



Department of
Knowledge & Information Stewardship
University of Cape Town



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for the

Department of
Knowledge &
Information Stewardship

Advisory Committee
Meeting

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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 2025, DKIS offered, for the third time, a Faculty-approved undergraduate service course, Introduction to Social Informatics, to first-year students across the Humanities Faculty.

DKIS began 2025 with six full-time academic staff members: a Head at Senior Lecturer level, Deputy Dean (substantive post) at full Professor level, a Senior Lecturer and three Lecturers. DKIS has a full-time permanent Administrative Assistant (payclass 7), the role has been regraded to Administrative Officer (payclass 8) from 1 January 2026. Emerita 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 completing historic supervision. To manage the growing number of masters supervisions and cover teaching gaps resulting from staff moving to the Deanery, DKIS utilised the support of current and former PhD students. In 2025, DKIS, operating with a single administrator, secured funding for a 22-day part-time receptionist role, subsequently filled by a senior student.

There have been 12 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 14th DKIS Annual Report, is the sixth 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 2024 on the Department's [website](#). Similar to past reports, this annual report also highlights the activities of DKIS for the 2025 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.

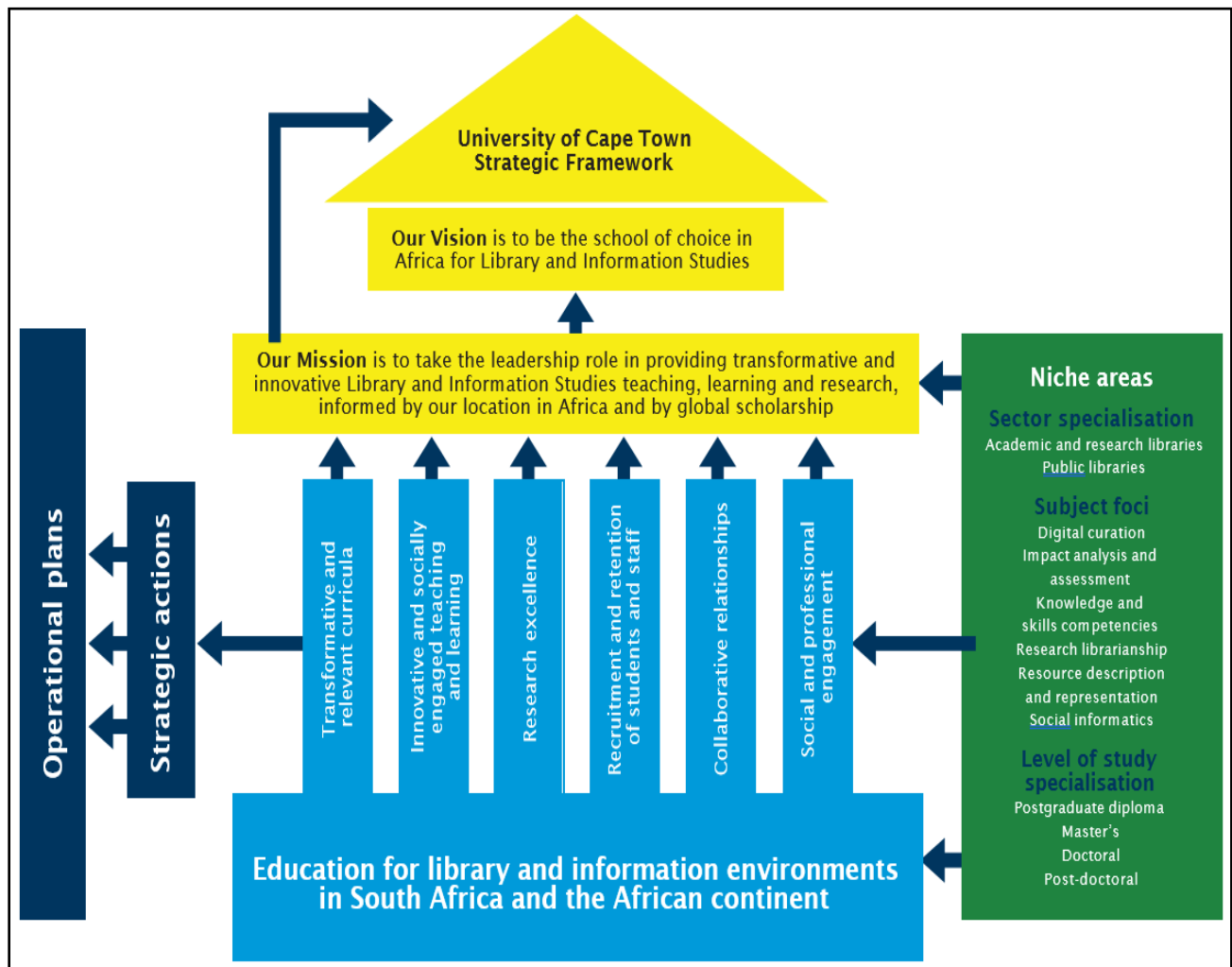


Figure 1: Graphic representation of DKIS Strategic Directions

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. The programme curriculum engages with trends in the discipline such as equity, diversity, inclusion and accessibility (EDIA) and LIS services; epistemological, ontological and theoretical approaches informing the research process, decoloniality and libraries, among others and continues to do so since its re-curriculation in 2012.

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: eResearch, eScience & Digital Humanities, Research impact assessment, Bibliometrics, altmetrics and alternative measures of impact, Transformation/decolonisation and Africanisation/indigenisation in LIS leadership and management, LIS and the 4th industrial revolution (4IR) and AI (artificial intelligence) among others.

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, Impact of digital transformation, including AI, Linked open data to support electronic resources and democratisation of knowledge, among others.

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 a 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 curriculation, is cognisant of our African location.

4. Teaching and learning

In a post-pandemic period, DKIS continued in 2025 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, 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 2025
- 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 one 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 2025, the block release class was made up of students from Johannesburg, Gqeberha, Mossel Bay and the Cape Town surrounds
- 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
- 2025 registrations: 10 part-time; 20 full-time; 7 block release (total=37)
- 2025 PGDipLIS registrations saw an increase of nine from 2024. The block release offering still seems to be a viable option for employers sponsoring formal LIS studies of their staff. This year, we found that not all block release students travelled to Cape Town for the final teaching week of the year, perhaps due to high accumulated travel and accommodation costs.
- Students registered in 2025 are all from South Africa, having previously graduated from local higher education institutions (CPUT, NWU, Rhodes, SUN, UCT, UFH, Unisa, UP, UWC, Wits, AFDA, STADIO, Varsity College, Vega). Seven 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: Cape Town Holocaust and Genocide Centre; City of Cape Town Library and Information Services (Central, Delft, Gugulethu, Kuyasa, Mitchell’s Plain, Lansdowne, Pinelands, Rylands, Wynberg libraries, Langeberg Municipality); CPUT Libraries; District Six Museum; Gordon's Bay Public Library; Iziko Social History Library; Library of Parliament; National Library of South Africa; UCT Libraries; University of Johannesburg Library; Wits University Library; Webber Wentzel.
- Academic orientation (for extra-curricular support) included: Amathuba orientation (UCT’s online learning platform); library orientation; citation management (facilitated by UCT Libraries); plagiarism & Turnitin; AI and academic writing; and presentation skills (facilitated by the UCT Careers Service).
- 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 2025, DKIS awarded two partial Hilda Buyskes Bursaries valued at R30,000.00 each. 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 22 October 2025. Departmental prizes (R500 book vouchers) for 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 2025 graduations: 35
- As of 31 October 2025: 127 PGDipLIS applications for 2026 (66 firm offers; 25 provisional offers; 14 declined; 11 withdrawn; 11 in progress) – applications closed 31 September 2025

MLIS

- 2025 registrations: 60 (11 new registrations and 49 returning students)
- Of the 60, 46 were registered for the minor dissertation in 2025, and 3 were repeating a course each; 6 MLIS graduations in 2025
- 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 2025 from Gauteng, KwaZulu Natal, Eastern Cape, Mpumalanga, 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 2025. Fee cost is likely influencing factor in the slow uptake of occasional courses
- From 2026, Leadership and Management, Internship, and Research Librarianship were added to the list of occasional courses
- As of 31 October 2025: 80 MLIS applications for 2026 (20 firm offers; 6 conditional offers; 19 declined; 10 in process) - applications closed 31 September 2025

MPhil (Digital Curation)

- 2025 registrations: 53 (16 new registrations and 37 returning students)
- Of the 53, 37 were registered for the minor dissertation in 2025 and 0 were repeating a course; 11 MPhil(DC) graduations for 2025
- 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 was one RDM occasional course registration in 2025
- In 2025, the entrance requirements for the programme were increased from 60% to 65% in line with other masters programme in the department
- As of 31 October 2025: 38 MPhil(DC) applications for 2026 (17 firm offers; 7 conditional offers; 7 declined; 3 in process) - applications closed 31 September 2025

MPhil (Research) & PhD

- 2025 MPhil (Research) registrations: 7 plus 1 on leave of absence (2 returning and 2 new); 2 MPhil (Research) graduations in September 2025
- 2025 PhD registrations: 10 plus 1 on leave of absence (10 returning and 0 new); 1 PhD graduated in April 2025
- In 2024, DKIS had its first MPhil (Research) student's 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 De Jager is supporting PhD supervision, this is now shifting towards permanent staff in DKIS
- DKIS continues to hold an Annual Research Day (this year on 28 November 2025 - 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 2025 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, worked well in involving students and presenters located outside of Cape Town and enjoyed decent 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 each year. 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 2025 Series, an award in the form of a published research text was made to a student for the ‘most impactful participation in the Series’ – the 2025 Award went to an MLIS coursework student

- As of 31 October 2025: 6 MPhil (Research) applications for 2026 (0 firm offers; 3 declined; 3 in process)
- As of 31 October 2025: 10 PhD applications in 2025 (0 firm offers; 5 declined; 4 in process)

Undergraduate service course (LIS1000S – Introduction to Social Informatics)

LIS1000S was offered for the third time in 2025. 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 Centre 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)
- In 2025, 81 students (from 48 in 2024) enrolled for the third time offering of the course
- Humanities undergraduate students, from 2024, were required to take two courses from UCSS’s Khanyisa suite of courses. Which might have resulted in an increase LIS1000S course enrolment in 2025
- In 2025, the course made use of teaching assistants and tutors (2 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 2025 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: 2025 DKIS publications and conference presentations/proceedings

Journal publications/book chapters/proceedings and other	Conference/Webinar presentations/Panel presentations
Mfengu, A. & Raju, R. Eds. 2025. <i>Advancing social justice through curriculum realignment: centering scholarly communication in LIS curricula</i>. Cape Town: UCT Libraries Press. DOI: https://doi.org/10.15641/978.0.7992.2561.7	De Young, T. & Mvakade, Z. 2025. The grand LIS challenge: the adoption of AI for scholarly output by astronomers in South Africa. Paper presented at the <i>10th Library and Information Services in Astronomy Conference</i> , Santiago, Chile, 3 –7 November 2025.
Mfengu, A. 2025. Equitable research assessment driving research impact in the global south: a perspective from South Africa. In <i>Advancing social justice through curriculum realignment: centering scholarly communication in LIS curricula</i> . A. Mfengu & R. Raju, Eds. Cape Town: UCT Libraries Press. 361-379. DOI: https://doi.org/10.15641/978.0.7992.2561.7	De Young, T. & Coetzer, G. 2025. A collaborative framework for super smart astronomy library and information services within the National Research Foundation in South Africa. Paper presented at the <i>4th University of South Africa Biennial International Conference on Library and Information Science in South Africa (UNILISA)</i> , Pretoria, South Africa, 1 –4 April 2025.
Raju, J. 2025. A hermeneutical consideration of <i>What</i> knowledge is produced before <i>How</i> it is shared. In <i>Advancing social justice through curriculum realignment: centering scholarly communication in LIS curricula</i> . A. Mfengu & R. Raju, Eds. Cape Town: UCT Libraries Press. 49-63. DOI: https://doi.org/10.15641/978.0.7992.2561.7	Mfengu, A. 2025. <i>Information literacy in practice: supporting communities of critical thinkers</i>. LIASA Special Interest Group workshop, 12 September 2025 (online) Mfengu, A. 2025. <i>Reclaiming research impact: centering African realities and knowledges</i>. ASIS&T webinar, 11 September 2025 (online).
Mfengu, A. 2025. Socially just research impact assessment as a foundation for the advancement of open access and open science: a case of a research-intensive African university. <i>Journal of Librarianship and Scholarly Communication</i> . 12(2): eP18248. DOI: https://doi.org/10.31274/jlsc.18248	Mfengu, A. 2025. Leadership and management competencies for libraries as innovation and community hubs. Paper presented at the 2025 <i>LIASA (Library and Information Association of South Africa) Annual Conference</i> , Boardwalk Hotel, Gqeberha, 30 September - 3 October 2025.
Hipangwa, M. & Mfengu, A. 2025. Professionals’ digital information literacy skills: a case of geoscientists in Namibia. <i>African Journal of Library, Archives and Information Science</i> . 35(1): 1-13. DOI: https://doi.org/10.4314/ajlais.e35110	Mfengu, A. 2025. Extending information literacy for the realization of artificial intelligence literacy. Paper presented at the <i>6th AfLIA Conference and 8th African Libraries</i>

	Summit, Windhoek, Namibia, 19 – 23 May 2025.
Xaba, S.S.G. & Shongwe, M.M. 2025. Implementation of resource description and access in the Gauteng Province, South Africa. <i>South African Journal of Library and Information Science</i> . 91(2): 1-10. DOI: https://doi.org/10.7553/91-2-2383	Mfengu, A. 2024. Equitable research assessment driving research impact in the global south: a perspective from South Africa. Paper presented at the <i>Advancing Social Justice Through Curriculum Realignment: Centering Scholarly Communication in LIS Curricula Conference</i> , UCT, Cape Town, 8-9 December 2024.
De Young, T. & Raju, J. 2025. Astronomers' contribution to library and information services at the South African Astronomical Observatory in their quest to understand the universe. <i>Library and Information History</i> . 41(1): 21-34. DOI: https://eupublishing.com/doi/abs/10.3366/lih.2025.0190	Raju, J. 2024. A hermeneutical consideration of <i>What</i> knowledge is produced before <i>How</i> it is shared. Paper presented at the <i>Advancing Social Justice Through Curriculum Realignment: Centering Scholarly Communication in LIS Curricula Conference</i> , UCT, Cape Town, 8-9 December 2024. (Keynote Address)
Mambo, R. & Raju, J. 2025. The use of online meeting platforms for information literacy training by academic librarians: the case of a private higher education institution. <i>Innovation: journal of appropriate librarianship and information work in Southern Africa</i> . 2025(70):20-36. DOI: https://hdl.handle.net/10520/ejc-innovation_v2025_n70_a3	Raju, J. 2024. 'The Master's tools will never dismantle the master's house': an epistemological reflection on transformation. <i>University of Cape Town School of Languages and Literatures Symposium: Languages and Literatures in Times of Transformation: Opportunities and Challenges</i> , Upper Campus, University of Cape Town, 26 November 2024 (Keynote Address)

Scholarly editing

Professor Jaya Raju:

- Continued in 2025 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
- Co-editor with A/Prof. Albina Krymskaya (St. Petersburg State University of Culture) and Prof. Sandra Hirsh (San José State University) on the IFLA (International Federation of Library and Information Associations and Institutions) Section on Education and Training 50th anniversary book - *Library and Information Science Education around the World: Historical Trends, Current Perspectives and Future Projections*

Dr Mzwandile Shongwe:

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

DKIS conference and book

DKIS hosted 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 ran 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 peer-reviewed papers presented at the two-day conference have been published ([*Advancing Social Justice Through Curriculum Realignment: Centering Scholarly Communication in LIS Curricula*](#)) in an open-access collection of essays published by UCT Libraries Press. The multilingual book, with chapters in Spanish, Portuguese and Setswana, was published and launched on 16 September 2025 by the Deputy Vice Chancellor of Teaching and Learning, Prof. Brandon Collier-Reed, and Dean of the Faculty of Humanities, Prof. Shose Kessi.

Independent research and collaboration

Professor Jaya Raju and Dr Mzwandile Shongwe are currently NRF-rated researchers. *Table 2* reflects 2025 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
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Research output from independent research and collaboration captured in *Table 2* is 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 (2025)

DKIS academic	Grant	Amount
Dr Andiswa Mfengu	UCT Researcher Development Grant	R42,000
Theresa De Young	UCT Researcher Development Grant	R35,259

DKIS academics are encouraged to look beyond the DKIS budget to fund research travel and study visits, and hence DKIS academics continued in 2025 to consider funding applications (based on their publications) from funding sources such as the **University Research Committee (URC)** and **Faculty Block Grants**. 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), the role has been regraded to pay class 8 (Administrative Officer) from January 2026. 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 Dr Mfengu for her promotion to Senior Lecturer (1 January 2025) and appointment as the head of the department, effective from 1 May 2025 for 3 +2 years. Professor Raju continued in 2025 in her substantive Deputy Dean role in the Humanities Faculty. 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 2025	Completed supervision (sole/main supervisor) as of November 2025
	2024	2025		
Michelle Kahn (MK) (Lecturer) – 2014 (Permanent)	4.92 - plus repeat lectures for block release, as required	4.5 (teaching relief for Sem. 2 2025) - plus repeat lectures for block release, as required	2025: 18 (17 minor dissertations; 1 MPhil(Res)) plus 5 PGDip proposals 2024: 14 (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) 3 minor/d (2025)
Richard Higgs (RH) (Lecturer) – 2014 (Permanent)	4.12 – carried an additional masters programme convenership of MLIS programme while MS was on sabbatical Semester 2 of 2024	3.5 (LIS5027S not offered in 2025)	2025: 15 (minor dissertations) plus 5 PGDip proposals 2024: 17 (minor dissertations)	2 minor/d (2017) 3 minor/d (2018) 5 minor/d (2019) 1 minor/d (2020) 2 minor/d (2022) 2 minor/d (2024) 4 minor/d (2025)
Prof. Jaya Raju (JR) (HoD and Deputy Dean) – 2012 (Permanent)	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	JR in 2025 continued in a substantive Deputy Dean role but was still involved in mentoring DKIS academics as a co-supervisor in 2 PhD studies plus involvement	2025: 8 (6 PhDs; 2 MPhil(Res)) 2024: 12 (5 PhDs; 5 MPhil(Res); 2 minor dissertations	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)

		in the Research Seminar Series (on sabbatical September - November 2025)		1 MPhil(Res) (2021) 1 PhD (2022) 1 minor/d (2022) 1 PhD (2023) 1 PhD (2024) 2 MPhil(Res); 1 minor/d (2025)
Dr Mzwandile Shongwe (MS) (Senior Lecturer) – 2019 (Permanent)	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)	6.2 plus repeat lectures for block release	2025: 17 (2 PhDs; 15 minor dissertations) plus 5 PGDip proposals 2024: 15 (2 PhDs; 1 MPhil(Res); 12 minor dissertations)	1 MPhil(Res) at UniZulu (2019) 1 MPhil(Res) at UniZulu (2020) 1 minor/d (2022) 1 minor/d (2023) 1 minor/d (2024) 1 minor/d; 1 MPhil(Res) (2025)
Dr Andiswa Mfengu (AM) (Lecturer and Deputy HoD) – 2019 (Permanent)	2.50 plus repeat lectures for block release, as required; plus headship responsibilities (teaching assistance provided to support AM for first-year servicing course)	3.9 plus repeat lectures for block release; plus headship responsibilities (teaching assistance provided to support AM for LIS1000S)	2025: 20 (2 PhDs; 2 MPhil(Res); 16 minor dissertations) plus 7 PGDip proposals 2024: 14 (2 PhDs; 2 MPhil(Res); 12 minor dissertations)	1 minor/d (2020) – in mentored capacity 1 minor/d (2023) 1 minor/d (2024) 3 minor/d (2025)
Theresa de Young (TDY) (Lecturer – 2023 (Permanent)	5.00 plus repeat lectures for block release and convening of Work Integrated Learning (PGDipLIS)	4.8 plus repeat lectures for block release and convening of Work Integrated Learning (PGDipLIS)	2025: 15 (14 minor dissertations; 1 MPhil(Res)) plus 5 PGDip proposals 2024: 9 (minor dissertations)	2 minor/d (2025)

Note: Emerita Associate Professors (Mary Nassimbeni and Karin de Jager) supplemented masters and PhD supervision in 2025. This is being progressively lessened with full-time academics taking

over most of the research supervision. DKIS used one external supervisor (Dr Lena Nyahodza) in 2025. While the department has successfully developed in-house supervision capacity over the years, we are mindful of the increasing masters supervision and the resultant pressure on full-time academics. We also recognise the global challenge of low student throughput.

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 2021 up to and including 2025 (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 2025 across all five programmes as DKIS works towards meeting 2026 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 immediate post-COVID-19 period (2022-4) has not seen much uptake on occasional courses. *Figure 2*, however, shows a healthy increase in enrolment numbers in 2025 across almost all programmes. This return to the past trend (pre-COVID-19) of a steady increase or maintenance 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 an increase in 2025 in PGDipLIS enrolments from 28 (2024) to 37, which was higher than projected and shows a healthy growth. Our PhD numbers remain stable due to graduations of PhD students almost every year - this augurs well for the Department's graduate output and subsidy earning capacity for the university. 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.

Totals	PGDipLIS	MLIS	MPhil (DC)	MPhil (Research)	PhD
2025 (167)	37	60	53	7	10
		Total of 120 Masters students in 2025			
2024 (156)	28	56	53	9	10
		Total of 118 Masters students in 2024			
2023 (156)	36	44	59	9	8
		Total of 112 Masters students in 2023			
2022 (146)	26	48	52	8	12
		Total of 108 Masters students in 2022			
2021 (141)	37	40	46	5	13
		Total of 91 Masters students in 2021			

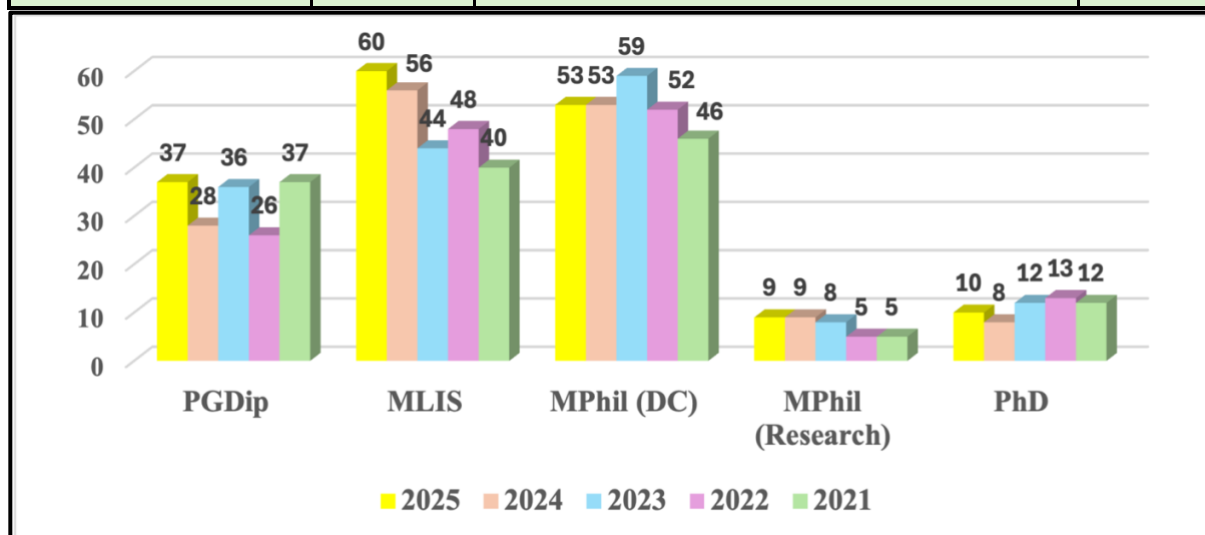


Figure 2: DKIS Student registrations (2021-2025)

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 2025 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 2025 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 2025
- e-Copies of flyers have been distributed throughout the year via listservs such as LIASA's listserv, IRTalk, as well as on Amathuba (UCT)
- Annual bursary advertising (ca. R30,000.00 – two partial bursaries in 2025) from the Buyskes and Spilhaus Funds
- PGDipLIS and masters programmes were actively advertised in 2025 on rotating banners on the UCT 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 June 2025)
- 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 2023/2024. The website statistics for 2023/2024 period may not be reflective due to the migration process. Our departmental administrator, Nicole Rajman, is now trained and responsible for the website management. For the period between 1 January and 31 October 2025, there were **5 899** (245 in 2024) active users and **17 155** (1 831 in 2024) views. There is generally a decrease in website traffic, which may be linked to the use of social media and AI overviews to access information instead of going directly to the website. Users spent an average of one minute and 33 seconds on the website. Most users were from South Africa, followed by United States and China, which in 2024 were Netherlands and Namibia. The Postgraduate Diploma in Library and Information

Studies page was viewed the most 2.6K views (3.4K views in 2024), followed by the homepage (2.6K views) and MLIS page (1.7k views). DKIS continued presence on Facebook, LinkedIn and Instagram, and not so much on Twitter (X). As of October 2025, DKIS had 2.5K Facebook followers (2.4K in 2024) and 675 LinkedIn followers (555 in 2024). Instagram followership and engagement is also on a steady growth. On Facebook, the most popular post was the announcement of the new HOD in May (4.8K Views, 2.3K Reach and 162 Interactions). The second most popular post was the book launch post in September 2025, with 2.9K Views, 1.8K Reach and 50 Interactions. [Note: **Facebook Views** – The number of times the content was displayed or viewed, **Reach** - The number of people who saw any of your posts at least once. **Interactions** - the number of times people engaged with your post through reactions, comments, shares and saves.]

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 Education in Developing Countries Special Interest Group (LISEDG)	Framework for quality assessment of LIS education internationally; Global collaborative work; International data collection/Global consultation; White Paper published; International conference/panel presentations; 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
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 (South African Astronomical Observatory and South African Radio Astronomy Observatory)	Collaborative framework for super smart astronomy library services; AI adoption in scientific research project
Dr Andiswa Mfengu	University of Sheffield, Information, Communication and Journalism Department	Knowledge exchange and AI training framework for librarians' research project

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 of 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
Member of Western Cape Archives Advisory Committee	Richard Higgs
Language and Literacy Programme (LLP), Cape Town	Dr Mzwandile Shongwe
Member of Literature Services Advisory Board for Europe PubMed Central (PMC) and European Molecular Biology Laboratory European Bioinformatics Institute (EMBL-EBI) (2024-2026)	Dr Andiswa Mfengu
Member of International Board on Books for Young People (IBBY) South Africa	Theresa de Young
Chair of National Council for Library and Information Services (2025-2028)	Dr Andiswa Mfengu
Members of IFLA SET (Section on Education and Training) (2025-2027)	Prof. Jaya Raju & Dr Andiswa Mfengu
Committee member of Jagger Bequest	Theresa de Young

9. Conclusion

DKIS, as of December 2024, relocated to the Faculty of Humanities' physical space in AC Jordan Building after many years in Chancellor Oppenheimer Library. Once again, DKIS thanks UCT Libraries for the continued use of the libraries' two dedicated teaching venues for teaching in 2025 as DKIS settled into the new space. Bigger classes are taught in venues that are part of UCT's central venue booking system and affected 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 supervisor, Dr Lena Nyahodza, for providing support in supervision of masters students in 2025.

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 2025