

M25 SpeedMeet



Who are you, where are you based and what do you do?

I am Stuart Hunt and I am Director of University Library & Collections Services and University Librarian at the University of Reading. In this role I have leadership responsibility for the University Library and University Museums and Special Collections Services. As a member of the University's Leadership Group my role is focused both within my own area (ULCS) and more widely across the University. I sit on a number of committees and boards at the university covering areas including research, teaching and learning, staffing, estates and more. My role includes strategic leadership and development of the work of ULCS both within the university and beyond and I ensure that our strategy and planning is aligned with the strategic priorities of the university. Supporting and promoting the work of colleagues is essential in order for both them and ULCS as a whole to be the best that we can. Outside of the University of Reading I am the newly elected Chair of the M25 Consortium having spent the past three and a half years as a member of the Steering Group. I am also a member of the Jisc Library Strategy Advisory Group and Chair of the Jisc Library Hub Community Advisory Board.

What do you most enjoy about your job?

I particularly enjoy thinking and planning ahead for how my teams can enhance and develop what we do in support of the core mission of teaching, learning and research at the University of Reading. I am at my happiest when challenging accepted orthodoxy if it means that we come to better solutions. Working with others who have a passion for us to be the best that we can is extremely rewarding and I am lucky to work with highly skilled and committed colleagues.

What motivates you in your work?

I am motivated by people and by ideas. Working with fantastic colleagues to continuously improve and in finding new and innovative ways to resolve new and existing problems is a pleasure. Librarianship is such a great profession and I am lucky to be surrounded by highly skilled individuals and teams both within the university and across the wider M25 membership.

How can/has the M25 Consortium supported you in your career?

The strength of the M25 Consortium lies in our diversity both as individuals and as institutions. I firmly believe that we learn much more from people and institutions who are different to

ourselves. The M25 enables all the membership no matter what level a member of staff is within one of our member institutions to learn and develop. As the consortium includes both academic and scholarly libraries we are so much stronger than single issue or mission group based organisations. Having the ability to visit, engage at our conference and learn from our diverse membership is something that we can't put a price on. Being a member of the Steering Group gives the opportunity to help set the direction for the consortium and I would encourage anyone interested to become involved.

What would it surprise people to know about you?

I have held a lion cub in my arms. They are heavier than you might think.

Complete the sentence: If I wasn't working in a library I would be..... because

If I wasn't working in a library I would be downcast and miserable because being a librarian is the only job I have ever wanted. Sad but true.

Stuart Hunt, University of Reading, 2022