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Managing the Past and the Future

Evolving Roles of Archival professionals in Contemporary Sweden

Abstract

This paper focuses on contemporary archival professionals in Sweden. The research questions posed are: RQ1: What are the different facets of archival work commonly described in employment advertisements directed at archival professionals? RQ2: What are the desirable personal traits that employers seek when hiring an archival professional? The material consists of job advertisements from the year 2022 compiled from Historical ads. The methods applied are content analysis and reflexive thematic analysis, and we use the term archival professionals to denote employees that are responsible for society's information resources being created, shared, used and preserved in an adequate way. A well-functioning information supply is crucial for information security, transparency and public access to information, and for securing future digital cultural heritage. Archival professionals have often been described as somewhat mysterious and obscured. Due to digitalisation, new demands are being created. However, it is not self-evident what different facets of archival work are required and what personal characteristics are beneficial. Our conclusion is that there is a broad scope in the types of archival work described and wished by employers. The roles and responsibilities of archival professionals, as depicted in employment advertisements, are diverse and multifaceted. They are expected to develop, lead, and educate within their area of expertise. Personality wise, an archival professional should be meticulous and at the same time flexible, be prepared to do monotonous work but also be creative, be able to work alone and at the same time meet the public.

Keywords: archives, archivists, archival professionals, digitalisation, employment, information management, Sweden

Introduction

The role of the archival professional is evolving in response to the increasing complexity of managing society's information resources. This paper explores the multifaceted nature of contemporary archival work, examining the evolving demands and expectations placed on archival professionals. By analysing job advertisements from 2022, it offers valuable insights into the skills, qualifications, and responsibilities sought in today's archival landscape. The analysis is grounded in the belief that archival professionals play a critical and growing role in ensuring effective information management, particularly in an era where the proactive handling of digital information is essential for long-term preservation and access. Our goal is to increase the knowledge about a profession that has often been described as invisible, passive and mysterious (Lee, 2021; Orchard et al, 2019; Schultz, 1996), and which is now undergoing changes due to the new demands that are placed on order and authenticity through increased digitalisation. Our research focus stems from a conviction that archives, and archival professionals have an increasingly important role, now as well as in the future, when it comes to managing society's information resources, not least because digital information requires more proactivity and control from the start.

Aim and purpose

The aim of the present study is twofold. First to increase the knowledge about the different facets of contemporary archival work by examining how it is described in job advertisements posted on the Swedish public employment services website in 2022. Second, to understand what type of persons employers wish for in an archival professional, by scrutinising the personality traits described in the same job advertisements.

Research questions

RQ1: What are the different facets of archival work commonly described in employment advertisements directed at archival professionals?
RQ2: What are the desirable personal traits that employers seek when hiring an archival professional?

Evolving roles of archival professionals

The traditional role of archival professionals has been, somewhat simplified, to function as objective and reliable trustees of the archival records that an organisation has chosen to preserve. The professional identity has partly been formed around the fact that archival professionals and the records they preserve are reliable. This reliability has traditionally been guaranteed by the custody, original order and authenticity of the records. The universal symbol for archives, embraced by organisations such as the Swedish National Archives and the International Council on Archives (ICA), features the enigmatic Roman god Janus, depicted with two faces. In Roman tradition, Janus symbolises a gaze directed simultaneously at the past and the future. While this dual-faced nature has sometimes been interpreted as treacherous or deceitful, it more profoundly represents completeness and a relentless drive to navigate both historical and future domains. The term "archive" is often associated with the preservation of the past, reflecting one aspect of Janus's duality. However, archival work extends beyond this, encompassing the management of contemporary information – an embodiment of Janus's forward-looking perspective – ensuring its enduring preservation and accessibility. In Sweden, where this study is conducted, the distinction between records management and archives management is less pronounced than in many other countries. Archival professionals often serve dual roles as both archivists and registrars, managing tasks ranging

from document labelling and registration to verifying authenticity, spanning the creation, use, and preservation of records, i.e., both looking backward and forward while also managing and making the information being created here and now searchable and accessible. To ensure accurate organisation and retrieval of information, Swedish authorities use "diary plans," which align with organisational processes. Archival professionals are central to mapping these processes and maintaining the trustworthiness of information. This duality is visible also at the Swedish Public Employment Services' website, where one can read about the profession:

> The archivist's most common duty is to look after the archives that exist today and to build new digital archives. The very idea of archived documents is that they should be available both now and in the future. In this way, the archivist stands with one foot in the future and one foot in the old archives. It is important to master both roles and to have the knowledge required to be able to bridge the technology shifts that occur continuously. (Arbetsförmedlingen, n.d., our translation)

Three "abilities that can be good to have" are listed in relation to working as an archivist: leadership skills, communicative ability, and organisational skills (Arbetsförmedlingen, n.d.). However, a communicative leader is most likely not the first thing that comes to mind when asking someone to visualise a 'typical archivist'. Instead, the image of archival professionals tends to be more along the lines of "those shadowy figures in the cellars" (Edquist, 2021, p. 117). As Ann E Pederson, Senior Lecturer at the University of New South Wales, Australia emphasises "most people have minimal knowledge of archives/records work, much less understand the vital role it plays in society" (Pederson, 2003, p. 224). Archives are often described as obscured (Trace, 2021) or even invisible (Ilshammar, 2023). Nevertheless, archives are necessary for organisations and, on a more general level, society. As Vivien Petras, professor at the Berlin School of Library and Information Science at Humboldt University, writes: "For almost all human interactions, it is helpful to have a record – to remember the past, to coordinate the present and to prepare for the future" (Petras, 2023). So although the term "archive" commonly evokes notions of safeguarding the past, the domain of archival professionals stretches beyond: it encompasses current information, ensuring its lasting preservation and accessibility. According to the Swedish Agency for Digital Government (DIGG) "Information produced by public actors constitutes an extensive, diversified and valuable resource that can benefit the whole society" (DIGG, 2023). At the same time, resources invested in archives are often scant, even decreasing. The Swedish National Archives have had their funding cut back, resulting in layoffs and reorganisation (Riksarkivet, 2023, p. 3).

Societal changes and technical development affect the archival work as well as archival professionals, who become "entrenched and entangled in the shifting meanings and purposes of archives and their records" (Lee, 2021, p. 33). We argue that when more and more information become available, the archives, standing for authoritative information in context, have an important role to fill. The European commission's white paper on archiving by design (2023) stresses that sustainably accessible information is: findable, available, readable, interpretable, reliable and future proof. It confirms our stance that different professions need to be involved to make this a reality: "To be successful it is necessary to collaborate with other information and data specialists such as architects, security and privacy officers. There is a lot of relevant knowledge among professionals who do not necessarily identify themselves as part of the archival field" (The European commission, 2023). British honorary senior research fellow in archives and records management Geoffrey Yeo (2019) similarly notes that while records managers and archivists can be referred to collectively as "records professionals", they now often work in largely separate professional groupings and furthermore, many recordkeeping activities fall outside the purview of both these professions.

This paper is the first step in a larger project exploring archival professionals in a contemporary job-environment. We define the archiving process as encompassing "all activities and processes involved

in identifying information for long-term retention, setting it aside, and preserving, managing, and providing access to it" (Bak & Rostgaard, 2023, p. 9), whether carried out by archivists or other professionals. While much archival work is of course conducted by archivists, other job titles must also be considered when trying to understand how the 'archival landscape' is evolving. This will be further explained in the methods section.

Recording- and preservation techniques have been developed and refined during millennia, first through oral transmission, then successively by material support such as stone, parchment, papyrus and paper. Robust archives are a prerequisite for a functioning society in almost all areas: transportation planning, nature protection, healthcare, and more. Today's information and records are largely created with the help of digital technology. Preserving them requires hardware, software and, not least, human resources. That society's' informational infrastructure increasingly consists of digital documents rather than paper ones, has disrupted several of the traditional ways of working that 20th-century archival professionals had established, and preservation today requires a different skill set than the preservation of paper documents.

The role of archival professionals in Sweden is evolving, visible in new titles such as document controller, e-archivist, and information management specialist reflecting expanded responsibilities, including digital recordkeeping, system procurement, and pedagogy. Traditional titles like archivist and registrar persist but now often involve broader tasks. Archival consultant Ole Ebbinghaus (2022) argues that while archivists once focused solely on ensuring compliance with regulations, today's archivists must actively contribute to organisational goals, reducing the risk of information distortion and establishing principles for information management. Ebbinghaus also emphasises the importance of collaboration with other professionals, highlighting that while legal frameworks remain unchanged, modern methods and organisational structures must adapt to contemporary realities. This aligns with the findings of the Swedish Government Official Report on Archives (SOU 2019:58), which notes the need for updated competencies but criticises archival education programs for failing to sufficiently adapt to new demands.

The debate over whether archival studies should be academic or vocational remains relevant. Nearly 20 years ago, Swedish archivists were evenly split on this issue (Alfredsson & Knutsson, 2006). Historically, a PhD in humanities, particularly history, was often required, as at the Swedish National Archives until the 1970s, where archivists were trained on-site (Smedberg, 2006). However, subsidised employment programs in the archival sector, active between 1934 and 1980, often had minimal educational requirements, reinforcing the perception of archival work as low skill (Engelbrektsson, 1997). This notion persists, as Christina Sirtoft Breitholtz (2018) laments, with archival work still frequently framed as "simple jobs" tied to labour market initiatives. Today, many employers require 60 ECTS credits in archival studies, offered at the universities of Gothenburg, Karlstad, Lund, Mid Sweden, Södertörn and Uppsala at various levels. These programs range from A and B-level studies to full master's degrees in archival science. A persistent challenge is determining the balance between theoretical and practical training to prepare students for the diverse and evolving demands of the profession.

Related research
According to Swedish professor in information studies Isto Huvila (2015) archival work has shifted from being a field dominated by a highly institutionalised and structured regime of information to "a complex field of multiple competing structural arrangements" (Huvila, 2015, p. 121). This is consistent with our perceptions as archival educators and researchers and is the reason why we see a need to examine how this becomes visible in recruitment. Archival scholars have argued that digitalisation will bring about a changed professional role since the digital reality puts traditional conceptualisations

of original, copy, and records placement on end (MacNeil, 2011; cf. MacNeil, 2005; MacNeil, 2008; Duncan, 2010); that increased focus is needed on collection and appraisal (e. g. Hoy, 2011); and that increased emphasis should be put on participation in the management, digitalisation and creation (Rolan, 2017). This section is divided in two parts: 1) different facets of archival work and 2) personal characteristics.

Different facets of archival work
Archivists are traditionally described as "the caretakers of historical material in the modern world" (Jenkins, 2016, p. 1). However, to preserve and care for historical material is far from all that archival professionals spend their time doing: they are also involved with planning, selecting, and providing access, just to mention a few other common types of archival work. In his study about Nordic archivists' perceptions of what factors steer their work, Huvila (2015) identified five broad aspects: archival: archives servant the public sphere; organisational: the creating agency determines how archival work is prioritised; antiquarian: intrinsic historical and cultural usefulness; pluralistic: explicit needs of current and future users; and digital: digitalisation as a driver of archival work. Bak and Rostgaard similarly highlight that there are several different goals of contemporary recordkeeping, why archiving today "may have many objectives, including those related to government accountability and transparency, those related to collective memory and history, and those that are far more intimate and personal, including aspects of personal and familial identity, memory, and history" (Bak & Rostgaard, 2023, p. 10).

Archival work is currently undergoing continuous development but in a dispersed way of which overarching knowledge is needed. Klareld (2017) has shown that decision makers' understanding of the terms archive and recordkeeping in Sweden is fluid and changing, a circumstance that can make decision-making challenging and, we add, employment, as well. Previous research (Klareld & Gidlund, 2017) has also shown that the necessary components tied to digital preservation is understood in different ways by different individuals and colour thoughts on what a digital archive is and ought to be. Differing perspectives and understanding can also be seen in legal frameworks, rules and regulations, SOU-reports, referrals and other national steering documents and affect archival work. One example is the National Archives (2020) response to the Archives investigation (2019) expressing lack of answers to how the state should meet the demands of the outside world on digital administration and society's access to information. Differences can also be seen regarding the digitalisation politics where it was expressed by the Digitalisation commission in their report (SOU 2013:31) where the ambition stated was for cultural activities, collections and archives to be increasingly preserved digitally and made available electronically to the public. However, the funding for the National Archives has decreased since and other agencies such as the State Service centre have been appointed to aid in digital preservation. Different perspectives and expectations regarding responsibilities and resource allocation affects operational work, steering, innovation, and of course also the role of archival professionals.

Yeo (2019) questions whether archival work has been fully professionalised yet but says archivists have moved far in this direction. Trace argues that "As an infrastructure maintained by a professional community, archives demonstrate a sense of commonality through professional standards and collaboration, and membership in professional bodies. Loosely coupled, what draws this infrastructure together are the shared norms, techniques, practices, and technical systems that workers use to support and sustain the archive" (Trace, 2021, p. 76). We contend that professional associations, standards and codes of ethics exist, as well as several growing professional and scholarly literature. However, there is a gap in understanding what archival professionals do, and should be doing, since they are most often associated with preserving records for cultural heritage use, when their work is just as much about evidence for legal, political, governmental purposes; appraisal,

preservation and use affects both individuals and society (Cook & Schwartz, 2002; Jimerson, 2007; Harris, 2007). Craig Gauld, Senior Lecturer in Archives and Records Management, highlights the importance of archivists reaching a professional consensus on their role as guardians of evidence, essential for establishing individual and societal truths. (Gauld, 2018). This paper examines what employers seek in the profession, offering insights into potential directions for its development.

Personal characteristics

In 1996 Charles R. Schultz, archivist at Texas A&M University, examined the personality types of American archivists using the Myers Briggs Type Indicator and the Keirsey Temperament Sorter. He found "substantial differences between archivists and the general population" (Schultz, 1996, p. 21), for example that archivists tended to be introverted, and prone to structure but not to innovation. Schultz argued that the archival profession could gain from introspection and "if need be, to counterbalance its predominant personality types and thereby to improve the work of the profession" (ibid, p. 18). Archivist, archival educator and scholar Barbara L. Craig (2000) conducted a similar survey among Canadian archivists and found that extroverted exceeded introverted, which she found "remarkable" and something that "certainly puts into question the stereotype of a reclusive and shy profession" (2000, p. 87). Australian information scholar Ann E. Pederson saw there to be a "lack of understanding and appreciation of archivists and archival work" (2003, p. 223) in archival literature from Australia, Canada and the United States. In her study, she concentrated on Australia and found that this population was slightly more prone to being introverted than the general population, that they were much less prone to be Artisans (who are associated with adventurous, artistic or skill-based occupations), but much more prone to be Guardians (who are dependable and orderly but less strong in the people management area, support and enforce society's laws and rules, and believe that there is much to learn from studying the past). Pederson also found that many archivists are the oldest sibling or an only child. In their paper in Information Management Journal, American scholars Pemberton et al (2005) conducted another personality type-themed study among records management professionals from the US and several other countries, using the Lounsberry and Gibson's Personal Style Inventory. The rationale put forward for studying personality traits within this profession was that when asked about the reasons for choosing a career path within archives and records management many professionals say they "fell into it" (Pemberton et al, 2005, p. 54) which makes it difficult for employers to know what traits to look for when hiring. The study resulted in a list of 13 traits that records professionals were more prone to, among them being assertive, service oriented, emotionally resilient, visionary, and adaptable. These four studies argued that archival professionals needed to become better at promoting themselves and their skills, to counteract as Pearson put it "vicious old stereotypes of archivists as caretakers in the boneyard of information" (2003, p. 260). Somewhat discouraging, improving the image of the archival personality seems to be a lingering goal: already in the early 1980s David B. Gracy, president of the Society for American Archivists, put together a task force aimed at overcoming the unflattering stereotypes of archives and archivists (Jimerson, 2014).

Another presumption about archival professionals has to do with gender roles. The profession has both in Sweden and internationally gone through a change, where "Archives originally descended from the male-dominated field of history, with many archivists initially trained as historians" (Orchard et al, 2019, p. 64). A feminine shift in Sweden occurred during the 1940s when war refugees came to Sweden and were assigned archives-work. One of four foreign archives-workers were women, compared to only one of ten Swedes. In 1960 almost half of the archive-workers were women. (Engelbertsson, 1997). This trend has continued and today an increasing number of archival professionals are women. We see this in our student cohorts that mainly consist of female students. An increasing number of women have entered the profession, leading some scholars to argue that there has been a feminisation of the profession (Lapp, 2019) resulting in inadequate understanding

and awareness of archives outside the profession (Orchard et al, 2019). This has affected the academic field as well since the conversation between humanities scholars and archival scholars is hampered by "a gendered and classed failure in which humanities scholars-even those whose work focuses on gender and class-have been blind to the intellectual contributions and labour of a field that has been construed as predominantly female, professional (that is, not academic), and service-oriented, and as such, unworthy of engagement" (Caswell, 2021, p. 4). In contrast, IT-professions, which are vital collaborative partners in digital recordkeeping, are typically male dominated fields. Gendered roles of archival professionals affect how the different professions collaborate and how organisational placement and status affect preservation. Gender roles, while interesting and relevant are, however, out of the scope of this paper.

Theoretical framework
The theoretical underpinning of this paper is based on the socio-constructivist assumption that the future role of archival professionals in society is influenced by how different stakeholder groups conceptualise the profession. What constitutes archives and archival work are therefore not self-evident. Archival theory and practice are influenced by current and former discourse about archives, and by related discourse on national governance, administration, concepts of order, etc. The 'archival paradigm' comprises the disciplinary and professional aspects of archival science; "a set of assumptions, principles, and practices that are common to the archival community and are a model for its activities and outlook" (Gilliland-Swetland, 2000, p. 7). A discourse is not only a way of talking about something, but literally creates reality by shaping, organising and circumscribing the phenomenon in question, in this case archival work and archival professionals. Discourse consequently affects perceived problems, opportunities and solutions.

Archival theory serves as a convergence point for various scientific and theoretical traditions (Eastwood, 1994). On the one hand, there is a practical core that delves into the formation of archives, optimal document preservation, and institutional perspectives. On the other hand, there are manifold theoretical aspects, and the approaches and methods within archival science intersect with disciplines such as law, media studies, history, and information and systems science. This dual nature of archival science encapsulates both interdisciplinary studies of archival objects based on theoretical perspectives and a more practical, normative focus, as evident in our discussion about democracy, transparency, accountability, and the preservation of archival documents for evidentiality (Iacovino, 2004).

Within archival science and practice, there has traditionally been a norm regarding the role of the archival function in relation to its principal. This has also established expectations for how a dutiful and effective archival professional should work and fulfil their work obligations. In his book Manual of Archive Administration (1922) British archivist and archival theorist Hilary Jenkinson argued that archivists ought to be impartial custodians who should not interfere in decisions on appraisal since this would corrupt the intentions of the archive's creator. American associate professor of Digital Culture, Information, and Society Jamie A. Lee (2021) argues that this has contributed to making archival professionals more invisible since they from this perspective are regarded as mere keepers of the records, and not as active participants in their capture, preservation and use. A different approach, where the archival function was integrated into the archives-creating organisations, was later advocated by American archivist and archival theorist Theodore Schellenberg (1956). He argued for a proactive archiving process where records should be described and weeded while still in the custody of the archives-creator. Schellenberg's principle has been used in Sweden since the beginning of the 1900s although Jenkinson's principles and view of the archivist's tasks have greatly influenced the image of the archival professionals at large. This description ties closely to the aim of the study by framing the evolving perceptions and expectations of the archivist's and archival professionals'

role. In this paper, we use two ideal types – the archivist as guardian and the archivist as proactive coordinator – as a starting point to explore how these roles have shaped perceptions of the different facets of archival work and personal characteristics. We view archival professionals as having a formative role in selecting, arranging, and delivering records, while also serving as custodians of the records they are entrusted to guard. The contrasting principles of Hilary Jenkinson and Theodore Schellenberg – one emphasising impartial custodianship and the other advocating proactive integration into record creation – highlight how archival professionals' duties and personal characteristics have been historically conceptualised. By applying the ideal types the study seeks to uncover how these roles resonate with contemporary demands. Examining Swedish job advertisements from 2022 provides a lens to explore how employers describe archival work and desired personality traits for these roles, thereby offering insights into the facets of modern archival work and the role and identity of archival professionals today.

Material and method

Internationally, records management and archives management are often divided responsibilities. A characteristic of the Nordic model of digital archiving is the close connection between records management and archiving (Bak & Rostgaard, 2023; Huvila, 2015). Sweden is one of the countries that have long worked toward proactive recordkeeping and where different professions have already since before digitalisation been cooperating to preserve information for the future. This makes Sweden suitable to conduct research on how different professions are working together toward the same archival and recordkeeping goals today. Sweden is also a country that has been eager to implement digital systems with the explicit goal to become "best in the world in the use of digitalisation opportunities" (Regeringskansliet, n.d.). That said, we do not see Sweden as an ideal but as a good case to conduct our research.

We obtained a dataset obtained from Historical ads (Historiska annonser, n.d.) a digital service that provides an overview of the Swedish labour market and how needs have changed over time. Historical ads contain all job advertisements published on the Swedish Employment Agency's platform Platsbanken from 2006 until 2022. It includes different types of data found in advertisements, e.g. information about position, employer, place, time, etc. The dataset contains approximately 6.9 million ads. We downloaded ads containing the term archive in the job description and then filtered the dataset in two steps, due to its large size. First, we selected ads that had the word "archive" in the headline. Thus, the outtake was not limited to only include ads for archivists. We made this choice because it gave a broader scope to the study. Then, we limited the time scope to the year 2022, since this was the most recent year in the dataset and the more recent ads in the dataset contained better coverage of the metadata needed for the following step. Finally, we filtered the data for two categories or codes 4410: Archive- and library assistants and more, and 2622: Librarians and archivists. The code 4410 includes, among other titles or subcategories, municipal archivist, court clerk, archives manager. Code 2622 includes, among other titles, information management specialist, and municipal archivist. Thus, the categories were not mutually exclusive. These two codes were chosen because they are the ones where most archive-related ads are placed. The ads capture the distinctiveness of the profession and provided a data set that was manageable to analyse. These codes were also the ones with the largest number of ads with the word archive in the headline. The initial number of ads was 403. However, many of these were duplicates and were therefore removed from the dataset, rendering the total number of ads to 204 for the year 2022. The total number of employers in the material were 112. These included archival institutions, government agencies, municipalities, private companies and staffing companies. Qualitative content analysis (Zhang and Wildemuth, 2009; Krippendorf, 2013) was used to map and start to analyse what titles that occurred; what archival work that was described; and what personality characteristics that were sought after.

In this initial overview, we began by coding and categorising message variables from job advertisements, grouping them into themes based on a quantitative content analysis. Specifically, we examined the types of tasks described in the advertisements and the personal characteristics sought by employers. Categories were developed using nominal measurement techniques, allowing for flexible classification of key elements, such as the duties expected of archival professionals and the individual traits emphasised by employers. Textual analysis was then applied to interpret the characteristics of the job ads, focusing on their content, structure, and function. To uncover patterns and meanings, we conducted a qualitative content analysis, coding the data into categories to provide both qualitative and quantitative insights into the nature of the communication.

Reflexive thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2022) was used to discern meaning from the data. This method allowed us as researchers to use our subjectivity to discern meaning from the data. With this approach we acknowledge our interaction with the data and our direct influence on the study as former archival professionals and present archival educators and researchers. We have not analysed the development of archival work and personal traits over time but focused on how archival professionals figure in the material during the chosen year of 2022.

This approach offered a structured framework for understanding the messages embedded within the advertisements. The core goal was to identify dominant themes and patterns within the discourse of the job ads, a concept informed by critical discourse analysis. This perspective examines how power, dominance, and inequality are maintained or challenged through communication in social and political contexts (van Dijk, 2015). While not a specific method, it provides a critical lens to explore the broader implications of discourse. This phase of the study connects to larger assumptions about the work of archival professionals and the characteristics and personalities associated with the profession. By integrating these analytical approaches, we aimed to better understand how the role of archival professionals is communicated and constructed within the context of job advertisements.

Together, the ads provided a basis for an initial overview of different facets of archival work and desirable personal characteristics from the employers' perspective. The types of archival work ranged from traditional archival duties such as organising and listing to responsibility for strategic development of information management. This broad spectrum gave us the opportunity to examine what common denominators there were and thus also a picture of the view of the archive profession today.

Result and analysis
The result shows some of the ways in which employers view the nature of archival work, responsibilities and personal characteristics of archival professionals. Employment advertisements is a text genre, and we cannot rely too heavily on the result when it comes to actual workdays of archival professionals. Flexibility, service mindedness and communicative skills are examples of words that are likely to occur in job advertisements for a lot of different professions. The dataset allows us to discern an image of how archival work and professions is framed and understood by employers. In the following sections we present our result under the headings Job titles; Different facets of archival work; and Desired personal characteristics.

Job titles
There were 78 unique professional titles in the material. Different types of archivists were in majority, for example departmental archivist, diocesan archivist, office archivist, etc. But not all titles had the word archive in it, for example coordinator, developer, informatician, information management specialist, project leader, production assistant, with the addition in the headline that the job revolved around archives. Sometimes more than one title appeared in the same advertisement. For example,

"Municipal archivist/information security manager" and "Information manager/archivist" and "Information strategist/Municipal archivist". While this study has not gone deeper into the content of the respective titles and interrogated for example what the difference is between an archivist and an archival administration officer, or a registrar and a document controller, the number of titles is in line with previous research indicating that archival work and professions are becoming increasingly complex and multifaceted (e.g. Huvila, 2015; Klareld, 2021; Yeo, 2019). We contend that further research is needed to understand what different facets of archival work that are tied to different job titles, if some titles are increasing while others are decreasing, and what this means for the future role of archival professionals. This is however out of the scope of this paper. What we can say though based on our results is that archival professionals today are expected to be dynamic in many ways. They can be a generic office worker and a specialist, have a support function and a steering function, work with procurement and vehicle service, be flexible and meticulous, be able to inspire others and be prepared to work monotonously. In other words, the types of archival work described, and personality characteristics sought after to shoulder the responsibilities under these job titles varies a lot. Several ads emphasise that both the organisation and the work itself are prone to change. Some say the archival professional should partake in it-development projects, some that they will be part of a steering group. Many require leadership skills and pedagogical skills.

In the following sections we focus on the themes found regarding the different facets of archival work and have therefore chosen to name our themes Facet 1: Change and development; Facet 2: Service and support; Facet 3: Information management and planning; and Facet 4: Communication and education. We do not claim to have included all facets of archival work that exist today, but our result contributes with a snapshot of where the profession was at in 2022 which can both serve as an illumination of fact and to compare in the future where the profession has headed.

Different facets of archival work

The most common archival words used to describe archival work in the ads are develop, offer support and service, and manage information, after which comes destroy, organise, and describe, followed by plan, educate, and strategize.

Facet 1: Change & development

Archives management is traditionally considered a support function, and while this role remains, it is often combined with more strategic and steering responsibilities within the organisation at large. An e-archivist at a municipality has within their duties to "Participate in the development of requirements when business systems are newly developed, changed or discontinued" (ad nr. 903656). The work is commonly described as varied and changing, and many ads state that the employer is striving toward new and improved working methods, both technically and organisationally. Only in a few cases does it say that the applicant should expect the work to be monotonous, repetitive or routine. The archival professional is expected to take an active part in developing the employer's recordkeeping, often by assuming a leading role. An ad seeking a Process manager for archives at a government agency sums up some of the things this can entail:

> You will work with continuous improvements in the archive process, both independently and together with others. The work includes identifying and prioritising archival issues of tactical/strategic and principled importance; paying attention to the need for change, taking the initiative and independently driving change work; independently creating contacts and networks, leading collaboration councils, meetings and workshops. (ad nr.882925)

Related to the Janus-face mentioned in the introduction, the primary focus in the ads are forward facing, toward the future, often with emphasis on continuous change. An example where both faces are visible however is a municipality archive stating that they are on a "digitalisation journey" (ad nr.

366380) where the archival professional they seek should be someone who has "a perspective both back in time and forward, who knows the traditional archival duties and who wants to take the step towards digital information management". Several ads mention e-archives or digital archiving. In many cases it says that while the organisation does not yet have an e-archive, the archival professional should partake in preparation for a coming e-archive, often in a leading role. Simultaneously, supportive and service-oriented work remains important.

Facet 2: Service and support
At the same time as working with change and development, the archival professionals are to offer support and service, duties that are directed both internally in the organisation and outward toward the public. As a university seeking an Expert in archiving says, "The work is very independent, varied and service-oriented and involves contacts with many different parties both internally and externally" (ad nr. 214796). Several ads state that the archival professional is an expert (e.g. ads nr. 290089; 214796; 784969) or specialist (e.g. ads nr. 12391; 1000873; 382855). Other ads describe the archival professional as more of a generalist, and someone who should be prepared to take on various non-archives related duties when needed, often formulated in general and unspecified terms; "other administrative duties may occur" (e.g. ads nr. 575806; 908313; 169663). One ad for an Archives manager to a national archival agency is however more specific:

> The employment mainly involves work with case management of various case types and production of ordered archive volumes for the reading room. The main duties will consist of handling cases vis-à-vis authorities and the public through research, production and disclosure of information from archive documents. The service also includes janitorial duties such as transport, office service and property maintenance as well as simpler service and maintenance of technical equipment and vehicles. (ad nr. 994368)

Facet 3: Information management and planning
Traditional archival work – arrangement/organisation, description, and destruction – remains a core component of the profession and frequently occurs in the material examined, encompassing and referring to both analogue and digital records. Information management also appears regularly, often referring to and focusing on digital records. For instance, an ad seeking an IT-archivist notes: "The municipality's traditional archive management has switched to information management" (ad nr. 18786). However, the sample of ads demonstrates that there is still a need to handle paper records, which may require a strong physical constitution. A museum seeking an archival assistant paints a vivid image: "You also need to be able to handle heavy lifting and work from ladders, in cramped environments" (ad nr. 385123). The information management part of archival work is however not limited to archives (analogue or digital) but has a broader scope. While archiving was traditionally not considered part of an organisation's core business, our material shows that this is changing. One example comes from a government agency seeking an IT archivist: "As an IT archivist, you contribute to developing and enabling the [X agency]'s mission by ensuring correct and efficient information management in business processes and IT systems" (ad nr. 384096).

Related to both development and information management is planning. An ad for a part-time archivist at a government agency notes that the job includes "designing strategies and plans for a sustainable and long-term information supply based on current regulations" (ad nr.78395).

Strategy and coordination also feature prominently, underscoring the active nature of contemporary archival work. This may include procurement, in which the archival professional is expected to partake in demand setting and help define requirements when purchasing new systems. An ad from a government agency seeking an archivist states: "You will work with the information from a holistic perspective, i.e. be involved in everything from procurement, new and further development,

investigations into conservation and destruction, advice and support, handling during decommissioning and long-term preservation" (ad nr. 25165). Creating and updating steering documents and routines, as well as instructing others about information management issues, are also common duties.

Facet 4: Communication and education
Educating other staff is closely related to the personal characteristics of collaborative, communicative, and social skills. According to the literature (c.f. Cook, 2013), archivists are anticipated to become more visible to the public. Although this is not commonly stated in the ads, there are examples, such as an ad from a municipality seeking an image archivist/cultural secretary: "Making both the analogue and digital material available is an essential part of the work. You are a resource for schools, the municipality's citizens, associations and various organisations and you will participate in the unit's outward-facing activities" (ad nr. 811550).

Summation
In our material, traditional archival work – such as arrangement, description, and destruction – remain important, pointing towards Jenkinson's conventional view of the archivist as guardian and custodian. These traditional tasks frequently appear in job advertisements. It is noteworthy that some advertisements also emphasise the physical capabilities of archival professionals, including tasks such as handling paper records, which require physical endurance. However, the most common term found in these ads is "develop", highlighting a shift in expectations. Archival professionals are increasingly expected to actively participate in developing recordkeeping systems, often assuming leadership roles. In this context the work of an archival professional is commonly described as varied and dynamic, with many employers emphasising the pursuit of new and improved working methods, both technically and organisationally. Job ads often describe archival professionals as either specialists or generalists, with the latter expected to take on various administrative duties. Fewer ads depict the work as monotonous or routine. Information management, especially related to digital records, is another frequent responsibility. Archival professionals are now seen as integral to the core business of organisations, contributing to efficient information management in business processes and IT systems. This broader scope of duties includes strategic planning, coordination, procurement and developing policies and routines. Service and support, offered both internally and to the public, remain critical components of the role.

Desired personal characteristics
The 'typical archivist' is in many people's opinion an introverted person. The ads studied challenge this presumption by highlighting communicative and social skills as important. The most common words found in relation to characteristics are cooperation skills and independence, after which comes meticulousness, communicative skills and being responsible, followed by the skills of service, group/teamwork, pedagogy and analysis.

The contemporary archival professional must be able to collaborate with colleagues and stakeholders when necessary while also being capable of working alone on detailed duties without needing constant guidance. Based on the analysis of job advertisements, the following personality traits are particularly valued for archival professionals.

Interpersonal skills
The most frequently mentioned characteristic is cooperation skills, which highlights the ability to work effectively in teams and build relationships, both internally and externally. An ad for Data protection coordinator/archive manager to a municipal agency state "You are a natural relationship builder who easily creates trust and good relationships with employees at all levels" (ad nr. 1006263). Another

commonly mentioned trait is strong communication skills – both verbal and written – crucial for informing and supporting others, as well as collaborating with various stakeholders. Among interpersonal skills, the attribute of teamwork is also emphasised. "Since you will cooperate with others it is important that you are both pedagogical and clear in your way of communicating" (ad nr. 688688), says an ad for a municipal department archivist. Service-mindedness frequently appears as well, emphasising a positive attitude towards providing service and support, especially in roles involving customer contact or internal support functions. An ad from an administrative court looking for an archive administrator states "We want you to have a positive and good attitude, be service-oriented and be able to work independently but also in a team" (ad nr. 765827). The related characteristic of flexibility involves adaptability to changing circumstances and handling a variety of duties and environments. This trait is increasingly in demand in the modern labour market, and is likely mentioned in many job advertisements, not just for archival professionals. However, the evolving role of the archival professional, as seen in job ads and descriptions, now includes a wider range of duties, making flexibility crucial.

Independence & meticulousness
The emphasis on interpersonal skills is somewhat at odds with the second most mentioned trait, independence. This quality emphasises the ability to work independently, take initiative, and manage duties without constant supervision. As one ad seeking a municipal archivist state, "The position involves a lot of independent work as you are the only archivist" (ad nr. 858294). While organisations suggest teamwork, independence aligns more closely with the popular image of the solitary, invisible, passive and mysterious archival professional who organises records efficiently, discussed in the introduction (Edquist, 2021, p. 117; Lee 2021; Orchard et al, 2019; Schultz, 1996).

An archival professional is also desired and expected to be meticulous and responsible, qualities essential to their custodial role within an organisation. Being thorough and conscientious, as well as functioning as guardians, is crucial for ensuring the authenticity of archival records, a role traditionally emphasised by archival theorist Jenkinson in the early 20th century. Attention to detail and precision are vital for handling archives and documents correctly, adhering to regulations and standards, as highlighted in job advertisements. As stated in an ad for information manager/archivist at a government agency, "You take care for following laws and guidelines and keeping up to date in your area of expertise" (ad nr. 610562). Additionally, taking responsibility for one's work, driving processes forward, and making necessary decisions are highly valued qualities.

Leadership skills
The ability to lead is also important, involving the ability to explain and teach clearly and engagingly to both colleagues and external parties. One advertisement from a court of appeal seeking an archivist says, "You are pedagogical and have experience from training others and leading projects" (ad nr.805603). The capacity to inspire others is mentioned in an ad for a regional archivist with e-archiving focus, seeking the "ability to create commitment and interest in archive and information management issues" (ad nr. 31741). In the context of archival work, these skills have become increasingly important. Since the cultural investigations of the 1990s and the subsequent cultural cooperation model, archival institutions have placed greater emphasis on outward-oriented work and making archival material accessible. This shift makes communication and educational skills crucial for archival professionals, who must now play a more leading and active role in ensuring colleagues understand the need for and importance of sound information management and record registration. At the same time, these qualities can also be seen as reflecting broader demands in today's labour market.

Although less frequently mentioned, analytical ability is also growing in importance. Archival professionals are increasingly expected to function and serve as overall coordinators for an organisation's information management, which involves setting requirements, process mapping, and solving problems effectively. These tasks highlight the need for strong analytical skills and often relate to leading or participating in change and development processes. One advertisement from a government agency states, "The role of an IT archivist includes analysing, setting requirements and evaluating information in a complex and extensive organisation. Therefore, it is important to have good analytical skills, responsibility and the ability to work independently" (ad nr. 382855).

Summation
An effective archival professional should be capable of working both strategically and operationally, integrating change as a natural aspect of their role. The characteristics of cooperation skills and independence in archival professionals may seem contradictory at first glance. Cooperation skills, mentioned 104 times, emphasise the ability to work effectively in teams and build relationships. Independence, mentioned 103 times, highlights the capacity to work independently, take initiative, and manage duties without constant supervision. While cooperation implies reliance on others, independence implies self-reliance and minimal dependence on others. However, these characteristics are not mutually exclusive. Similarly, the characteristics of meticulousness and flexibility might appear conflicting. Meticulousness requires attention to detail and precision, adhering strictly to rules and standards. Flexibility requires adaptability to changing circumstances and handling a variety of duties. Meticulousness demands a high level of accuracy, while flexibility necessitates openness to change. An archival professional needs to be meticulous in ensuring accuracy and compliance with standards while also being flexible enough to adapt to new processes, technologies, and unexpected challenges.

The characteristics highlighted in job advertisements for archival professionals reflect the complex and multifaceted nature of the role. These traits might initially seem contradictory, but they reflect the shifting nature of the role, and the diverse skills required in this profession. Archival professionals in contemporary administrations and organisations must balance working independently with collaborating effectively and maintaining meticulous standards with being adaptable to change.

The characteristics valued in archival professionals today, such as versatility, adaptability, independence, teamwork, detail-orientation, flexibility and strong communication skills, contrast with some of the findings from personality studies of archivists. For instance, Schultz (1996) found that archivists tend to be introverted and prone to structure. Craig (2000) and Perderson (2003) found similar tendencies towards structure. Perderson (2003) also emphasised that archivists were more prone to being guardian and orderly – in line with Jenkinsons more traditional archivist role – but less skilled in people management. At the same time Craig (2000) found a higher number then Schultz (1996) of extroverted archivists, challenging the stereotype of a reclusive profession. The evolving role of archival professionals requires a balance of more traditional and more extroverted personal characteristics. While the profession historically possibly attracted individuals with introverted and structured personalities, today's job advertisements reflect a need for a broader skill set of versatility, team-orientation, flexibility and effective communicators. This blend of characteristics shows that the profession is adapting to meet new demands, requiring archival professionals to balance their inherent characteristics with skills that promote extroversion and collaboration.

The Intersection of Roles
The description of archival work highlights two ideal types of archivists: the guardian and the proactive coordinator, each representing distinct but interconnected roles in the profession. The guardian aligns with the traditional Jenkinsonian view of the archivist as a meticulous custodian,

focusing on core duties such as arrangement, description, and destruction. These tasks, frequently mentioned in job advertisements, emphasise the importance of maintaining compliance with laws and standards to safeguard the authenticity and integrity of records. This role also includes physical responsibilities, such as handling paper records or managing archives in confined spaces, underscoring the hands-on aspect of archival custodianship. Guardians often operate in support roles, providing services internally and externally without directly influencing organisational strategies. This aligns with the historical image of archivists as introverted, detail-oriented professionals with a strong preference for structure and order.

In contrast, the proactive coordinator reflects a shift toward a more dynamic and future-oriented role, emphasising development, leadership, and strategic responsibilities. Job advertisements frequently mention "development," indicating that archival professionals are increasingly expected to take active roles in improving recordkeeping systems, implementing new technologies, and preparing for digital archives. Coordinators engage in strategic planning, policymaking, and even procurement, often working collaboratively across departments to address complex organisational needs. They are described as communicative, team-oriented, and pedagogical, capable of educating colleagues, leading projects and inspiring others. This outward-facing approach aligns with modern archival theory, which predicts a greater public visibility for archival professionals and a more integrated role within organisations.

Despite their differences, these roles are not mutually exclusive but rather complementary. Modern archival professionals are often expected to embody traits from both ideal types, balancing traditional skills with the demands of contemporary information management. Job advertisements frequently describe a dual focus, emphasising the importance of preserving archival heritage while driving digitalisation and innovation. This duality also extends to personal characteristics. Archival professionals are expected to work independently on detail-oriented tasks, reflecting the guardian's meticulousness, while also demonstrating flexibility and adaptability, traits more commonly associated with the proactive coordinator. The combination of these seemingly contradictory traits reflects the complex and evolving nature of the profession.

This blending of roles highlights the broader transformation of archival work. Traditional custodial responsibilities remain vital, but they are increasingly supplemented – and in some cases redefined – by strategic and developmental duties. The modern archival professional must navigate this shift by integrating the structured, protective qualities of the guardian with the dynamic, leadership-oriented approach of the coordinator. This evolution underscores the profession's growing complexity and its need for versatile individuals capable of bridging the past and the future.

Concluding remarks
Our study gives the overall impression of an active role, far from the quiet, passive and invisible traditional image of the archivist. The roles and responsibilities of archival professionals, as depicted in employment advertisements, are diverse and multifaceted. Archival professionals are expected to develop, lead, and educate within their area of expertise. In conclusion, the ideal archival professional must be versatile and adaptable, able to work both independently and in a team. They should seamlessly switch between detailed, solitary duties and collaborative projects. They must maintain high standards of accuracy while being flexible enough to adapt to new situations and changes. Strong communication skills are essential for day-to-day interactions and training other employees within the organisation.

Employers seek individuals who are not only skilled in traditional archiving but also capable of taking on additional duties, demonstrating physical endurance, and excelling in communication. The

profession demands a blend of meticulousness, flexibility, and the ability to inspire and engage with others, challenging traditional stereotypes and emphasising the evolving nature of archival work. An ideal candidate is development-focused, pedagogical, unpretentious, and experienced in handling diverse roles and responsibilities. Additionally, experience in training others in document and archive management, and any leadership or coordination roles, are considered advantageous, linked to the personal characteristics of collaboration and communication. Yeo argues that "the biggest challenge that the advent of digital technology has brought for records professionals is the evident weakening, in many organisations, of what might be called a record-keeping mentality" (Yeo, 2019, p. 31), meaning that staff often do not realise that there is still a need to spend time on recordkeeping. As the result shows educating other staff about archival issues and creating steering documents.

The role of the archival professional is evolving. They should, according to the advertisements, become more visible to the public, engaging in outreach activities and making archival material accessible. They are expected to balance traditional archival duties with forward-facing, strategic tasks. This dual responsibility resonates with the image of Janus, who is looking both backward in time to preserve historical documents and forward to update standards and governing documents. The archival professional's role is now seen as more dynamic and integral to organisational undertakings, blending meticulous attention to detail with a proactive approach to development and change. Technical development has significantly impacted the role, with frequent references to digital archives and e-archiving. The Swedish archival sector has described e-archives as "the hub of the municipalities' information management" (Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions, 2024), which is not something we can see clearly in the material; however, the archival professional's responsibilities include continuous improvements, strategic prioritisation and leading collaborative efforts. While archives management is still considered a support function, it increasingly involves strategic and steering responsibilities within organisations, the proactive role that archival theorist Schellenberg was advocating for.

Future research
Future research may delve deeper into the similarities, differences and interrelations among specific titles – such as archive assistant, archive manager, document controller and information management specialist. A useful approach might involve mapping out these various roles and then, through surveys and interviews, exploring whether there is any consensus on what characterises an archival assistant, a municipality archivist, a senior archivist, and so forth.

Another strand of future research concerns examining the collaborative partners of today´s archival professionals within contemporary organisations. The job advertisements reviewed in this paper occasionally identify other professions that the archival professionals are expected to collaborate closely with. Examples include administrative officer, document controller, informatician, information security coordinator, IT-specialist, lawyer, manager, registrar, system scientist, among others. The increasing need for archival professionals to interact with a diverse range of colleagues and collaborative partners from varied disciplinary backgrounds testifies to the importance of extending archival science even further into an interdisciplinary field and territory. At the same time, it remains crucial not to lose the ties to and sight of the core archival theories and practices that form the foundation of the profession.

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