

# Academic Libraries in Challenging Times

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ANLTC Seminar, 30 November 2011



NUI Galway  
OÉ Gaillimh

James Hardiman Library

# Overview

- Environmental factors
- Scale of cuts
- Responses: challenges and opportunities
- Lessons learned



# Environmental Factors

- Economic climate – prolonged cuts
- Technology: cloud, disintermediation, participation...
- HE, eg Hunt Report assumptions:
  - Alliances/collaboration/consolidation
  - New entrants to rise from 42,500 (2009) to 65,000 (2025), mainly non-traditional
  - More flexible access
  - Generic skills, critical thinking, lifelong learning
  - Impact of higher fee payment? New expectations
  - Research competitiveness



# Local Impact: NUI Galway Library

- Staffing: 15% lost since end 2008 (12.12 FTE)
- Non-pay: 12.5% reduction in same period
- BUT: Student numbers up by c10%
- AND: Further 5.32 FTE loss imminent



# Challenges

- Doing more with less
- Doing less with less
- Moving online, but staying hybrid
- Diversity and growth of user base and its needs
- Staff deployment
- Collaboration, competition, differentiation
- Interdependency: joined-up thinking on campus and beyond
- Assuring both service quality and development



# Some Responses

- Selling the Library vision and mission
- Staff restructuring and redeployment: short, medium and long term
- Clearer planning and engagement
- Maximising self-service
- Partnership but differentiation
- Measuring and benchmarking
- Targeting new funding sources
- Doing less with less



# The Library Service: Vision and Mission

## Vision

- The James Hardiman Library at NUI Galway adds value by creating an atmosphere which ignites curiosity, encourages scholarship, and leverages all resources optimally.

## Mission

- We are **agents** for knowledge and information without barriers.
- We contribute proactively in **partnership** with individuals and communities through a deep understanding of their needs.
- We support people in developing their **skills** to discover, access, apply, and exploit information successfully.
- We engage with all individuals in an **inclusive** manner.

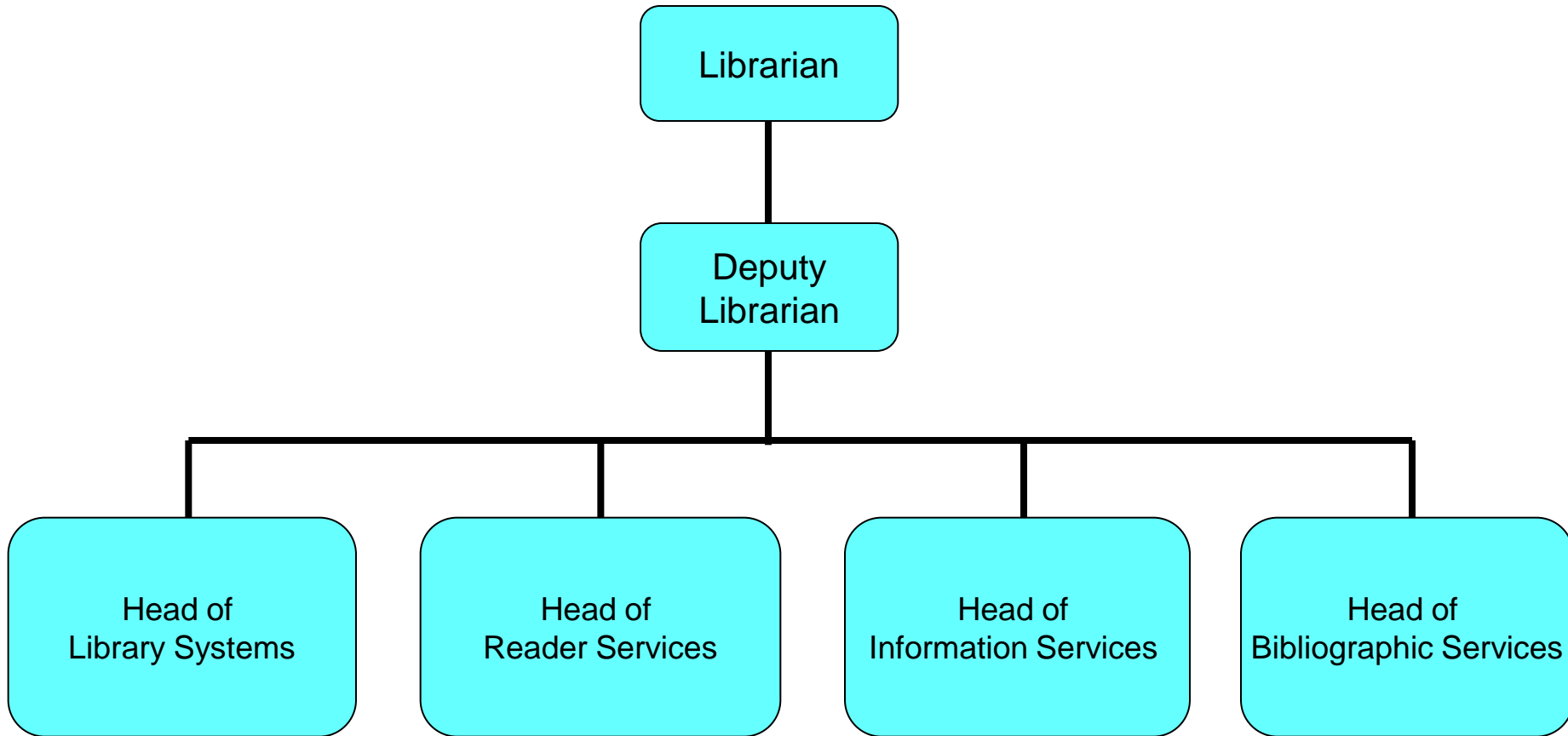


# Staff Restructuring and Redeployment: immediate term

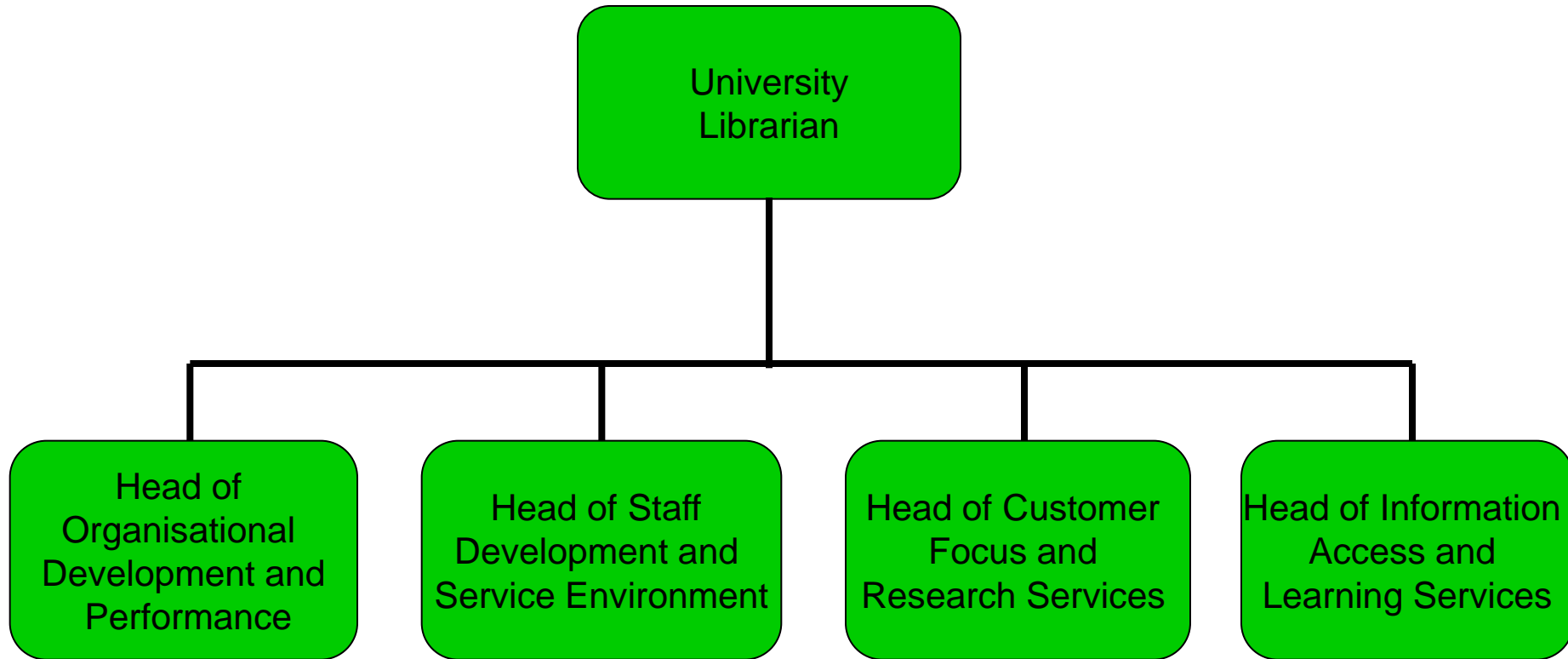
- More a necessity than an option due to staff losses
- Greater acceptance of change in tough times
- Genuine opportunity to organise differently
- Informed by clearer planning and strategic objectives
- Aims:
  - Logical functional groupings for service delivery
  - Maximum service performance and uptake
  - Spreading of expertise



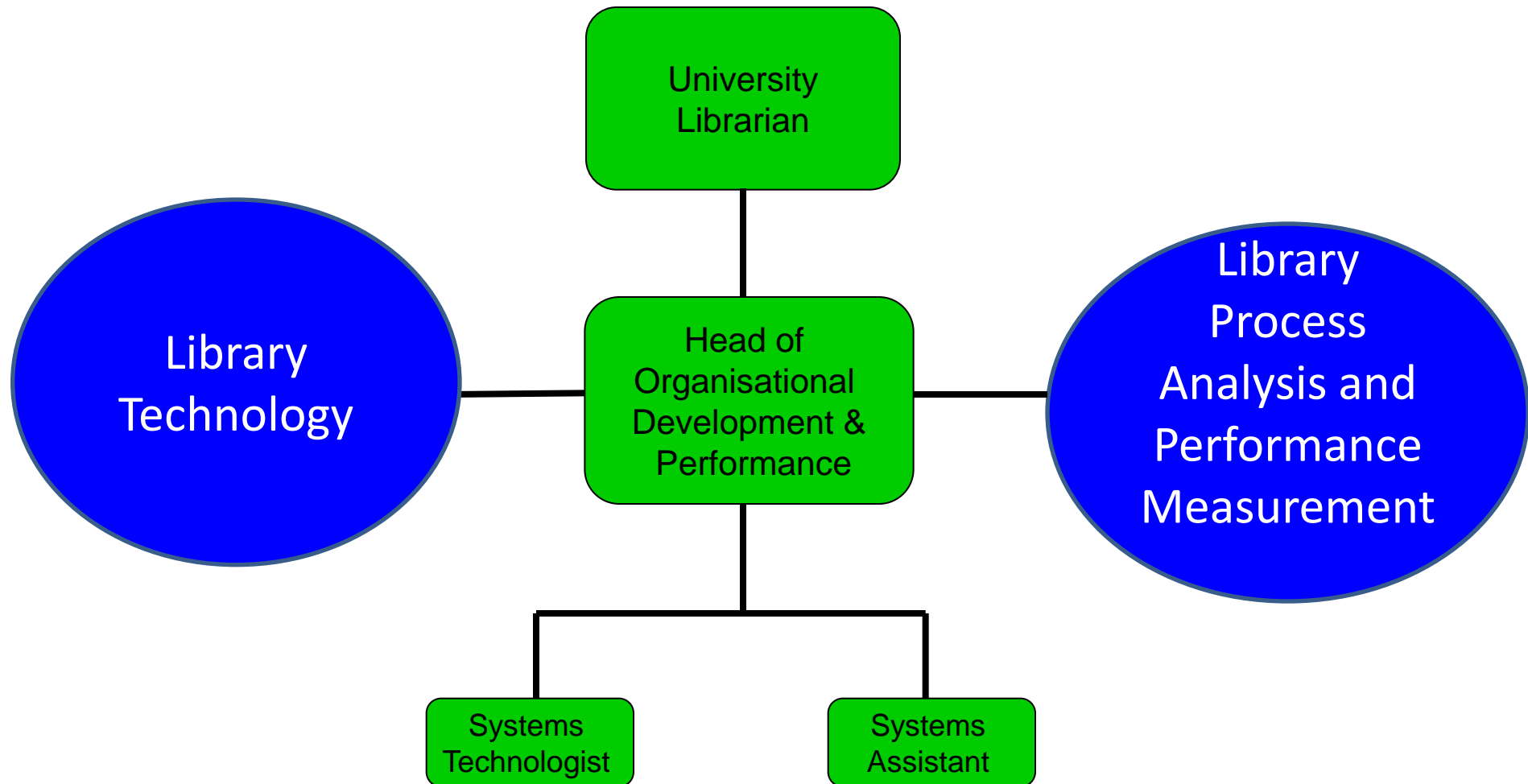
# Previous Structure



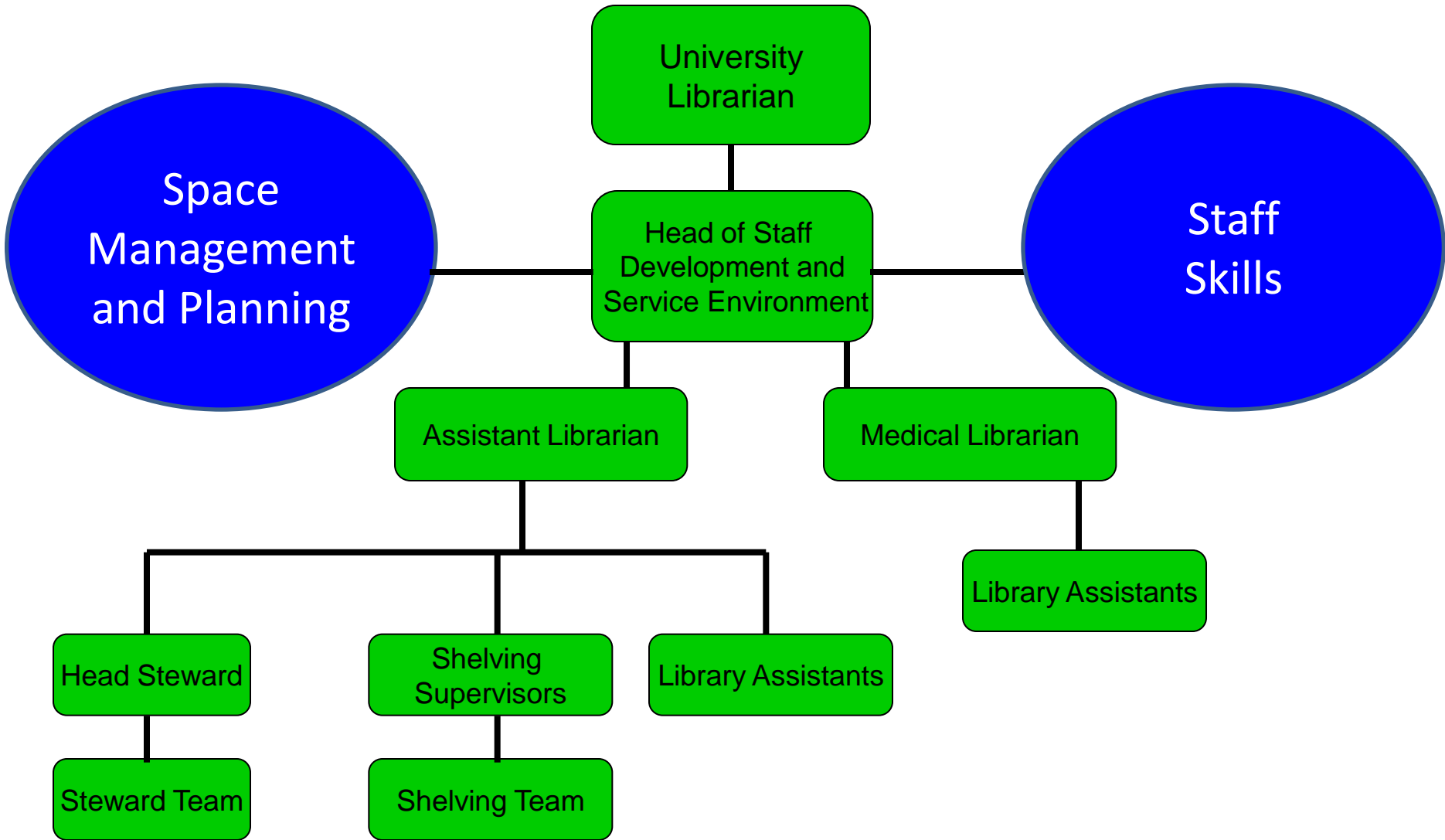
# New Structure



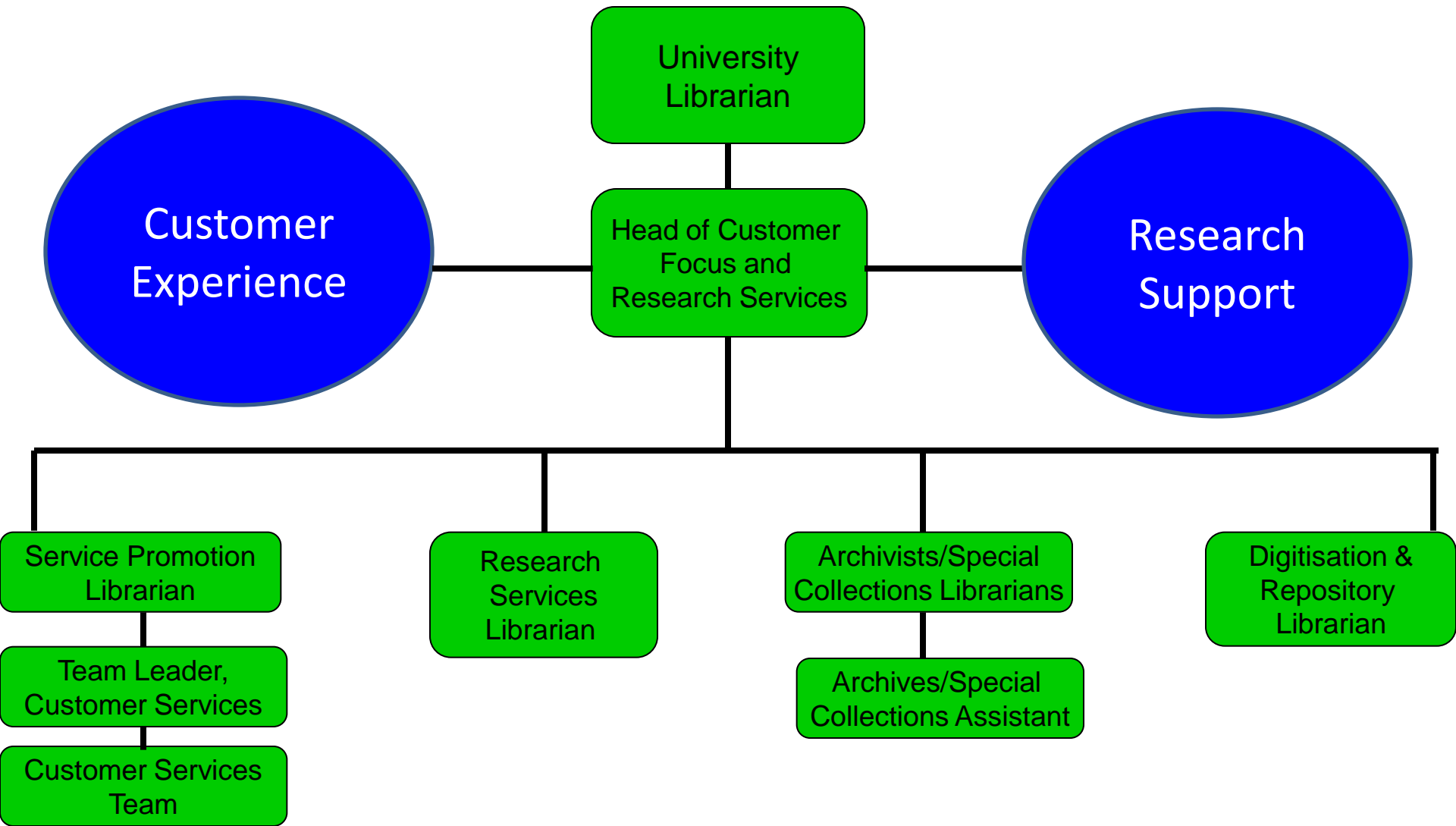
# Organisational Development and Performance



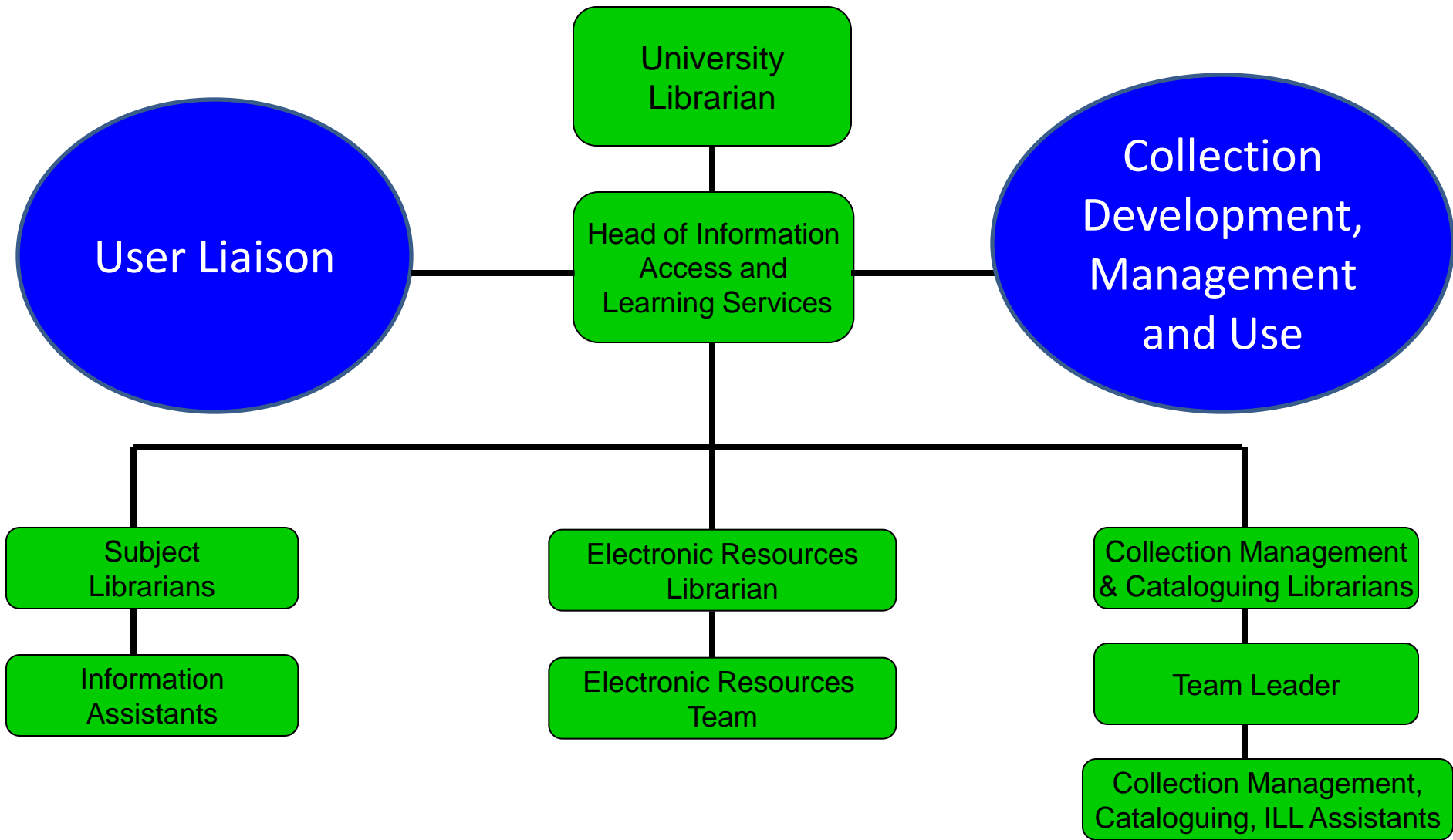
# Staff Development and Service Environment



# Customer Focus and Research Services



# Information Access and Learning Services



# Service Transitions/Transformations to 2025 (at varying rates of predictability...)

From	To
In-person mediation	Online support/self-service
Information warehouse	Knowledge creation place
Digital access packaging	Online publishing
Servants	Partners
Library-performed	Outsourced
Library-only	Jointly provided
Local	Shared
Bespoke	Commoditised
Permanent	Contract
Generalists	Specialists
Predictable	Opportunistic



# Growth Functions and Skills

- Digitisation (in widest sense), digital asset management
- IT for online delivery, disintermediation and differentiation
- Archives for distinctive research, courses, outreach
- Rights management
- Adding *academic* value to institution
- Management capacity, especially project, change and performance management
- Structured skills development
- Collaboration/partnership, locally and beyond
- Business process re-engineering



# Functions of Enduring Value

- Content provision and development
- Access to information
- Skills mediation for better scholarship
- Excellent service interaction
- Effective processes and people as service foundation
- Versatile space, fit for purpose



# Planning and Engagement

- One-page operational plan/improvement agenda for 2011/12
  - Data-driven, metrics-focused and based on user priorities
- Start of term staff forum: Delivering Excellent Quality Service
  - Positive and optimistic outlook
  - Emphasis on current successes and future developments



## Library Start of Term Forum

### *Delivering Excellent Quality Service*

Wednesday 31 August 2011, 1400-1645,

**Siobhan McKenna Theatre, Arts Millennium Building**

1400: Welcome and introduction (John Cox, University Librarian)

1405: Our LibQual+ performance (Peter Corrigan, Head of Organisational Development and Performance)

1420: LibQual+ Task and Finish Groups:

1. Affect of Service (Geraldine Curtin, Senior Library Assistant, Inter-Library Loans)
2. Information Control (Ronán Kennedy, Electronic Resources Librarian)
3. Library as Place (Jane Mulligan, Health Sciences Librarian)

1440: Service quality: discussion and interactive session (John Cox, University Librarian)

1510: Library customer charter (Laurie Greenfield, Service Promotion Librarian)

1525: Tea/coffee break

1545: President's address (Dr. James J. Browne, President, NUI Galway)

1600: Operational Plan 2011/12 overview (Library Senior Management Team)

1630: User view (Dr. Ann Torres, Lecturer, Marketing, J. E. Cairnes School of Business and Economics, EMBA Programme Director and Vice-Dean of Internationalisation)

1640: Conclusion

1645: Reception



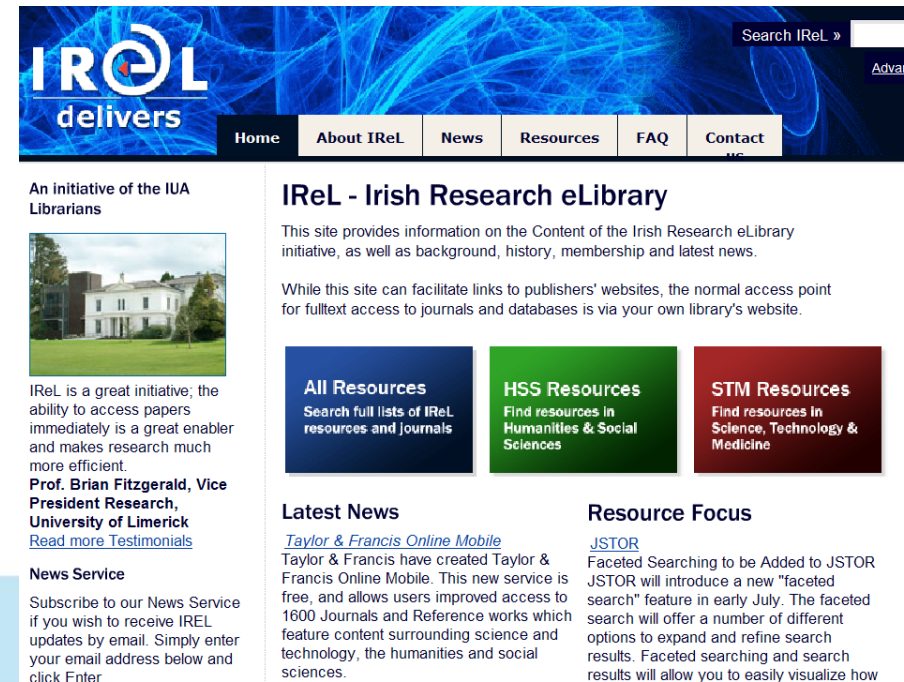
# Maximising Self-Service Technology

- 90% of books are borrowed at self-issue stations
- Automatic book sorter for faster book return and reshelving
- Book dispenser (soon) to manage high-circulation course books
- Standard multi-function copy/print devices
- Online fines payment



# Collaboration

- ANLTC
- Irish Research eLibrary (IReL)
- Collaborative storage of low-use printed stock
- Shared IT systems scoping study




The screenshot shows the homepage of the Irish Research eLibrary (IReL). The header features the IReL logo with the tagline "delivers" and a search bar. A navigation menu includes links for Home, About IReL, News, Resources, FAQ, and Contact Us. The main content area is divided into two columns. The left column contains the text "An initiative of the IUA Librarians" above a photograph of a large, white, classical-style building. Below the photo is a testimonial from Prof. Brian Fitzgerald, Vice President Research at the University of Limerick, with a link to "Read more Testimonials". A "News Service" section invites users to subscribe for email updates. The right column features the heading "IReL - Irish Research eLibrary" and a brief description of the site's purpose. Below this are three colored boxes: "All Resources" (dark blue), "HSS Resources" (green), and "STM Resources" (red), each with a brief description of the resource lists. At the bottom of the right column, there are sections for "Latest News" (mentioning Taylor & Francis Online Mobile) and "Resource Focus" (mentioning JSTOR's faceted search feature).

**IReL**  
delivers

Search IReL »

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An initiative of the IUA Librarians



IReL is a great initiative; the ability to access papers immediately is a great enabler and makes research much more efficient.  
**Prof. Brian Fitzgerald, Vice President Research, University of Limerick**  
[Read more Testimonials](#)

**News Service**  
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**IReL - Irish Research eLibrary**  
This site provides information on the Content of the Irish Research eLibrary initiative, as well as background, history, membership and latest news.  
While this site can facilitate links to publishers' websites, the normal access point for fulltext access to journals and databases is via your own library's website.

**All Resources**  
Search full lists of IReL resources and Journals

**HSS Resources**  
Find resources in Humanities & Social Sciences

**STM Resources**  
Find resources in Science, Technology & Medicine

**Latest News**  
[Taylor & Francis Online Mobile](#)  
Taylor & Francis have created Taylor & Francis Online Mobile. This new service is free, and allows users improved access to 1600 Journals and Reference works which feature content surrounding science and technology, the humanities and social sciences.

**Resource Focus**  
[JSTOR](#)  
Faceted Searching to be Added to JSTOR  
JSTOR will introduce a new "faceted search" feature in early July. The faceted search will offer a number of different options to expand and refine search results. Faceted searching and search results will allow you to easily visualize how



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# Local and Regional Frameworks

- Local
  - Integrated Support Services Strategic Plan
- Regional
  - NUI Galway-University of Limerick Strategic Alliance



# NUIG Integrated Support Services Strategic Plan (ISSSP)

- Maximum service support for academic mission
  - High performance standards
  - Focus on customer satisfaction
  - Value for money
  - Flexibility and continuous improvement
  - Simplification of processes
  - Non-duplication across campus
  - Maximum staff skills development and deployment
  - Integrated service planning and reporting on annual basis



# NUI Galway-University of Limerick Alliance

- Part of a national trend
- Proactive collaboration initiative
- Sharing of resources for research, teaching, technology transfer, procurement, services
- Initial library priorities:
  - Reciprocal access
  - Staff development
  - Shared training materials

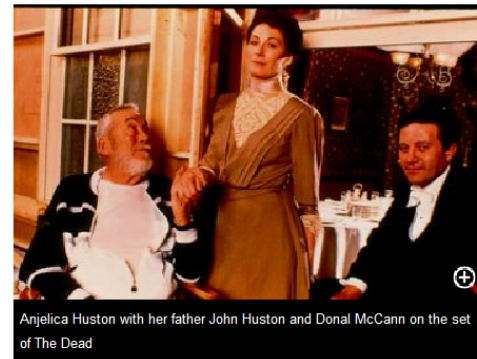


# Differentiation

- Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences Research Building
- High-quality archives and special collections: major research asset (and headline grabber!)
- Incorporation of Writing Centre
- Extended Summer opening hours

The Irish Times - Monday, November 22, 2010

## Director's Legacy: John Huston archive moves to NUI Galway



Anjelica Huston with her father John Huston and Donal McCann on the set of *The Dead*

LORNA SIGGINS, Western Correspondent

WHEN French existentialist philosopher Jean-Paul Sartre visited the late film director John Huston in his Co Galway home over half a century ago, little did he know that his 300-page carbon copy manuscript would be the subject of a rare archive.

Sartre wanted to sell the idea of making a film about psychoanalyst Sigmund Freud, but his script was so unsuitable that it required considerable work by Huston to pull it off – which the director did, with *Freud: The Secret Passion* (1962), starring Montgomery Clift.

This and other details form part of an extensive archive which the Huston family is due to present to NUI Galway (NUIG) today.

### In this section »

- Dublin's retailers unwrap festive menu of delights to draw shoppers to city centre
- Minister and priest say pray for economy
- Leading medic calls for national transplant office
- Abuse revealed 'much deeper' crisis, says Martin
- Recession blamed for 66% rise in rent arrears cases
- €24m public services card aims to cut fraud



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# Measurement/Benchmarking

- LibQual
- SCONUL statistics
- Annual performance report



# Diversification of Funding Base

- Registrar's Office (equipment grants)
- Galway University Foundation
- Quality Office
- Joint bids with academics, internally and externally



# Responses: Doing Less with Less

- Reduced activity, eg recruitment, purchasing, committees
- Leveraging local IT infrastructure
- Discontinuations, eg Desk Reserve
- Consolidation of subject librarian/research librarian portfolios
- Elimination of manual processes
- Imperfectionism



# In Conclusion: Some Lessons Learned

- Don't waste a crisis: seek opportunities and differentiation
- Retain positive and clear vision: seek to thrive, not just survive
- Cultivate partnerships, especially academic
- Have funding bids ready
- Question every service, think ahead and be prepared to delete
- Have the numbers at hand
- Be passionate about the library's contribution



# References

- Cox, J. Sharing the pain, striving for gain. *Serials*, 23(1), March 2010, pp.12-15.
- Cox, J. Academic libraries in challenging times. *An Leabharlann: the Irish Library*, 19(2), 2010, pp 7-13.

Both at <http://aran.library.nuigalway.ie>

*Thank you.*

