

SCONUL Strategy Statement

Who we are?

SCONUL is a key strategic body that works with, and on behalf of, its members which include libraries in higher education institutions (universities and colleges); the British Library and the national libraries of Ireland, Scotland, and Wales; and libraries in national museums and other specialist institutions.

SCONUL:-

- brings specific expertise about our sector to influence national initiatives and policy development
- advises both government agencies and other bodies on policy and sectoral priorities
- works to ensure that the key contributions our sector can make are related and integrated with these broader agenda
- provides a single voice for our diverse membership which, collectively, is the primary provider of information services to the UK and Irish research and tertiary education communities.

SCONUL offers advice, guidance on best practice and networking opportunities to support our members who are typically library directors and so are the information experts within the organisations that they represent. SCONUL also actively supports and provides guidance on best practice to other senior library managers.

Our vision

Our vision is to provide focused leadership for the UK and Irish academic and national libraries, enabling the sector to position itself at the forefront of international developments to support researchers, teachers and learners in tertiary education through the promotion of innovation and best practice.

Our values

SCONUL's organisational values focus on being:-

- Expert
- Influential
- Inclusive
- Relevant

Our mission

SCONUL's mission is to promote excellence in member library services. The means by which we achieve this are threefold:-

- by influencing government, government agencies and other bodies to develop policies and practice that support our vision
- by adopting an advocacy role (in relation, for example, to legislative and scholarly communication developments)
- through facilitative and collaborative working both within the sector and with both national and international other partners (including an observatory and technology watch role).

Our objectives

SCONUL has four key objectives:-

- To advocate on behalf of its members, influencing policy makers and encourage debate on information issues
- To raise the profile of UK and Irish higher education and national libraries
- To promote the development, implementation and sharing of international good practice to improve service delivery to users
- To support members to meet the challenges of future service needs

SCONUL strategy

Academic and national libraries support academic and research excellence and development through the provision of intellectual, physical and electronic access to knowledge, information sources, ideas and services that sustain our diverse user communities. Our members also support users in the development of the information skills and information management competencies required to support their research, teaching and lifelong learning.

SCONUL works to support its members through advocacy, collaborative work and targeted strategic activities. The current SCONUL strategy is built around several themes (see below) which shape the work of its standing and task and finish groups and inform annual planning. These themes are reviewed regularly to ensure continuing best strategic fit.

Strategic proposition

SCONUL has traditionally assisted its members by providing advice and support in clearly-defined niche areas. SCONUL is now positioning itself to take a more proactive and strategic role, moving beyond its traditional boundaries in recognition of the dynamic environment within which its members operate. This will increasingly involve working in partnership with others to support SCONUL's strategic goals, requiring not only a change in activities but also in its ways of working.

Strategic priorities

SCONUL's strategic agenda is currently focused around the following themes:-

- Influencing the political and legislative context
- Enhancing the user experience
- Supporting the development of best practice
- Exploiting the digital environment to benefit users
- Collaborating with others to provide added-value to members

Governance

SCONUL is governed by its member institutions, whose Representatives meet collectively twice a year. An elected Executive Board is responsible for delivering SCONUL's agenda supported by the SCONUL Secretariat and a number of both standing and task and finish groups. SCONUL's strategic priorities and operational plan proposals for the forthcoming year are agreed with members at the AGM. In addition, SCONUL is developing its internal infrastructure and working to create strategic alliances to support delivery of its agenda.