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For immediate release

Research Information Network gives support to academic library borrowing scheme

London, 15 September – The new Research Information Network has given its first funding grant. SCONUL (the Society of College, National and University Libraries) will receive funds from the Research Information Network to ensure the continuation of the SCONUL Research Extra Scheme.

Launched in 2003, with an initial grant from the Research Support Libraries Programme, SCONUL Research Extra is the largest academic access scheme in the United Kingdom and Ireland, and allows researchers in an extended academic community to share resources by extending borrowing privileges to all participating libraries.

Initially supported 60 higher education institutions, SCONUL Research Extra has now grown to include 156 out of a possible total of 161.

Since its inception, the SCONUL Research Extra scheme has resulted in a total of 100,000 loans and renewals being issued to 9000 academics and research students registering with other university libraries.

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Suzanne Enright, Chair of the Executive Board of SCONUL and Director of Information Systems and Library Services at the University of Westminster, said 'SCONUL is delighted that with funding from the Research Information Network the scheme can continue to develop. It is a real success story in library collaboration for the benefit of researchers.'

Michael Jubb, the Director of the RIN said 'In a short space of time, Research Extra has established itself as a widespread and popular scheme to facilitate access to library resources across the UK. We are delighted that support from the RIN will mean that the scheme will continue to grow.'

Alasdair Smith, Vice-Chancellor of the University of Sussex, said 'Research Extra is beginning to play a vital role in enabling researchers from institutions across the higher education sector to study the resources they need to pursue their research. I am very pleased that the RIN is supporting this practical example of collaboration between institutions.'

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Notes for editors

- 1 The RIN is a new body set up from the UK Higher Education Funding Councils, the Research Councils, the British Library and the national libraries of Scotland and Wales to lead and co-ordinate the development of information services for the research community.
- 2 SCONUL is the professional association representing the directors of libraries in all the universities in the UK and Ireland, and in most other UK institutions of higher education. (It also represents the directors of national libraries on both sides of the Irish Sea.)
- 3 For a full account of SCONUL Research Extra see pages 80-82 of *SCONUL Focus*, issue 33, at <http://www.skonul.ac.uk>