UK and Ireland Libraries EDI update
May 2023

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SCONUL and other regional and national consortia have come together to discuss how to effectively coordinate our EDI activity and share information and resources. EDI leads will come together three times a year to share information on planned activities and to coordinate activity as appropriate. From this, a shared newsletter for the sector about this activity will be produced.

Academic Libraries North

1. EDI in General

- The EDI Action Group is becoming more representative as new members are joining regularly

- We have created webpages on the ALN website and are building up content

- The case studies of EDI activities from around the membership have been collated and added to the EDI page on the ALN website – this is being added to all the time, especially after events where projects have been shared.

2. EDI Innovation Fund

The Action Group launched a pilot EDI Innovation Fund in September 2022, aiming to provide small grants to ALN institutions (up to a max of £500) to support a project, event or activity which will improve, enhance or develop approaches to EDI. The following 6 projects have been funded:

- Neurodiverse Library Leaders: strengthening ALN leadership through neurodiversity

- Library access and support for local refugee & asylum seeker groups

- Inclusive Imaginations

- Living while black - anti racism talk for student-facing teams

- Library services for international students in ALN member institutions

- Human Library Joint Initiative

3. Mental Health & Wellbeing

The project team has been working further on the advocacy resource to support library work around mental health and wellbeing. So far 168 people have signed up to it. The formal launch for the resource took place on Tuesday 8 November 2022 which was attended by 100+ people. On 19 April 2023, there was also a follow up event run in partnership with NHS Library Knowledge Services North - Sharing good practice on supporting wellbeing: NHS libraries and ALN.

4. Thriving in your Career Event (TIYC) 2

Following on from the success of the peer-support TIYC1 in-person event in June 2022, the organising group is hosting a second event on 9 June 2023. TIYC2 will be a further opportunity for

Global Majority colleagues and students to come together face-to-face to share and learn from each other. It will be at the University of Leeds and will include opportunities for full and small group discussion, a keynote from Josh Sendall (University of Leeds) and lightning talks from a number of colleagues from across ALN.

The organising group has also been working to create a mailing list to enable people of colour across ALN institutions to build up their networks. Named the ALN Global Equity Network (GEN), there are plans to build on the Terms of Reference for the group and roll the details out to the ALN membership.

5.   EDI Events this academic year

- November 2022 - Formal launch of the ALN Mental Health and Wellbeing Advocacy Resource

- March 2023 - EDI in practice: "getting on with it"

- April 2023 - Sharing good practice on supporting wellbeing: NHS libraries and ALN

- April 2023 - Living While Black - hosted online and in-person

- May 2023 – Inclusive recruitment

- June 2023 – Thriving in your career, Part 2

- June 2023 – Decolonising literature searching

CILIP Scotland

1.   Annual Conference – 5th & 6th June

CILIP Scotland are delighted to be part of SCONUL's Libraries EDI Coordinating Group and are looking forward to a number of EDI-themed sessions during their upcoming Annual Conference, taking place in Dundee on Monday 5th and Tuesday 6th June. They include:

- A keynote by Dr Adele Patrick, co-founder and co-director of Glasgow Women's Library, on centring an equality of voices in our visioning of the libraries of the future

- Neil Fraser's Engaging with the Deaf Community using the Archives of Historic Environment Scotland (in partnership with the CILIP Disability Network)

- Celebration of diversity is not enough - we need transformation with Ellie Muniandy, EDI Officer at the National Library of Scotland

2.   Sighted Guiding for Library Professionals

Earlier this year, CILIPS also collaborated with both the Disability Network and Guide Dogs Scotland for a fascinating online learning session on Sighted Guiding for Library Professionals. If you missed it, fancy a refresh or would like to share the learning with colleagues, please check out their extensive Resource Recap on the CILIPS blog.

CONUL

1.   CONUL Customer Services Group

In April the CONUL Customer Services Group hosted its Biannual Show & Tell Seminar. The theme of the seminar was Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion, and showcased the great customer

service initiatives taking place across the CONUL libraries. The programme included several presentations, with the speakers and delegates representing national and university libraries from all over the island of Ireland.

2. UCC Library Annual Seminar:

In March the UCC Library ran its annual seminar for 2023 and this year the focus was the 'libraries role in promoting and supporting Equity, diversity and inclusion'. We had some excellent speakers from across Ireland and the UK all offering perspectives form the Library viewpoint, and also from the perspective of the communities the libraries serve. Our keynote speaker was Marilyn Clarke from the Institute of Advanced legal Studies.

Links to the UCC Library YouTube channel below provide recordings of the seminar presentations, along with a link to the seminar information page.

UCC Library Annual Seminar 2023 - LibCal - UCC Library

Recordings of the seminar presentations are now available on the Library's YouTube channel.
- Marilyn Clarke - Social Justice and EDI in the Library: praxis and reflexivity
- Leona Burgess - Library of Sanctuary
- Katy Lumsden - The horizon leans forward: strategic landscape transformed through E, E, D & I
- Elaine Chapman – Diversity, not division

3. CONUL Training & Development group

The CONUL Training & Development group are currently facilitating training on Diversity and Inclusion (D&I) in the workplace run by the Irish Centre for Diversity (ICD). The 6 x one hour modules run, over the course of six months, are covering topics such as Introduction to D&I, LGBT+ in the workplace, Race Awareness, Neurodiversity, Disability in the workplace and Mental Health in the workplace. There are 51 registered attendees from CONUL libraries with great attendance so far. Those participating in this will be learn how to advance D&I in their Libraries. There is also personal reflection, and at the end of each module, reference materials are supplied.

RLUK

1. Emerging Leaders Survey

Evidence shows that there is a lack of ethnic diversity within the library workforce and this is particularly pronounced in management and leadership positions. This poses a great challenge across all sectors of the library profession.
As part of a research project commissioned to support the creation of a cross-sector Emerging Leaders programme for members of ethnically diverse communities within libraries, we are carrying a survey amongst staff in UK public, academic and research libraries.

You can complete the survey at https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/PNJHGSR (closes 6 June).

We welcome responses from interested UK public, academic and research library staff in a variety of roles and from a range of ethnic backgrounds.

The survey should take around 15 minutes to complete and will ask about your level of interest in, and preferences for, various options for leadership training.

The scoping study has been funded by Arts Council England with contributions from the commissioning partners: Research Libraries UK (RLUK); Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals (CILIP); Libraries Connected; Society of College, National, and University Libraries (SCONUL); Scottish Confederation of University and Research Libraries (SCURL); and Wales Higher Education Library Forum (WHELF).

2. Inclusive Collections, Inclusive Libraries #RLUKICIL

Over the past few years, cultural heritage institutions, including research libraries from across the UK and beyond, have intensified their efforts to decolonise their collections and practices. Developing more inclusive collections, where a variety of voices are represented, is necessary to create a culture where equity, inclusivity, and diversity are the driving forces and where scholarship and learning can thrive.
However, there is a need for honest discussions about what drives decolonisation in institutions, how initiatives are delivered, the successes and failures, which can lead in identifying current gaps and needs in the sector.

Inclusive Collections, Inclusive Libraries is an RLUK programme of events that aims to foster conversation around decolonisation and inclusive practice in collecting, describing, presenting, and engaging with content in research library collections. It seeks to raise awareness about the opportunities and challenges of dealing with, contextualising, and engaging with offensive collections while also identifying and sharing examples of good practice.

The next event of this current series is on the 30th of May with Hannah Ishmael, Collections and Research Manager, Black Cultural Archives. Hannah's talk will ask "Can the archives be decolonised?"

Register for this event

All Inclusive Collections, Inclusive Libraries talks are recorded, and you can watch previous events on the RLUKICIL on Demand page.

SCONUL

1. SCONUL's commitment to fostering diversity

The SCONUL Board is the sponsor and driver of the organisation's work on equality, diversity and inclusion and it is committed to this remaining a priority for support and funding. The Board and staff will lead on and model the change we believe we need to see.

Our work continues to be informed by the report we commissioned and published in 2019 *BAME staff experiences of academic and research libraries* which put the voices of Global Majority staff at the centre of our conversation. This research and report was designed and commissioned in order to help those of us who lead libraries to understand the lived experience of our staff from a Global Majority background.

Following its publication, SCONUL has been working on a series of initiatives to address the challenges it raised, with more details below.

2. Data on the library workforce

The report noted that we lacked proper data on the makeup of the workforce in academic and research libraries. While CILIP had captured general data on the library workforce, which demonstrated a clear lack of diversity across the sector, this did not provide the level of granularity needed to understand the picture within HE. SCONUL commissioned research to explore whether it would be possible to capture EDI information as part of the existing SCONUL benchmarking statistics, the report on which is available here: https://www.sconul.ac.uk/publication/sconul-equality-diversity-and-inclusion-benchmarking-data-project. This showed that members believed they can and should capture this data and that doing so will provide an important benchmark that will support individual institutions in measuring their own progress as well as supporting the sector in fostering greater diversity.

As a result, the SCONUL statistics for the year 2022-23 included a question set on the ethnic backgrounds of the library workforce and SCONUL will be publishing the results of this set alongside the rest of the statistics in Summer 2023. This will later be followed by a review of the process.

3. New Leadership Programme scoping study launched

SCONUL is a partner in a research project commissioned to support the creation of a cross-sector Emerging Leaders programme for members of ethnically diverse communities within libraries. The work is being funded by Arts Council England and has sector representation from a number of areas, including CILIP, WHELF and SCURL. Evidence Base, based at Birmingham City University, were chosen to undertake the scoping work and a survey is being carried out amongst staff in UK public, academic and research libraries to ascertain library staff needs in this area. Please see further details from lead partner RLUK: https://www.rluk.ac.uk/emerging-leaders-prog-study/

4. Leading on Race Workshops

We have partnered with AdvanceHE to bring members subsidised development workshops on 'Leading Change on Race Equality'. The two linked workshops are designed to strengthen knowledge, skills and confidence to lead progress on race equality in college, national and university libraries. Further information is available here: https://www.sconul.ac.uk/news/leading-change-on-race-equality. SCONUL will be supporting more of these workshops in 2023. To register an interest in future workshops or for further information, please contact Jenelle Negraeff at jenelle.negraeff@sconul.ac.uk

5. Global Majority staff and allies forum

SCONUL will lead on the Global Majority staff and allies forum in 2024. The forum aims to be a safe space for Global Majority library and information professionals to exchange information about careers and key issues in the academic library and information sector, as well as a network to develop sustainable support systems. The first Forum meeting was held online in February 2021 and was open to all Global Majority staff working at SCONUL member institutions. A second meeting in September 2021 was also open to allies to attend (https://www.sconul.ac.uk/event/sconul-bame-forum). The most recent meeting was held under the auspices of Academic Libraries North in June of 2022. SCONUL will release further details on meetings later in the year.

6. Thriving in your Career Pt2, 9 June - travel and accommodation bursaries

Academic Libraries North is hosting Thriving in your Career Pt2 on Friday 9 June in Leeds with support from SCONUL, who offered several travel and accommodation bursaries to support staff who would otherwise struggle to attend.

This free face-to-face event hopes to build on the collaborative and supportive event held in June 2022, continuing the theme of how we can best thrive in our careers, whether we are looking to progress into a new role or want to develop in our current one and includes space for us to recognise the structural barriers that stand in our way. Staff from the Global Majority at all grades are encouraged to attend. The event will be held at University of Leeds and the link to register is here: https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/thriving-in-your-career-pt-2-a-face-to-face-event-for-bame-colleagues-tickets-468539061947?aff=affiliate1.

7. Sharing resources and best practice

The SCONUL Organisational Development Group previously ran a programme of webinars and developed shared resources, which helped provide a venue for discussion on meeting the challenge of fostering greater diversity in our workforce. Recordings of past sessions are available here: https://www.sconul.ac.uk/page/the-dynamic-workforce#events.

SCONUL also facilitates a meeting 3 times a year for those leading on EDI matters for regional and national library consortia. For more information, please contact Ann Rossiter at ann.rossiter@sconul.ac.uk.

UKSG

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) is a strategic priority for UKSG, and its strategic vision articulates its ambitions in this area: to ensure that the membership reflects the diversity of the global knowledge community and that activities represent all sections of that community. Providing a voice for new entrants to the sector is also a priority. In order to embed EDI within its policies, procedures, committees and activities, UKSG has recently initiated an EDI audit of the organisation and its activities with an external consultant to establish baseline data and recommend priority areas for action. Please contact Bev Acreman, Executive Director (bev@uksg.org) or Joanna Ball, Chair (joanna@doaj.org) for more information. More on this can be found here.