
Report from the SCONUL Executive Board

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A key aspect of the work of SCONUL's Executive Board recently has been to continue to extend links with various "sister" organisations. Some, such as our links with CURL (the Consortium of University Research Libraries) - now RLUK (Research Libraries UK) - and RIN (Research Information Network) are already well established whilst others, such as those with JISC (the Joint Information Systems Committee), have traditionally been less developed. That situation is now changing. Senior JISC colleagues have joined us at a number of Executive Board meetings as well as at last summer's annual planning event in Loughborough which brought together Board members, the chairs (or their nominees) of the various SCONUL groups as well as colleagues from CURL and UCISA (Universities and Colleges Information Systems Association). This has led to closer working with JISC and the development of joint activities, early examples of which are identified below:-

LMS AND RELATED SYSTEMS STUDY

Last year JISC and SCONUL jointly commissioned a study into the library management system (LMS) and related systems market. The study, undertaken by SERO Consulting Ltd with Glenaffric Ltd and Ken Chad Consulting Ltd, is now available at http://www.sconul.ac.uk/news/lms_report/lmsstudy/.

The report was informed by:-

- an analysis of the current LMS and related systems market
- detailed interviews with systems vendors
- an horizon scan that considered broader systems developments (e.g. Google/Amazon, corporate systems etc.) and other relevant technological and related developments (e.g.

Web 2.0 initiatives and user behaviours in the networked environment etc.)

- a library survey

The report also includes, in section 7, a practical guide to support local decision-making.

A community consultation event on the study findings is being planned to help JISC and SCONUL identify priorities for further action. The event is primarily aimed at directors and senior managers (rather than those responsible for operational systems delivery) and will also include members of the project team and systems vendors. The date for this London event is 27 June 2008.

The report raises a number of significant challenges and opportunities for both the community and individual libraries. It also includes specific recommendations for JISC and SCONUL to pursue, both individually and collaboratively.

TILE (TOWARDS IMPLEMENTATION OF LIBRARY 2.0 AND THE E-FRAMEWORK)

In a related activity, JISC and SCONUL are working together on the TILE project which will identify how far Library 2.0 thinking is beginning to develop within the UK higher education community, what activities are being initiated and early responses to such activities. The project follows on from survey responses received as part of the above LMS and related systems study in which 47 out of 100 respondents indicated they were already involved to some degree in delivering Web 2.0 services, according to their own interpretation of the term, with a further 36 indicating it was their intention to do so in future. The project team is led by David Kay from SERO Consulting and includes several members who were involved with the earlier project.

The project will include coverage of a) strategies, activities and tools b) Library 2.0 and the library mission and c) Library 2.0 and the librarian. A survey to help inform the TILE project will be undertaken in May 2008 and the project report should be available in the early autumn.

JISC/SCONUL ACCESS MANAGEMENT EVENT

SCONUL sponsored a joint event with JISC on general access management issues, including how the HAERVI (HE Access to e-Resources in Visited Institutions) report might be progressed, in March. The current relevance of the topic was reinforced when the event was over-subscribed within a few

hours of registration being opened to members. A further event is being organised for 13 May.

SCONUL'S DEVELOPING INTERNATIONAL AGENDA

SCONUL's Executive Board members are working to extend our links with international sister organisations as well as with those closer to home. Following the successful study tour to South Africa last year CHELSA (Committee for Higher Education Librarians of South Africa) has formally welcomed the initiative to develop a closer working relationship with SCONUL and is currently identifying those areas where they would particularly value developing a joint agenda.

SCONUL is also sponsoring, with CHELSA, Joyce Gozo (the Librarian of Vaal University of Technology) to support her attendance at the SCONUL Conference in Edinburgh in June 2008.

Details are also being finalised for the Canadian study tour that is taking place in late September to mid-October. The tour will not only enable participants to see at first hand a range of initiatives and best practice being undertaken by our Canadian hosts but will also enable SCONUL and CARL to consider how to take forward various collaborative possibilities following discussions during their visit to the UK late last year.

Planning for the 2009 SCONUL study tour to Scandinavia has begun. Whilst details are yet to be confirmed it is possible that the study tour will focus on Denmark and Sweden. Given the UK and Ireland's relative proximity to our proposed host countries the study tour organisers are considering whether it might be feasible for some participants to join the study tour for part of the tour rather than the entire schedule.

UKRR

The UKRR (UK Research Reserve) project team recently submitted the phase 2 project proposal to HEFCE (Higher Education Funding Council for England) for their consideration. Prior to that, SCONUL's Executive Board sent confirmation to the project team that it endorsed the project's objectives (i.e. to develop a nationally co-ordinated retention scheme for print resources to reduce the current costly duplication and storage of resources) and that it strongly endorsed the project team's proposal to seek funding to enhance SUNCAT and related tools to support this. SCONUL has also indicated that, on behalf of the community, it would be happy to adminis-

ter the arrangements under the project to ensure sufficient copies are retained nationally. This had originally been intended to begin under phase 1 of the project. However, it has not yet been possible to put those arrangements into effect.

TOP CONCERNS

The 2008 SCONUL Top Concerns survey was run in April 2008 and is again being managed in conjunction with Priority Search. 115 responses were received (this was 20 higher than last year). The exercise seeks to establish what issues library directors have been focusing on recently and what they expect to be focusing on during the next twelve months. Whilst the detailed results are still to be made available early indications suggest that space planning, e-environment and funding issues will be amongst the issues expected to dominate the coming year. Full results will be publicised on the SCONUL website once available.

SCONUL CONFERENCES – DATES FOR THE DIARY

Registration for the forthcoming residential conference in Edinburgh (11 to 13 June 2008) opened in May. For further details see <http://www.sconul.ac.uk/events/agm2008/>. The theme of the conference is "Think globally, act locally".

The date for the 2008 one-day SCONUL is Tuesday 16 December. The venue will be the British Library Conference Centre.

FUTURE LEADERS PROGRAMME

The third annual run of the popular Future Leaders Programme - the bespoke leadership development course for experienced SCONUL professional managers working in Information roles – started recently.

It is delivered by the Leadership Foundation with the support of SCONUL and also the British Library, UCISA and JISC. The current cohort of 18 participants was competitively selected on the strength of their applications, commitment and talent for leadership, strength of their proposed change management projects and support from their head of service to successfully complete the programme. For the next year, the participants will develop their self-awareness, influencing and communication skills, and leadership capabilities while reflecting upon strategic and organisational change management options that are available to a leader, over a series of residential modules and Action Learning days. The programme will

conclude in March 2009 and participants will then join the ranks of the 40 alumni who have successfully completed the programme since its launch in the spring of 2006.

An article on the Future Leaders Programme is planned for the next issue of Focus.