

# Executive Position Profile

## Dean of K-State Libraries

### 2025

**KANSAS STATE**  
UNIVERSITY®



## Quick Facts

Founded in **1863**

Led by **President Richard Linton**

**20,200+** students

Nearly **4,000 full-time faculty and staff**

**250+** undergraduate academic programs

Fight Song: **Wildcat Victory**

Mascot: **Willie the Wildcat**

School Color: **Royal Purple**

**Big 12** athletic conference

## ABOUT KSU

Founded in 1863 as the nation's first operational land-grant university, Kansas State University has grown into a comprehensive research university with more than 20,200 students, 1,300 faculty and 3,000 staff members. It spans three physical campuses: the main campus in Manhattan; K-State Salina, home to aviation and technology programs; and K-State Olathe, which serves the industry and workforce needs of Greater Kansas City.

K-State has nine colleges, Graduate School and K-State Online and offers more than 400 degrees and options, from bachelor's to doctoral degrees. K-State Research and Extension also serves the citizenry with a presence in every county throughout Kansas and supports research in more than 20 K-State departments. K-State has an annual budget of more than \$900 million.

K-State is known for the passion and pride of its alumni. With more than 200,000 living graduates, the K-State Alumni Association ranks in the top 10 among Power Five conferences for the percentage of graduates who are members. Private giving to the university is around \$200 million per year, and the value of K-State's long-term investment pool is \$1 billion. The university and foundation recently completed a major fundraising campaign that raised \$1.6 billion.

The Princeton Review recognizes the university as one of the nation's best colleges. K-State also has been designated as an Innovation and Economic Prosperity University by the Association of Public and Land-grant Universities and is recognized as a Carnegie Community Engaged Institution. Commonly referred to as K-State, the university is proud of its welcoming environment.





## Mission

### Why K-State?

At K-State, passion drives our purpose. Our faculty and staff are deeply committed to the meaningful impact of their work, collectively shaping the future of our next-generation land-grant university. Every employee plays a vital role in advancing our mission, touching the lives of Kansans and communities worldwide. Through our research, teaching, and service, we strive to create positive change and realize K-State's vision of becoming a leading land-grant institution.

## Next-Gen K-State Strategic Plan

In September 2023, K-State launched its [Next-Gen K-State Strategic Plan](#), which charts our path forward, driven by ambitious goals and a deep connection to our mission and vision. The plan was supported by a strategic planning process that engaged more than 10,000 members of the K-State community — students, faculty, staff, alumni, friends and community members all lent their voices to the planning effort.

## Guided by the greater good.

Through the Next-Gen K-State strategic planning process, the university community identified six core values that orient our thinking, inspire us to be the best versions of ourselves and serve as our guideposts as we make the decisions that drive us forward. As we live these values together, we collectively express our unity as One K-State in all that we do.

**Connection.** We are stronger together — cultivating trust and building relationships to connect our K-State community with our state, nation and world.

**Courage.** We lead with bold conviction — rising to the moment, even when the course is uncharted, to deliver the greatest good for areas of greatest need.

**Impact.** We listen, adapt and challenge the status quo — leading change through learning and discovery that transforms lives and creates shared prosperity for all.

**Learner-Focused.** We welcome all who seek to learn and grow — providing an accessible, inclusive and exceptional experience that helps them achieve their potential.

**People-Centered.** We are everything because of our people — supporting, valuing and inspiring our entire K-State community and championing a culture of belonging for all.

**Stewardship.** We are committed to our future — using our resources responsibly to leave a positive, lasting legacy.

## University and student achievements.

- Innovation and Economic Prosperity University designation, *Association of Public and Land-grant Universities*.
- Carnegie Community Engagement Classification, *Carnegie Foundation*.
- 96% of graduates are employed or furthering their education.
- 85.5% sustained freshman-to-sophomore retention rate.
- 15 times in the last 19 years, K-State's Black Student Union named Big 12's most outstanding Black student government council.
- 21% of students are first-generation.
- 500+ student clubs and organizations.
- \$91M in scholarships and awards in 2023-24.

## Athletics

As a founding member of the Big 12, K-State competes in the Football Bowl Subdivision of NCAA Division I. The university has garnered 18 Big 12 championships, including a 2022 title in football, and is coming off a memorable Elite Eight run in men's basketball in 2023. K-State Athletics has maintained national acclaim as one of the NCAA's most financially solvent programs and remains one of just a few dozen universities nationwide, and the only institution in Kansas, to operate without use of state tax or university tuition dollars. Wildcat student-athletes continue to shine in the classroom as all programs exceeded benchmarks for the eight straight years in the latest NCAA APR rankings while also ranking among the best in the Big 12 in graduation rates.





# ABOUT THE COMMUNITY

Situated in the heart of northeast Kansas' scenic Flint Hills, Manhattan's 55,000 citizens enjoy a dynamic region with shopping, dining, entertainment and nightlife. Manhattan is also conveniently located for quick access to major urban centers. In addition to being less than two hours from Kansas City, the Manhattan Regional Airport offers multiple jet flights daily to Dallas-Fort Worth and Chicago.

Additionally, the city of Manhattan has been a valuable partner to Kansas State University in facilitating growth of the institution. That's why the Princeton Review routinely recognizes Manhattan and Kansas State in the Top 5 community Town & Gown Relations. Manhattan has also been ranked No. 2 Best Place to Live in America by Livability.com. Manhattan is affectionately known as the "Little Apple," a nod to its East Coast namesake, but has a vibrant culture all its own.

A sampling of what residents look forward to year-round:

- A cost-of-living index of 89% of the U.S. average, according to the Council for Community and Economic Research.
- Shopping, dining and socializing in Aggieville, a local entertainment district with a fun, energetic vibe.
- A vibrant, revitalized downtown area with fine dining options and local boutiques.
- Recreation opportunities at the Konza Prairie, Tuttle Creek Lake and State Park, Linear Trail and more.
- A vibrant health care community, including a 150-bed acute care facility and an independent state-of-the-art surgical center.
- The university's McCain Performance Series, which hosts acclaimed Broadway musicals, comedians, musicians and other entertainers.
- Exciting Big 12 athletic events from a Power 5 conference.
- Colbert Hills Golf Course, ranked as the top public golf course in Kansas.
- Excellent K-12 education. The local high school ranks among the top 5 percent of U.S. high schools, and the district is home to several Kansas Master Teachers.







## ABOUT THE K-STATE LIBRARIES

K-State Libraries support and advance the teaching, research and service mission of Kansas State University. In addition to five locations, the Libraries maintain a robust online environment to support teaching, learning and research. [View our library locations.](#)

### Our Collections

Our collections are comprised of more than three million volumes and includes our special collections and university archives and digitized materials. Our budget also supports online access to more than 200 databases and 90,000 electronic journals. Additionally, we support open access publishing initiatives. [Learn more about our collections.](#)

### Our People & Services

The expertise of the Libraries faculty and staff is our greatest resource. Our dedicated staff work with the K-State community to provide services that support the mission of the university.





## ABOUT THE ROLE

This is an extraordinary opportunity for a dynamic, visionary, and experienced leader to serve as the next dean of K-State Libraries, a public R1, land-grant university comprised of three campuses and nine colleges. The University serves approximately 21,000 students.

The successful candidate is a collaborative leader and prominent advocate who understands and provides the strategic direction necessary to meet the evolving role of libraries in the 21st century within a public research university setting. The dean will provide strategic leadership and vision crucial in the support of the strategic initiatives and intellectual core of the university.

As the chief academic and administrative officer of K-State Libraries, the dean oversees multiple departments delivering exceptional [library services](#). The dean reports to the Provost and Executive Vice President and serves on the Council of Deans and the Academic Leadership Council. The Dean of K-State Libraries will also hold the faculty rank of Professor.

At K-State, deans are highly visible University-wide leaders. The dean will work closely with the president, provost, deans, and other senior leaders to advance the missions and strategic goals of the Library and the University through a shared vision of education, research, teaching, and service. Additionally, the Dean will be externally focused on developing strong relationships and engaged with the community

The dean will work collaboratively with partners across the three campuses and nine colleges to develop a broad and synergistic alignment of library services supporting the continuing transformation of K-State Libraries as a center encouraging student research, academic excellence, and collaboration in a technologically rich environment. Student learning and success should be at the forefront of the new dean's priorities, while also promoting and supporting an increase in research, scholarship, and engagement across the university as K-State pursues its strategic goal to become a [Next-Generation Land Grant University by 2030](#).

## Responsibilities and Core Duties

The dean of K-State Libraries will provide overall program leadership, strategic vision, and direction to advance K-State Libraries, ensuring that plans, policies, practices, programs, and services align with university and college-level strategic directions and goals. The dean is responsible for the administration, coordination, and oversight of all activities related to strategic planning; assessment; policy development; library, archives, and records management services and programs; physical space; collections development and preservation; budget planning and fiscal stewardship; staffing; fundraising; and technology adoption.

### Strategic Leadership (25%)

Works effectively and collaboratively to lead, execute, and manage change within K-State Libraries. This includes developing strategic directions for K-State Libraries and its collections and services for students and faculty; updating and reporting progress on the [Libraries' strategic plan](#); and providing visionary and effective leadership to library faculty and staff to collectively execute library strategies and achieve strategic goals.

### Library Services (25%)

Promotes a service-based environment to effectively support and respond to the diverse needs of academic library patrons, including undergraduates, graduate students, professional students, faculty, staff, alumni, and the community. Supports intellectual inquiry by aligning library services with advances in research, instructional delivery, curriculum development, and academic study. Ensures that K-State Libraries stay at the forefront of changes in technology, communication, instruction, outreach and the storage and delivery of information. Develops service and collection models that capitalize on new and innovative information formats and access technologies, including the use of generative artificial intelligence (AI) tools.

### Management of K-State Libraries (25%)

Serves as the senior administrator for K-State Libraries with oversight of planning and assessment; policy development, services and programs, physical space, collections development and preservation, fund development and financial management, staffing and personnel management, and technology services. Sets priorities with finite resources, effectively planning and managing the financial resources of the Libraries to meet current needs while allowing for attainment of strategic initiatives. Oversees the assessment of operations, programs, and services and continual service improvements to increase operational effectiveness and efficiency. Nurtures staff development by recruitment and retention of high-achieving and diverse Libraries faculty and staff, supporting their professional growth, setting performance objectives, evaluating outcomes, and maintaining accountability. Fosters a culture that welcomes change and innovation and values teamwork and collaboration.

### Advancement, Fundraising, Grants, Outreach, and Community Activities (25%)

Serves as a strong and active advocate for K-State Libraries and its diverse constituencies, missions in teaching, learning, and scholarship, and importance to K-State now and in the future. Builds awareness of library programs and communicates the scholarship, leadership, and research expertise of Libraries faculty. Cultivates external relations, community engagement, and development opportunities. Leads philanthropic efforts to secure funding for all aspects of K-State Libraries, working collaboratively with the president, provost, deans, the Friends of K-State Libraries and the KSU Foundation. Represents K-State Libraries locally, regionally, nationally, and internationally.



## Educational Requirements

- Masters in Library Science, Masters of Library and Information Science, or equivalent terminal degree from an American Library Association-accredited institution or equivalent required; additional advanced degree preferred.

## Required Competencies/Qualifications

- A strong record of sustained scholarly accomplishments and of excellence in librarianship, research, and service appropriate to appointment at the rank of Professor at Kansas State University
- Proven leadership skills with the ability to analyze, plan, coordinate, articulate, and execute a strategic vision and initiatives and engage others in implementation
- Demonstrated success as a strategic and creative planner and outstanding collaborator and relationship builder with strong interpersonal skills
- Proven record as a successful library administrator with managerial experience including guiding strategy, assessment, collections development, financial planning and management, staffing and personnel management, and technology acquisition
- Excellent organizational, problem-solving, and decision-making skills
- Record of success in advancing digital initiatives, adopting new technologies, and coordinating with information technology units
- Excellent oral and written communication skills with a demonstrated ability to communicate effectively with varied groups of stakeholders and audiences
- Demonstrated commitment to the development of programs and services that meet the needs of a varied population of students, faculty, and staff
- Deep understanding of the major challenges facing academic research libraries today, particularly in a public university, with evidence of engagement in working toward meeting those challenges
- Demonstrated ability to supervise, lead, manage, and develop high performing faculty, staff, and teams with a commitment to an open and participatory management style and a culture of continuous professional development and learning
- Proven ability to initiate, lead, and facilitate transformational change and innovation initiatives, be adaptable with changing conditions, and comfortable with the ambiguity that accompanies a large public university

## Preferred Qualifications/Competencies

- Demonstrated success securing funds through grants and external fundraising and stewardship
- A passion for the role of librarianship in public higher education, with clear understanding of national trends in the academic library profession and higher education, emerging areas of librarianship and scholarly communication and future trends of library technology and systems to maximize discovery and access to scholarly resources
- A history of building, enhancing, and sustaining partnerships across a university, local communities, state, region, and nation
- Recognition and appreciation for educational access and opportunities in a positive working environment.



## APPLICATION PROCESS

Confidential inquiries, nominations, and applications are invited. Review of applications will continue until the position is filled. For fullest consideration, application materials should be received no later than March 7, 2025. Candidates should provide a letter of application describing their interest and qualifications for the position, current vita, and five references. Incomplete applications will not be considered. Nominations and application materials should be sent electronically via email to Martin Baker and Chelsie Whitelock of Buffkin / Baker at [ksudeanoflibraries@buffkinbaker.com](mailto:ksudeanoflibraries@buffkinbaker.com).