Lead Metadata Strategist – MIT Libraries

The Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) Libraries, located in Cambridge, MA on traditional unceded territory, seeks for its Lead Metadata Strategist a dynamic and thoughtful leader who will set the strategic direction for metadata projects and activities across the Libraries in active collaboration with colleagues both within and outside of the Libraries to further the Libraries' shared vision, mission, and values. While this position is located within Technical Services in the Collections Directorate, work centered on and driven by metadata is being done across the MIT Libraries, with profound impacts at every point in the information lifecycle. Reporting to the Head of Technical Services, Kim Maxwell, the incoming Lead Metadata Strategist and their team of three direct and six indirect reports will prioritize and address the metadata needs of the organization, and coordinate a wide range of people and activities across several directorates.

The MIT Libraries are on an exciting journey of transformation, prioritizing a digital-first, open scholarship agenda that includes support for data-intensive and computational research, all in the service of accelerating the progress of science, promoting equity and inclusion across disciplines, elevating scholars and scholarship from around the globe, and contributing to solutions to the world's greatest challenges. MIT Libraries has a strong history of questioning existing paradigms and advancing open access and has goals of transforming the library into an open global platform. The work of the Libraries is taking place in the context of broader reflection and action at MIT, including the first Institute-wide strategic action plan for diversity, equity, and inclusion and a wide variety of initiatives that further open and equitable scholarship.

As is made clear through the work and communications of the MIT Libraries, there is a drive to increase the demographic representation within the staff of the Libraries in addition to its initiatives to broaden information collection and access. The MIT Libraries seeks professionals who enthusiastically embrace the empathy, courage, self-reflection, and respect of a multi-cultural, diverse and inclusive workplace, and have a track record of incorporating those values into their work and interactions.

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THE MIT LIBRARIES

To further MIT's mission to build a better world, the MIT Libraries are working to make the Institute's distinct body of knowledge more open, equitable, accessible, and durable. Strategic initiatives focused on open access, data and computational research and learning, digital sustainability, and understanding and addressing barriers to participating in scholarship have been articulated through campus-wide processes, with support and leadership from the Director of Libraries, Chris Bourg, as well as the Office of the Provost.

Organized in four directorates and a research center – Collections, Research and Learning, Digital Library Services, Administrative Services, and the Center for Research on Equitable and Open Scholarship (CREOS) – the MIT Libraries staff of 150 individuals is well positioned to address the interdisciplinary priorities identified in collaboration with the MIT community.

In addition to the main search on the Libraries' website, the MIT Libraries' various discovery interfaces are found at the following sites: Search Our Collections (Primo VE); DSpace@MIT; Dome; ArchivesSpace; Archnet; and TIMDEX.

THE ROLE

The MIT Libraries seek a forward-thinking and collaborative library professional to lead metadata strategy and management (including prioritization) with the end goal of optimizing the user experience. Through collaboration with Libraries staff and other partners across the Institute and more broadly, the Lead Metadata Strategist will catalyze an evolving understanding of metadata standards and service models. Their direction will serve to coordinate and streamline a variety of workflows as well as to uncover novel avenues to providing intellectual and physical access to the information resources and collections in support of the Institute's commitment "to generating, disseminating, and preserving knowledge, and to working with others to bring this knowledge to bear on the world's great challenges." The Lead Metadata Strategist is also responsible for the tactical supervision and professional development of the Technical Services members of the metadata team.

A collaborative leader, the Lead Metadata Strategist works with staff within Collections and the other directorates to develop a roadmap for prioritizing the metadata work across the enterprise, including metadata production, remediation, enhancement, and management. All of these efforts are directed towards maximizing global availability of local resources with the goal of inclusive discovery, from rethinking the language in subject headings, to understanding how tools can be made accessible, so as to promote discovery by the MIT community and beyond. This leader will assess, develop,

and document internal policies and procedures, and initiate projects related to improving the discoverability of resources with a focus on equity, diversity, inclusion, and social justice.

SUMMARY OF ESSENTIAL JOB FUNCTIONS

Leadership, Strategy, and Projects

- Provides leadership and strategy, establishes priorities, sets goals, and coordinates Libraries' metadata initiatives, including data transformation and remediation projects.

- Works collaboratively with colleagues across the organization to allocate resources, and develop and evaluate plans, policies, and practices to enhance discovery, access, and use of library resources.

- Provides vision and guidance in the development and implementation of established and evolving metadata standards and best practices, including non-MARC metadata schema and linked data, particularly in relation to enhanced user experience (UX). Collaborates on the optimization of discovery systems.

- Leads and coordinates oversight of metadata consulting and project analysis services including data modeling, data transformation, data creation, database design, and application of new and evolving technologies.

- Provides project management for cross-collection metadata initiatives, including enhancement and remediation projects, increasing strategic use of persistent identifiers, and other projects that support improved discovery, system interoperability, and metadata re-use and extensibility.

- Plans, implements, and monitors external vendor contracts providing cataloging data or bibliographic utilities services. Assesses vendor performance, including services and costs. Monitors production by contractors to inform budget and procurement processes.

- Serves as a member of the Technical Services Leadership Team, as well as other committees, task forces, and teams in which perspective and leadership in metadata management is needed.

- Leads and assesses MIT's participation in cooperative cataloging and metadata initiatives. Engages in regional and national communities of practice, integrating evolving standards.

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Staff Management, Development, and Support

- Hires, trains, supervises, and develops staff, including both direct reports and other departmental staff who have interconnected or shared responsibilities; provides coaching, leadership, and development support for direct reports and other colleagues.

- Plans and runs regular meetings for working groups related to metadata, to learn new skills, share current situations, and collaborate on solutions.

- Builds and fosters a culture of innovation, continuous learning, and calculated risk taking.

Collaboration, Outreach, and Relationship Building

- Develops and champions collaborative working relationships with staff across the Libraries, MIT, and external partners to investigate and develop scalable metadata standards and service models that enhance access and discovery.

- Builds relationships and works cooperatively with other departments, external partners and individual collaborators, as appropriate, to assess and respond to needs, clarify and solicit feedback on policies, coordinate workflow, and implement new procedures and system modifications.

- Collaborates with Digital Library Services (DLS), the Department of Distinctive Collections (DDC), Data and Specialized Services (DSS), and others to plan, implement, and integrate various metadata repositories, and to identify appropriate metadata schemes and standards for digital or other collections, ensuring optimal discovery through online interfaces.

- Provides professional development opportunities, mentoring, training, coaching, and professional guidance to ensure that staff are knowledgeable and current on contemporary and emerging metadata topics.

QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE

The Lead Metadata Strategist will be an experienced and creative libraries professional who is comfortable leading through influence and persuasion. They will have excellent interpersonal skills, including the ability to collaborate effectively within and across organizational boundaries, to work successfully with a diverse population, and to build and sustain healthy, long-term, multi-project relationships with a wide variety of stakeholders. The ability to be flexible, embrace ambiguity, set priorities effectively, and resolve competing demands in an atmosphere of fast-paced change will serve the Lead Metadata Strategist well.

Specific requirements and desired experience include:

- Master's degree in library/information science or related field; minimum of five (5) years of professional experience in an academic or research library, or other relevant setting, with experience in metadata management, including best practices, trends, and developments across format types.

- Experience in leading, managing, training, and inspiring staff.

- Ability to identify problems, think creatively, and carry out solutions independently and as part of a group or team, particularly when several priorities arise at the same time.

- Experience with project planning and evidence of being able to bring complex projects through to completion.

- Demonstrated ability to work well with diverse groups of people; to productively handle relationships and conflicts; and to embrace the values of equity, diversity, inclusion, and social justice in working with people, collections, and systems.

- Excellent written and oral communication skills, including the ability to explain complex concepts to staff with differing levels of expertise.

- Experience with library automation systems and discovery systems and tools, and the facility to learn and master new software, systems, and technology.

- Ability to understand, evaluate, and implement new and emerging technologies that facilitate both discovery and operational workflows, and dedication to the value of innovation and experimentation in these endeavors.

The final candidate should anticipate completing a background check and educational verification successfully.

MIT Libraries is an environment that welcomes any body, any mind — including all genders — and particularly encourages applications from underrepresented minorities, women, disabled applicants, and veterans. EDDA partners is committed to working openly with all and to recognizing our nation's histories of prejudicial exclusion. The Institute promotes the principle that every person brings unique qualities and talents to the community and that every individual should be treated in a respectful manner. All members of the MIT community are expected to conduct themselves with professionalism, personal integrity, and respect for the rights, differences and dignity of others (MIT Personal Conduct policy).

JOB SUMMARY

The Lead Metadata Strategist for the MIT Libraries will be a dynamic and thoughtful leader who will prioritize and address the metadata needs of the organization, in active collaboration with colleagues within and outside of the Libraries, to further the Libraries' shared vision, mission, and values. They will set the strategic direction for metadata projects and activities across the Libraries, and will lead a team of three direct and six indirect reports, and coordinate a wide range of people and activities across several directorates.

The position is MIT pay grade 10. The anticipated MIT Libraries salary range is $91,350 - $150,735 with a midpoint of $121,095. Actual salary will depend on qualifications and experience. MIT offers excellent benefits including a choice of health and retirement plans, a dental plan, tuition assistance, and fully subsidized MBTA passes for local bus and subway service. Flexible work arrangements, including flex-time and telecommuting, are considered for positions that meet established criteria. The MIT Libraries is a collegial and supportive working environment and fosters professional growth of staff with management training and travel funding for professional meetings.

CONTACT

Expressions of interest and nominations should be directed to Jennifer Rice and Kristine O'Brien, PhD at EDDA partners via email mit_metadata@eddapartners.com. We request a CV and a letter of interest.