are part of UCT's central venue booking system and effected during annual class scheduling. DKIS continues its close working relationship with UCT Libraries. It wishes to thank colleagues from UCT Libraries for their professional enrichment, from time to time, in DKIS teaching.

A special thanks to Emerita Associate Professors Mary Nassimbeni and Karin de Jager for their continued support of DKIS. Thanks also go to DKIS staff (including DKIS Administrator, Nicole Rajman), all of whom, despite periodic challenges, remain committed to the academic project and the work DKIS does for the L/IS and related professional sectors, for the University and for academia generally. DKIS also wishes to thank external research supervisors, Dr Lena Nyahodza and Dr Brenda van Wyk, for providing support in supervision of Masters students in 2024.

Gratitude also goes to the Humanities Faculty Dean (Prof. Shose Kessi) and the Faculty Executive and Administration teams for their support of DKIS in its delivery of its academic project. Lastly, a special thanks to members of stakeholder communities for participation in the DKIS Advisory Committee – we look forward to productive engagement.

Dr Andiswa Mfengu (with input from DKIS staff)
November 2024