

News

SCONUL Library Design Award 2025

The winners of the SCONUL Library Design Awards 2025 were announced at the SCONUL Autumn Conference on 19 November. Congratulations go to London South Bank University, winner of the service design category, and to Lancaster University, winner of the library spaces category. The Victoria & Albert Museum and University of Limerick both received highly commended recognition for their library spaces.

[Read more](#)

Case studies on libraries' contributions to delivering the UN Sustainable Development Goals

SCONUL published *Agents for change: Libraries and the UN Sustainable Development Goals* at its Autumn Conference on 19 November. University libraries play an important role in supporting the success of their institutions directly through their contribution to teaching, learning and research missions, but also through a range of activities which bring wider societal benefit. One way in which this has been measured in recent years is through contributions to the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). This report showcases the role of academic libraries across the UK and Ireland in advancing institutional missions aligned with the UN SDGs. The collection of 21 case studies offers powerful and inspiring examples of libraries as partners for sustainable and equitable development. [Read more](#)

Academic Libraries and Learning Technologies CIG meeting, 3 December

SCONUL's Academic Libraries and Learning Technologies CIG will meet on 3 December at 11.00hrs. This meeting will explore the use of AI for teaching, learning and assessment, and challenges of promoting active in online sessions. Attendees will hear from Elaine Harison, University of Aberdeen and David Callaghan, Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine. The webinar will be held in an interactive format, with break-out rooms whereby speakers will share their experiences and invite discussions. All participants will have equal exposure to all the topics. For registration details, please email sconul@sconul.ac.uk.

SCONUL and Manchester Public Libraries screening: The Librarians, 4 December

Join colleagues for an evening of discussion and networking in Manchester on 4 December from 17.45 at the School of Digital Arts (SODA) cinema, 14 Higher Chatham Street, M15 6ED. SCONUL and Manchester Public Libraries are hosting a joint event which includes the screening of *The Librarians*, a documentary following a group of embattled librarians fighting for intellectual freedom amidst an unprecedented wave of book banning across America. The screening will be followed by a panel discussion and Q&A facilitated by Katy Woolfenden, SCONUL Board member and Deputy University Librarian and Director of Education, Experience and Strategic Insights, University of Manchester. Panel members include Neil MacInnes, Strategic Lead for Libraries, Galleries and Culture at Manchester City Council, Alex Wheeler, Academic Liaison Librarian and Tutor (Library and Information Management) and Rachel Beckett, Co-Chair of SCONUL and Director of Library and Cultural Services, Manchester Metropolitan University. There will also be the opportunity for further discussion and network with colleagues afterwards at the

Salutation Pub. This event is open to all – friends and family are very welcome to join us. Tickets are free but you need to register to attend as seats are limited: <https://buytickets.at/sconul/1963688>. [Read more](#)

AI and Information literacy CIG meeting, 9 December

SCONUL's AI and information literacy CIG will be holding a meeting on 9 December at 14.00hrs when the discussion will be centred around how attendees are dealing with AI literacy support at their own places of work and how we might best collect and share good practice in this area. Callum Perry, Academic and Teaching Partner at the University of East Anglia, will give a presentation on his work around AI literacies and critical thinking. The meeting is open to all, whatever your role or level of expertise, and we welcome the sharing of different perspectives and practices. For registration details, please email

sconul@sconul.ac.uk

Moving the dial on OER in the UK and Ireland: SCONUL OER CoP webinar, 22 January

Join colleagues from across the UK on 22 January from 14.00 – 15.30hrs to hear the latest developments with the OER Community of Practice for the UK and Ireland and to hear from libraries and academics who will share current best practice in the sector. This webinar will also highlight solutions and discuss how SCONUL libraries can get more involved in driving OER initiatives in their libraries. We'll also identify demand and willingness for participation from institutions for future work. We will hear from: Barb Thees, Director of Community Engagement at Open Education Network who will provide an update on the Community of Practice; Irene Barranco Garcia, Copyright and Scholarly Communications Librarian at Imperial College London and Celine Peignen, Head Librarian at Technological University of the Shannon who will share their experiences of OERs in their libraries; Academic OER authors Professor Jan Grabowski from University of Lancaster and Dr Alex Best from University of Sheffield; Darrin Sabourin, Account Executive at Pressbooks on getting started with publishing; and Sue Hodgson, Strategic Advisor, Content Strategy at Sylla. For registration details, please email sconul@sconul.ac.uk.

SCONUL AI coffee morning, 30 January

SCONUL's AI coffee mornings will take a break for the festive holidays, and the next one will be on Friday 30 January at 10am. For registration details, please email sconul@sconul.ac.uk. SCONUL's AI coffee mornings brings together those with an interest in AI developments within libraries on the last Friday of every month. SCONUL members can access recordings and resources at:

<https://www.sconul.ac.uk/knowledge-hub/ai/ai-coffee-mornings/past-ai-coffee-mornings/>

Controlled Digital Lending webinar, 12 February

Join colleagues from SCONUL, RLUK and Jisc to find out how controlled digital lending can support access to content not otherwise available in digital format, enabling libraries to provide accessible and inclusive readings to students, provide remote access to special collections or to supply out of commerce works. We will hear from Jane Secker and Chris Morrison, authors of the report [*Controlled digital lending in UK higher education: a landscape review*](#) which offers a follow-up to the briefing paper published by Jisc, SCONUL and RLUK in 2024, [*Controlled digital lending \(CDL\) in UK higher education: a Jisc briefing for libraries*](#). The latest report builds on earlier work to assess the current state of controlled digital lending (CDL) in UK academic libraries. Data gathered in spring 2025 through a national survey of 58 institutions, interviews with seven institutions, one vendor and a consortium solution provider underpin the report. It considers the status of CDL implementation in academic libraries, the use cases driving adoption, technical requirements for implementation and currently available solutions. The report also

considers the benefits, costs, barriers and legal implications of CDL, whilst concluding with some practical recommendations for institutions and library leaders as well as for Jisc, SCONUL, RLUK and other sector-level bodies. The webinar will take place on 12 February 2026 from 11.00 – 12.30hrs. For registration details, please email sconul@sconul.ac.uk.

The Future of the Systems Librarian CIG meetings 2026

The next three meetings of the Future of the Systems Librarian CIG will each explore current themes in system librarianship. The group officers welcome and invite contributions or suggestions from anyone who would like them to address particular topics – please [get in touch!](#)

Session 1: Challenges and opportunities for systems librarians, 20 January, 11:00 –12:30hrs

Presenters talking about current developments in systems librarianship with time for questions and discussion.

- Nicolas Moretto, Library Digital Services Manager, Royal Holloway University of London – Reflections on entering a HE library systems role, and some tips for early success.
- Natalie Wakefield, Librarian (Discovery and Access Systems), University of Nottingham – Talking about implementing systems at overseas campuses

Session 2: People, recruitment, and progression, 30 April, 13:00-14:30hrs

To include a further look at the name of the Systems Librarian – is this still the most relevant name for the role?

- Matt Cox, Head of Content Delivery and Discovery, Anglia Ruskin University – Reflections on a 5-year challenge to recruit a Systems Librarian
- Sue Egleton, University Librarian, University of Reading – Looking at entry level roles

Session 3: Different ways of working, 17 September, 13:30– 15:00hrs

Looking at how the role can sit outside the library and how this can work effectively. Also reflecting on the importance and visibility of the role.

For registration details, please email sconul@sconul.ac.uk

Business Intelligence CIG meeting, 4 February

Members of the SCONUL community are warmly invited to the first meeting of the Business Intelligence Community of Interest Group on Thursday 4 February, 10.00–11.30hrs. The group is taking forward the work of the Library Analytics CIG and is open to anyone interested in using data to improve library services, irrespective of role or level of experience. The aim of the group is to offer you a welcoming space to grow your skills, capability and confidence in working with data, tools and technologies. You will have the chance to explore creative and accessible approaches to communicating with data to tell clear stories to different audiences and support better decision making. The group will offer a safe and supportive space to test and share ideas, learn from one another and explore engaging approaches to turning data into insights and action. For the first meeting we'll feature short, practical presentations from three institutions showcasing how they use and communicate data analytics using different Library Management Systems, followed by time for discussion and questions. The speakers will be Michael Whitton, University of Southampton, on OCLC; Will Peaden, Coventry University, on Primo; and Phil Adams, De Montfort University, on Folio. After attending this session, you will have gained a greater understanding of how library data can be used for analytics using tools like Power BI. There will also be

time for group discussions on current issues, and to explore topics for future meetings. For registration details, please email sconul@sconul.ac.uk.

Leading and developing AI services and teams webinar recording

The SCONUL AI working group hosted a webinar on 13 November, focussing on libraries leading the development and integration of AI tools. Attendees heard from Gary Elliott-Cirigottis, Director of Library and Knowledge Services at the Open University and Ciaran Talbot, Director of Artificial Intelligence and Ideas Adoption at University of Manchester Library, who presented on strategies for digital transformation, collaboration, and training in adopting AI technologies. Key discussions included the evolving role of libraries in the digital landscape, resource constraints, ethical concerns, and the importance of positioning libraries as central hubs for knowledge management. SCONUL members can access the recording and presentations here: <https://www.sconul.ac.uk/knowledge-hub/ai/leading-and-developing-ai-services-and-teams-webinar/>.

SCONUL Autumn conference 2025 presentations

On 19 November over 130 SCONUL members gathered in Birmingham to focus on *Library Transformation: people and place*. The keynote, on *Digital and AI Transformation in the HKU Libraries*, was delivered by Flora Ng, Chief Information Officer and University Librarian, The University of Hong Kong. There were sessions on driving digital transformation and creating vision and motivation within libraries, as well as workshops on the evolution of hybrid working; on effective collaboration for shared services and on Jisc's new Digital Transformation Library Lens. [Read more](#)

Uncovering open resources

A pilot programme led by Jisc and Sylla is helping universities find sustainable, UK-relevant open educational resources that cut costs, support custom content, and advance open access goals. Sylla is a tech company helping libraries and academics discover and use OER and open access (OA) content. Using AI, Sylla maps open materials at a granular level to textbooks, reading lists, modules, learning outcomes and entire curricula. Participating universities are testing Sylla's platform to find and integrate OER into their courses while providing useful feedback to Sylla to help refine the discovery tool, for real-world academic use. [Read more](#)

CILIP seeks members for new Intellectual Freedom Committee

CILIP is seeking founding committee members for its new Intellectual Freedom Committee which will launch in early 2026. At a time when issues of free expression, censorship, and access to information are increasingly contested, this committee will play an important national role in championing the public's right to read, think and speak freely. Chaired by Dr David McMenemy, Reader in Information Studies at the University of Glasgow, the committee will bring together eight experts from across the sector. Its purpose is to provide strategic leadership on matters of intellectual freedom and to support those working across all library, knowledge, data and information services, including public, school, academic, health, government, legal and prison sectors. Cilip are looking for five experts to join the committee for a three-year term, with four virtual meetings per year. Expressions of interest are welcome from individuals who demonstrate a strong commitment to intellectual freedom, who can take a broad and inclusive view of the profession, and who are willing to engage constructively in complex or contested discussions. Strategic thinking, good communication skills and a collaborative approach are all valuable. Previous

committee experience is not essential, as full induction and ongoing support will be provided. Deadline for applications is 18 December. [Read more](#)

Behind the scenes at SCONUL

Thank you to everyone who has put themselves forward for membership of one of SCONUL's working groups - we're delighted with the levels of interest we've had. The new groups include the Shared Services Task and Finish group and our groups looking at EDI and Climate change and sustainability. We'll be arranging initial meetings for each of these in the coming weeks and look forward to them starting their work in the new year.

We've also been working with our colleagues internationally (in the US, Canada, New Zealand and Europe) to test our findings on proposed changes to the [HE Reference Models](#) and have had a positive reception to date, which we hope will mean these changes will be adopted internationally.

Many thanks to everyone on the SCONUL team who made our conference last month such a success with over 130 sector leaders in attendance. The team is now busy working on our events programme for 2026 with conferences planned for Spring and Autumn. In the meantime, we hope everyone involved in the community has a wonderful and restful break over Christmas and the new year.

Making the most of your SCONUL membership

- [Sign up to lis-sconul](#) to participate in discussions with your peers as well as hear about news and events.
- [Join](#) the SCONUL community on [LinkedIn](#).
- [Register](#) to access all the resources on the SCONUL website.
- [SCONUL mentoring scheme](#) supporting emerging and newly appointed leaders.
- [Join](#) a SCONUL [Directors or Deputies Group](#).

Updates from our peer organisations:

1. Academic Libraries North <https://www.academiclibrariesnorth.ac.uk/>
2. CILIP https://www.cilip.org.uk/page/IP_news
3. CONUL <https://conul.ie/news/>
4. LIBER <https://libereurope.eu/news/>
5. M25 Consortium of Academic Libraries <https://www.m25lib.org.uk/about-the-consortium/newsletter-archive/>
6. Mercian Collaboration <https://merciancollaboration.org.uk/news>
7. RLUK <https://www.rluk.ac.uk/rluk-bulletin/>
8. SCURL <https://www.scurl.ac.uk/news>
9. ucisa <https://www.ucisa.ac.uk/News-and-Views>
10. WHELF <https://whelf.ac.uk/>

Appointments and job opportunities

If you have moved to a new role or institution or have any senior job opportunities that you would like us to include, please e-mail SitMui.Ng@sconul.ac.uk. These vacancies can also be found on our website at: <https://www.sconul.ac.uk/jobs-bank/current-roles/>

Appointment: Deputy University Librarian, Imperial College London

Imperial College London is pleased to announce that after an open recruitment process, Dr Alistair Morey has been appointed as Deputy University Librarian. Alistair is currently Head of Library Learning Support and Engagement at Queen Mary University of London and will take up his new post on 19 January. Alistair has great breadth of experience gained from roles across a number of UKHE institutions, as well as several years in a senior leadership role in Library Services at Queen Mary.

Vacancy: Digital Preservation Project Officer, Newcastle University

This post presents an excellent opportunity for a talented individual to join the Library's Digital Library Services team as we embark on a project to develop the University's digital preservation infrastructure. You will have opportunities to develop both your technical and team-working skills, while supporting this key strategic project involving our Special Collections and Archives team, as well as other stakeholders in the Library and the wider University. **Closing date 2 December** [Read more](#)

Vacancy: Strategic Communications Officer, Bodleian Libraries, University of Oxford

The Bodleian Libraries' Office for Strategy & Delivery is hiring a Strategic Communications Officer. The successful candidate will play an essential role in supporting strategic change and project delivery at the Bodleian Libraries. This will involve developing a comms campaign, drafting emails and newsletters about strategy updates, drafting blog posts to celebrate strategic successes, drafting information packs for managers about the strategy, facilitating consultative workshops about future strategy, and maintaining an internet presence via the Strategy Hub. **Closing date 2 December** [Read more](#)

Vacancy: Senior Library Assistant, Maynooth University

Maynooth University are seeking a Senior Library Assistant to support the work of the Library in the critical area of Collections and Content. Based in General Collections and Finance, the post holder will work closely with staff in their department, but also other departments of the Library and will report to the Assistant Librarian with Responsibility for General Collections and Finance. They will be expected to operate with minimal supervision and have the skills and knowledge to plan, manage, and track their work to ensure that deadlines are met. **Closing date 3 December** [Read more](#)

Vacancy: Science and Art Attendant, National Library of Ireland

The National Library of Ireland is seeking a Science and Art Attendant. Working as part of the NLI's Estates team and currently reporting to the Facilities Manager, Estates, the role of the Science and Art Attendant in the National Library of Ireland is to provide front of house services to visitors, ensuring an enhanced visitor experience while ensuring the safety of the visitors, collections, staff and facilities as appropriate to the role. **Closing date 5 December** [Read more](#)

Vacancy: MRC Manager and Head of Special Collections & Archives, University of Warwick

University of Warwick is seeking an MRC Manager and Head of Special Collections & Archives. As a member of the Library & Archives senior management team the post holder will lead on all aspects of strategic development and operational management and expertise relating to the Modern Record Centre (MRC), including the University Archives and Special Collections. Leading the MRC team and all aspects of the archival service the post holder will develop strategies to enhance engagement with the MRC and its collections, the management and development of both the physical and digital collections and their use to support teaching, research and community engagement. **Closing date 7 December**

[Read more](#)

Vacancy: Repository Team Leader (Enlighten Services), University of Glasgow

The Enlighten Team, within Information Services at the University of Glasgow, supports digital access to globally significant research content for the purposes of world-leading open scholarship, teaching, and learning. Reporting to the College Librarian for Scholarly Research Communications, the post holder will join the Enlighten Services Team as their Team Leader, ensuring delivery of all operational aspects of the University of Glasgow's open repositories, notably 'Enlighten: Publications', 'Enlighten: Theses', 'Enlighten: Dissertations', and 'EdShare', Glasgow's open educational resources repository. The post holder's oversight of these services will support essential operational research functions at the institution. **Closing date 11 December** [Read more](#)

Events

If you would like SCONUL to include any events that may be of interest to directors, please e-mail sconul@sconul.ac.uk.

RLUK: Embedding EDI principles in research library spaces and practices, 2 December

UKSG Forum 2025, Brighton, 3 December

Fantastic Futures 2025, London, 3-5 December

Open Access in a Time of Financial Uncertainty online seminar, 8-9 December

UKeig Annual Forum 2025, 9 December

Call for Papers: RCN Nursing Librarianship Conference 2025 'Change, react, adapt: Future-proofing nursing library services', 10 December

Bridging the AI Divide: The Future of Research Management, 11 December

AI in the HE Creative Curriculum, Liverpool Institute for Performing Arts, 8 January 2026

Copim Conference, 26-27 February 2026

Call for contributions: OxFOS 2026 Conference, 2-6 March 2026

CILIP Metadata & Discovery Group Conference 2026, Bristol, 11-13 March 2026

RLUK26 Virtual Conference, 25-27 March 2026

UKSG Annual Conference, Glasgow, 30 March-1 April 2026

LILAC 2026, Sheffield, 30 March – 1 April 2026

Call for papers: Critical Approaches to Libraries Conference (CALC) 2026

Call for papers: NAG Seminar and Forum, Nottingham, 20-21 May

18th Qualitative and Quantitative Methods in Libraries International Conference, Romania, 26 and 29 May 2026

CILIP Data Protection Conference, 3 June 2026

CILIP Online Copyright Conference, 4 June 2026

UXLibs10, York 2, 9-11 June 2026

LIBER Annual Conference, Trondheim, 1-3 July 2026