

News

New Organisational Development Knowledge Base (ODKB) now live

SCONUL's new shared service, the Organisational Development Knowledge Base (ODKB) is now live, and we are inviting members to add their data. The ODKB is a searchable database of job descriptions and organisational charts, allowing you to share and reuse information and resources quickly and easily. It will allow you to compare JDs for similar roles, including salary information, and to distinguish newly created or reviewed JDs. It will also allow you to review organisational structures for any participating member institution. We would like to thank to all of those who have contributed so far including by providing data for the pilot. Particular thanks go to Davina Omar, Director of Library Services at the University of West London who has led the development of this project. [Read more.](#)

SCONUL Content Forum, 3 November

SCONUL is bringing members together for a Content Forum focusing on developing a shared sector position on sustainable access and publishing, and on positioning libraries as strategic partners in research and education transformation. The day will include perspectives from across the sector, contributions from Jisc and senior institutional leaders, and an interactive strategy exercise exploring procurement priorities. Delegates will work through scenario-planning exercises designed to test approaches to future collection development, publishing models and national negotiations. This will be an excellent opportunity for directors and heads of content to connect, network, and help shape the future direction of the 21st-century library collection. The online forum will take place on 3 November; with the morning session from 10.00 – 12.00hrs and the afternoon session from 13.00 – 15.30hrs. Further information, including an agenda, can be found on our website [here](#).

SCONUL Autumn Conference, 13 November, Birmingham

SCONUL is pleased to announce that it is bringing members together on Friday 13 November for a one-day face-to-face conference at The Studio in Birmingham. Keynote speaker, [Dr Stephen Gow](#), Leverhulme Research Fellow – Student use of AI, at Edinburgh Napier University, will be presenting the findings of his study on student experiences of navigating the generative AI landscape in HE. The conference will focus on demonstrating and delivering value with plenary presentations, lightning talks and workshops. This will be an excellent opportunity for colleagues to connect and network. [Read more.](#)

SCONUL Technology and Markets Group seeking new members

If you are interested in the technologies, suppliers and market shifts that are shaping UK HE, the Technology and Markets Strategy Group is looking for new recruits. We are a friendly, practical group (rather than a deeply geeky one) but we do get to play in some really interesting areas: AI, specialist systems, digital content, procurement, supplier change, and the future infrastructure needed to support knowledge creation, management and curation across the sector – even internationally. While rooted in "libraries" the impacts are often much wider, which is what makes it useful, timely and worth being part of. If that sounds like your kind of thing (or you would like to "nominate" someone), please do think about joining us. For further information or to express an interest, please email ann.rossiter@sconul.ac.uk by 24 September.

Delay in issuing the question sets for the SCONUL benchmarking statistics

The SCONUL Statistical Return and Strategic Planning Set question sets for 2025–26 will be slightly delayed this year. A working group has been reviewing the current question set to ensure that it remains current. The group are currently finalising a number of changes to both the Strategic Planning Set and the main statistical return, publication of the documentation and templates. Work to complete these revisions as quickly as possible is underway and the full set will be shared with you as soon as it is ready by the end of September. At present, we do not anticipate any change to the submission deadline for the full return, which is expected to remain 31 January 2027. SCONUL would like to thank members for their patience while we complete this work. A further update will be issued once the revised materials are available.

The Future of the Systems Librarian CIG meeting, 17 September

The next meeting of the Future of the Systems Librarian Community of Interest Group (CIG), *Different ways of working*, will look at when the role sits outside the library and how this can work effectively, as well as reflecting on the importance and visibility of the role. The CIG meeting will take place on 17 September, 13:30–15:00hrs. For registration details, please email sconul@sconul.ac.uk.

SCONUL AI coffee morning, 25 September

SCONUL's first AI coffee morning of the new academic year will take place on Friday 25 September at 10am. For registration details, please email sconul@sconul.ac.uk. The coffee mornings brings together those with an interest in AI developments within libraries on the last Friday of every month. SCONUL members can register for future AI coffee mornings [here](#) and access recordings and resources [here](#).

Business Intelligence CIG meeting, 14 October

The Business Intelligence Community of Interest Group's final meeting of this year will focus on the SCONUL statistics for decision making. There will be presentations from two member institutions: Ian Chilvers, Library Systems Administrator at University of Reading, who will talk about Modelling the effect of student growth on study space within a university library, and Davina Omar, Director of Library Services at University of West London, who will discuss how they use SCONUL statistics for benchmarking and the statistics they have for different purposes across the University. The group will also be joined by co-chairs of the SCONUL Business Intelligence project group on benchmarking statistics: Sarah Thompson, Associate Director (Content and Open research) at University of York, and Ella Mitchell, Head of Library Services at Middlesex University who will give an update on the statistics review and answer any questions. The CIG meeting will take place on 14 October from 10.00–11.30hrs. For registration details, please email sconul@sconul.ac.uk.

Student AI use for discovery and its implications for libraries: Webinar 15 October

Users' deployment of AI tools has changed the way that they are engaging with academic sources. Traditional conceptions of discovery behaviour no longer fit the reality in which many students are using AI tools to guide their search for appropriate resources – including those who starting with AI generated explanations and working back to the original sources. This has significant implications for many aspects of libraries' work. This webinar will explore these questions with two sets of contributors: Meg McMahon and Amy Deschenes both at UX and Discovery, Harvard Library and Leo S Lo, Dean of Libraries and University Librarian at the University of Virginia. Amy and Meg have conducted fascinating research on how users are using library discovery services differently, including looking at how students are using AI to build their understanding. Leo has written about the development of an "answer first" behaviour by

students and has developed the CARE approach (Classify, Assess, Review, Enhance), which articulates a critical way of engaging those answers with users. The webinar is part of a SCONUL project, Digital Futures, which is exploring the library community's technology needs 5-10 years in the future, grounded in an exploration of users' needs and behaviours. Join us on 15 October from 14.00–15.30hrs, for registration details, please email sconul@sconul.ac.uk.

SCONUL Small and Specialist Institutions Forum, 5 November

SCONUL brings together this group of members to share experiences, information and best practice. It is open to all those leading SCONUL member institutions who define themselves as specialist or small and their senior teams plus invited guests. Members are also invited to suggest topics or issues to cover. Join us next on Wednesday 5 November from 10:00–11:30hrs. For registration details, please email sconul@sconul.ac.uk.

Advocacy webinar on Innovation and resilience in managing change, 10 November

SCONUL published a set of [advocacy case studies](#) highlighting how library leaders are responding creatively to the challenges facing the sector – from reorganising services to pioneering new forms of practice. Following on from this, we will be holding a webinar where three contributing institutions will expand further on their experience. We will hear from Rachel Scott Halls, Library and Archives Director at Buckinghamshire New University, who worked on improving the library service and its morale and reputation, by creating a new Library and Archives Directorate; Lesley Castens, Director of Education Services at University of Plymouth, who employed a more radical reorganisation in an attempt to develop new ways of working together in a transformed service, as a way to deal with further budget cuts; and Louise Doolan, Director of Library Services at City St George's, University of London, who navigated a merger, bringing together and consequent restructure of very different library services, systems, staff and users from City and St George's universities. Join us on 10 November from 14:00–15:30hrs, for registration details, please email sconul@sconul.ac.uk.

Engaging with the HE Reference Models, 25 November

This third webinar in the series on the HE Reference Models will provide an opportunity to hear from SCONUL members who have successfully engaged with the use of the models within their institution and to explore how these can be to support the library's engagement with the institutional leaders and to advocate for the library. This webinar will take place on 25 November from 14:00–15:30hrs. For registration details, please email sconul@sconul.ac.uk.

Recordings and resources from the previous two webinars in this series are available:

- [Everything you wanted to know about the HE Reference Models but were afraid to ask](#)
- [HE Reference Models as a tool for institutional transformation](#)

If you don't yet have access to the HERMS documentation and would like a copy, please contact the SCONUL team at sconul@sconul.ac.uk.

SCONUL Mentoring Scheme

SCONUL's mentoring scheme supports emerging and newly appointed leaders, by partnering them with more experienced colleagues, who can guide them in their professional growth. The scheme is seeking mentors and mentees from across SCONUL who want to be a part of this highly valued scheme. Click [here](#) to discover more about how the scheme works. Information on becoming a mentor and how to apply can be found [here](#). If you would like to sign up as a mentee you can find further information [here](#).

2025 Korean Academic Library statistics benchmarked against SCONUL ALS 2023-24

The Korea Education and Research Information Service (KERIS) has produced its 2025 University Library Survey Analytics Report. The comparative results between SCONUL and Korea have been extracted (please note that the translation has been done by ChatGPT) and SCONUL members can access the report [here](#).

RPF Individual Survey closing date extended

The Research Professional Futures (RPF) individual survey has extended its closing date to Friday 18 September. Some interesting findings are already emerging:

- nearly a third of respondents are the only person undertaking this role in their institution;
- the top skill which respondents find most valuable in their roles is communication; and
- over 40% of respondents are using AI occasionally for specific tasks.

RPF particularly want to hear from colleagues working in Library, collection and research information services roles. These professions play a critical role in supporting the research lifecycle, and it is important that their experiences, expertise and perspectives are represented in the project findings. If you work in one of these areas, we encourage you to take part in the survey and share it with colleagues across your professional community. The survey, developed and delivered by Research Consulting, takes approximately 30 minutes to complete: <https://survey.alchemer.eu/s3/91122368/RPF-survey-2026>. To keep up to date with project developments, events and opportunities to contribute, visit the [RPF website](#), join the mailing list and follow the project on [LinkedIn](#).

Green Libraries Week, 21-28 October 2026

Green Libraries Week led by CILIP is the annual opportunity to celebrate libraries across all sectors with a focus on the climate and sustainability. The theme for this year is Climate Facts for a greener future: Navigating mis – and disinformation in libraries. Get planning with your green events, use our range of resources available & get featured on the 2026 map this year. Posters and social media assets are available to download now from CILIP's campaign page. Share your events and activities with #GreenLibraries. For resources to promote your green plans, visit www.cilip.org.uk/GreenLibrariesWeek

New UK Minister for Science and Intellectual Property

Chris McDonald MP has been confirmed as the new Minister with responsibility for intellectual property. This follows his appointment as Minister of State (Minister for Science, Innovation and Investment) jointly in the Department for Health and Social Care and the Department for Business, Innovation, Science and Trade (BIST) in July 2026.

Behind the scenes at SCONUL

We're delighted to announce that Trudy Turner has been appointed interim SCONUL Deputy Director for six months from 1 September and will be working closely with the Director across the breadth of our work programme.

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/events/>
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: University Librarian and Director of Library Services at RCSI, University of Medicine and Health Sciences

Andrew Simpson has been appointed Director of Library Services at RCSI, University of Medicine and Health Science. He has served as Associate Librarian for Education, Research and Clinical Support at RCSI since January 2017. Andrew has spent his career in healthcare and university libraries, previously working at the Universities of Southampton and Portsmouth. A graduate of the University of Sheffield, he holds a Master's degree in Information and Library Studies from Aberystwyth University and is a Chartered Member of CILIP, the Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals.

Vacancy: Director of Library, Archives and Learning Services & University Librarian, University of York

The University of York seeks an experienced senior leader to guide the Library, Archives and Learning Services (LALS). Overseeing campus libraries and the Borthwick Institute for Archives, you will drive strategic vision, advance digital transformation and open scholarship, curate world-class collections, and

enrich the student learning experience. You will possess proven experience managing large teams and multi-million-pound budgets, alongside expertise in digital tools and scholarly communications. Join a Russell Group university dedicated to the public good in a historic, vibrant city. University of York particularly welcomes applications from Black, Asian, and Minority Ethnic candidates. **Closing date 6 September** [Read more](#)

Vacancy: Liaison Librarian, University of Cambridge

University of Cambridge is seeking to appoint a Liaison Librarian. This role will support library services across Cambridge West, with particular responsibility for Computer Science and Technology (CST) and Chemical Engineering and Biotechnology (CEB). **Closing date 6 September** [Read more](#)

Vacancy: National Open Research Forum Manager IReL, Maynooth University

As the convenor of the National Open Research Forum (NORF), IReL is seeking to appoint a National Open Research Forum Manager. The appointee will provide strategic leadership on the open research agenda in Ireland and oversee and facilitate cooperation among stakeholders to support the implementation of the National Action Plan for Open Research 2022–2030. **Closing date 6 September** [Read more](#)

Vacancy: Liaison Librarian (Veterinary and pre-clinical Medicine), University of Cambridge

University of Cambridge are looking for a Liaison Librarian to join their team and work closely with colleagues and academics across the School of Biological Sciences, Cambridge. The postholder will lead engagement with departments supporting the Pre-clinical Medical and Veterinary Medicine Tripos (MVST). This varied role combines teaching, collection management, and relationship-building to support learning, teaching, and research across the School of Biological Sciences (SBS). **Closing date 7 September** [Read more](#)

Vacancy: Head of Operations, Open Book Collective

The Open Book Collective is seeking a highly organised, proactive Head of Operations to help lead the day-to-day running of their growing organisation. Working closely with the Managing Director, you will ensure that their operations are efficient, the team is supported, and projects and grants are well managed. This is a part time, fully remote role, with a working pattern that can fit around other responsibilities. **Closing date 9 September** [Read more](#)

Vacancy: Customer Services Information Assistant, Royal College of Nursing

Royal College of Nursing are currently advertising for a Customer Services Information Assistant post on a fixed term contract until 31 March 2027. This varied role covers fielding front line enquiries, providing tours, and supporting long running and short-term library projects. **Closing date 13 September** [Read more](#)

Vacancy: Assistant Librarian, House of Lords

The House of Lords Library is seeking to appoint an Assistant Librarian. Based on the Parliamentary Estate in Westminster, this role will involve working with acquisitions, cataloguing, collection care, and reference desk work. Applicants need to have a CILIP accredited degree or postgraduate qualification in a Library and Information Science related discipline or demonstrable equivalent knowledge and experience. **Closing date 13 September** [Read more](#)

Vacancy: Interim Hive Library Manager, University of Worcester

University of Worcester are currently advertising for a one-year maternity leave cover for their Hive Library Services Manager. The Hive is a fully integrated academic and public library, run in partnership with Worcestershire County Council, which provides services to all members of the University and community. An ability and commitment to liaise and build strong working relationships with multiple partners is essential. Principal responsibilities will be to provide support and management for Library Team Leaders, act as a point of escalation for front of house staff and lead implementation of the integrated service plan ensuring the needs of both partners are met. **Closing date 15 September** [Read more](#)

Vacancy: Senior Library Assistant (Cataloguing), Trinity College Cambridge

Trinity College wishes to appoint a full-time, fixed-term (1 year from October 2026) Senior Library Assistant (Cataloguing) to lead on the cataloguing of the Library's modern monograph stock, and classification of this material into the Library's in-house schemes. The role-holder will also assist with reclassification work and ordering of new materials for the Library. The Senior Library Assistant (Cataloguing) will be a front-line member of staff and work directly with library users (students, Fellows and external readers) on a daily basis. **Closing date 23 September** [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.

CILIP Rare Books and Special Collections Group conference, Cambridge, 9-11 September

Book bans: How can we prepare for the next 5 years?, 14 September

AI4LAM Fantastic Futures 2026: Trust in the Loop, Washington, 15-17 September

OpenFest 2026 on Open Research: People and Place, Sheffield, 15-18 September

Transforming Local Libraries: Responding to Changing Community Needs and National Priorities, 17 September

OASPA Conference on Open Access Scholarly Publishing 2026, Zagreb, 21-23 September

Beginning and Beyond: 2 views on LOD in practice: MDGS Bites no. 13, 23 September

UKeiG CPD: Artificial Intelligence - core concepts for librarians, information and knowledge professionals, 24 September

LIRG Annual General Meeting, 25 September

The European Print Initiative Collaboration conference, London, 30 September – 2 October

CILIP RPG Unconference 2026, York, 16 – 18 October

ALT Annual Conference: Learning Without Edges, Cardiff, 20–21 October

Call for speakers: Intersections: Identity, Neurodivergence, and Library & Information Work, London, 21 October

Call for papers: UKSG Online Conference 2026 – ‘Trust’, 9 November

46th Annual International Association of University Libraries (IATUL) Conference, Johannesburg, 22–23 November

Call for papers: CGUK Annual Conference, Bristol, 27 November

UKSG Online Conference 2026 – Trust, 30 November – 3 December

Call for papers: RLUK27 Conference, Belfast, 10–12 March 2027