

SCONUL Staff Development Award 2000

As reported in the last issue of the *SCONUL Newsletter*, Claire Barnes, pictured below with Pat Noon (Chair of the SCONUL Advisory Committee on Staffing) and Jean Sykes (Chair of SCONUL), was awarded with the SCONUL Staff Development Award 2000 at the SCONUL Conference last April.

Her report –an excellent review of the TAFLIN cross-sectoral training initiative– is available in full via the Scottish Library and Information Council Web site (URL:). As a taster, we have reproduced Claire’s own summary below.

Once again, we would like to congratulate Claire on her achievement.

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TAFLIN co-operative training programme - evaluative report summary

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The following summary outlines the main findings of the research project analysing the success of TAFLIN’s Co-operative Training Programme. The project aimed to measure the strengths and successes of the cross-sectoral initiative. It hoped to highlight training weaknesses and indicate where future training priorities should be.

The training programme focused on generic library skills and covered topics such as Internet

Searching and Customer Care skills. Over 180 delegates attended 14 workshops. Attendance at all workshops was cross-sectoral with Dundee City Council sending the majority of delegates.

Delegates were asked to complete a questionnaire which covered the cross-sectoral aspect of the programme. Its findings were very encouraging:

- ◆ Over 80% of respondents strongly agreed or agreed they had enjoyed the training.
- ◆ 90% of respondents felt they had benefited from meeting and exchanging ideas with staff working in other sectors.
- ◆ Over 50% of respondents believed the training had been equally suited to all sectors.
- ◆ Only 16% of respondents felt the training would have been more effective it had not been cross-sectoral.
- ◆ Only 8% of respondents did not agree that further cross-sectoral training programmes should be developed.

Feedback from focus groups and follow up interviews with the trainers and senior staff in TAFLIN

member institutions was also positive, with all believing the programme had been worthwhile and informative. However, there were problem areas that needed to be addressed before the training could be developed further. It was clear that advertising promotion and marketing had been inadequate. The structure and content of some of the workshops also had to be examined and course evaluation needed to be improved. The following conclusions were reached:

- ◆ Produce more detailed promotional material – look at developing individual leaflets for each workshop which give information regarding the objectives of the training and who the course is aimed at.
- ◆ More extensive marketing campaign that targets all library sectors. Only one delegate who attended the training was working in a school library. This issue must be addressed. Staff working in libraries do not get the same opportunities to attend training and there is a danger they can feel isolated. There is no doubt school librarians would greatly benefit from attending training that covers generic library skills.
- ◆ Investigate limiting the number of places at workshops for each sector. This would avoid any dominance by a particular group.
- ◆ Greater involvement of the trainers in the structure of the workshops. This would avoid any overlap in course content and lead to a more cohesive programme.
- ◆ Investigate the possibility of developing half-days workshops. This allows for lone librarians and other members of the library and information community who might find it difficult to find the time to attend training (e.g. school librarians) to benefit from the programme.
- ◆ Develop a consistent TAFLIN course evaluation form.

This research aimed to develop a code of good practice that can be followed by TAFLIN and other library consortia when planning future training programmes. The following guidelines are recommended:

- ◆ Carry out an in-depth analysis before the design of the training programme. Consult all sectors before workshops are developed.

This will ensure training is designed around specific needs of staff.

- ◆ Compile clear, concise and informative promotional literature that outlines:
 - ◆ Objectives of training
 - ◆ Format of workshop
 - ◆ Who would benefit most from the training
- ◆ Market the program to all sectors.
- ◆ Involve all trainers in the development and structure of the workshops. This will eliminate any overlap with workshops.
- ◆ Ensure all workgroups and practical exercises are cross-sectoral. This will allow staff the opportunity to mix and exchange ideas.
- ◆ Develop a standard evaluative questionnaire to be used for all workshops within the training programme. This will mean analysis of the programme will be consistent and based on the same criteria.

With sound promotion, planning and organisation and consultation of all sectors involved in the training, the initiative should be a success.

The report can be found at <http://www.sconul.ac.uk/staffing/devawardwinner2000.doc>