News

November 2026

News

SCONUL Autumn Conference: Leading Libraries in a Changing World: Value, Trust and Transformation, 13 November, Birmingham

Academic and research libraries face rapid change driven by generative AI, evolving expectations, pressure to demonstrate value, and wider questions about trust and the role of institutions. The SCONUL Autumn Conference will bring library leaders together to consider how the sector can respond with confidence and purpose. Dr Stephen Gow will present findings from his study of UK students' experiences of generative AI, alongside sessions on articulating library value and supporting truth and democracy. Join us in Birmingham on 13 November to engage with evidence, emerging practice and colleagues from across the sector. Read more.

Microsoft education changes: webinar 5 November

Microsoft are introducing a set of changes to their education offer which is likely to have implications for libraries. Jisc is holding an initial briefing with Microsoft on 5 November (16.00 – 17.00) which will set out what is changing and provide an opportunity to ask questions. This is open to library teams to attend, and you can register here. SCONUL will be following this with a webinar later in the month exploring in more detail the implications for libraries, further details will be available shortly.

SCONUL Invitation to tender: The view from above

SCONUL is inviting proposals to undertake research exploring how senior leaders in UK and Irish higher education and research institutions now perceive the strategic value and leadership of their libraries, and what has changed since 2017. leading to a published report with practical recommendations. We would welcome proposals from consultants, researchers and organisations with experience of qualitative research and a good understanding of higher education, libraries or leadership development. Key dates:

- Clarification questions by 6 November 2026
- Proposals due by 16 November 2026
- Fieldwork from January to March 2027, with the final report due in April 2027

The full brief can be found here: *SCONUL Invitation to tender: The view from above*. Please send proposals and questions to Ann Rossiter, Executive Director, at ann.rossiter@sconul.ac.uk.

SCONUL Technology Survey 2026 Now Open

We have launched the Technology Survey 2026. Building on the successful 2024 survey, it will help members understand the library technology landscape and to make informed procurement decisions, as well as providing strategic sector insights on the use and value of library technologies. A key focus for 2026 is artificial intelligence, with questions exploring how libraries are adopting, governing and managing AI technologies, and how AI is shaping services, workflows and decision-making. The survey covers a broad range of library technologies and relies on contributions from colleagues across institutions to provide an up-to-date picture of opportunities and challenges across the sector. The deadline for responses is 15 January 2027. The findings will be launched at the SCONUL Spring Conference on 30 April 2027. For further information, please contact sconul@sconul.ac.uk.

Organisational Development Knowledge Base (ODKB) Update

The Organisational Development Knowledge Base now contains data from 50 institutions, including around 600 job descriptions and 40 organisational charts. Thank you to everyone who has contributed. To make the resource more useful across the sector, please upload job descriptions and organisational charts if your institution is able to share them. If you cannot contribute at present, contact ann.rossiter@sconul.ac.uk and we will follow up at a suitable time. Read more.

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

SCONUL has 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. At our 10 November webinar you can hear directly from the contributors: Rachel Scott Halls, (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 (formerly University of Plymouth) who employed a more radical reorganisation in an attempt to develop new ways of working together in a transformed service; and Louise Doolan (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.

SCONUL AI coffee morning, 27 November

SCONUL's next AI coffee morning will take place on Friday 27 November at 10am where the conversation will be around AI and cataloguing. We will hear from Hannes Lowagie, Head of Bibliographic Information Agency at the Royal Library of Belgium. Hannes oversees cataloguing processes and ensures metadata quality and his current focus is on integrating AI into cataloguing workflows and applying RDA and international cataloguing standards. 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.

AI and Information Literacy CIG: User insights and evaluations on AI and digital skills, 9 December

Join the next meeting of SCONUL's AI and Information Literacy Community of Interest Group where we will be discussing user insights and evaluations on AI tools and skills and will hear from speakers that have been capturing student and staff user voices and experiences, their reflections and the impact this is having on their approaches to AI in their own contexts. If you have examples of user insights, methods used to capture insights or examples of how you have used insights to influence your approaches to AI and Information Literacies, please contact Anna Richards, Callum Perry or Ella Mitchell, who can support you to share your experiences at this session. The CIG meeting will take place on 9 December at 9am. For registration details, please email sconul@sconul.ac.uk.

Engaging with the HE Reference Models webinar postposed

We have had to postpone the third webinar in the series on the HE Reference Models due to speaker availability. This will be rearranged and 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. A revised date will be confirmed in due course, 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 Spring Conference 2027

SCONUL's Spring conference will take place on Friday 30 April 2027 at The Royal College of Physicians in London. The conference will explore digital transformation including the latest developments in AI, and will include the launch of the new SCONUL Library Technology Survey Report. We will also be hosting a live AI Coffee morning. More details will follow, but we look forward to welcoming members to a forward-looking, sector-shaping discussion on technology, AI and digital futures.

Advancing Long-Form Open Access Project – Research Reports and Next Steps

SCONUL, ARMA and RLUK, with funding from UKRI, commissioned Information Power to research the current state of long-form open access (OA) in the UK. The reports are now available: *Part One – Ambition, Capacity and Practice in 2026* - A snapshot of long-form OA in the UK in summer 2026. *Part Two – Qualitative Research: Focus Groups, Survey and Recommendations* - Findings from focus groups and a survey conducted between May and July 2026. The project aims to support the sector in responding to the challenges and opportunities of long-form OA. The research reports show that descriptive content already exists and there is a need for more practical tools to support decision-making and strategy development. The next phase of the Advancing Long-Form Open Access project will begin with a strategy tool workshop on 10 November, followed shortly afterwards by the release of the tool itself. This stage of the project represents an important opportunity to translate research findings into practical action and support evidence-based decision-making across the sector. Stakeholders are encouraged to contribute to the development of the tools and resources that will help advance long-form open access. Further updates on workshops, resources and opportunities to get involved will be shared in the coming months.

UK Print Book Collection celebrates first birthday

The UK Print Book Collection (UK PBC) held a virtual event on Wednesday 14 October to celebrate its first birthday and to explore how it is transforming the way libraries safeguard access to scarce print monographs. This national collaboration, supported by SCONUL, RLUK, Jisc and the British Library, coordinates retention activity across the sector to ensure that at least seven libraries hold a copy of each print book. Powered by the National Bibliographic Knowledgebase (NBK), it gives libraries the confidence to make informed space and collections management decisions without risking long-term access.
The session showcased case studies from member libraries on UK PBC is working in practice and how it can benefit both institutions and the wider library community. The event also heard the latest programme updates and participation figures and answered audience questions on how libraries can join the initiative and how participation can strengthen both local and national collections. A recording of this event can be found here: https://www.rluk.ac.uk/uk-print-book-collection-uk-pbc-first-birthday-celebration/
Further information about the UK PBC, including how to become a member, can be found at: https://ukpbc.uk/

Second phase of TEF consultation - all providers to undergo the same assessment process

The Office for Students (OfS) has announced the second phase of its Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) consultation: Reforms to quality regulation. Proposed changes would introduce a single mandatory quality assessment for all providers, combining minimum quality requirements with TEF ratings where institutions choose to participate. Of particular relevance to libraries and digital services, Learning Resources will become a standalone assessment criterion, covering access to physical and digital resources and learning environments. Performance will be informed directly by the NSS Learning Resources measure, with evidence expected to demonstrate equitable access for all student groups, including those studying through partner institutions and subcontracted provision. The proposals place greater emphasis on demonstrating students' actual experience rather than policies and processes, while enhanced assessments may require providers to supply evidence on learning resources and systems at short notice. The consultation also highlights expectations around academic integrity, requiring providers to show how assessment design minimises misconduct, including misuse of AI. Potential outcomes could have significant implications for student recruitment and institutional growth. Read more

TNE Consultancy: Your feedback is invited

Jisc is exploring the creation of a dedicated consultancy offer for universities looking to set up new TNE operations and those looking to review and enhance their existing TNE provision. This consultancy would support institutions with the digital considerations needed to help them minimise risk, foster culturally sensitive dialogue and support equitable provision. It would therefore align with Jisc's guidance for senior leaders - Delivering digital equity in transnational education (TNE) - covering areas such as: . strategic planning; 2. digital access, licensing and infrastructure; 3. learning, teaching and curriculum adaptation; 4. student and staff digital experience, support and induction; and 5. staff digital capability, mobility and cross-cultural readiness. The deadline for responses is 6 November, and you can find the survey here https://forms.cloud.microsoft/e/cB8N7A5GrV.

A call to suppliers: Governance and cost control for generative AI in education and research

Jisc has published a statement and briefing on generative AI, developed with Jisc's strategic groups and colleagues from across the education and research community. The statement covers transparency, institutional autonomy, sustainable business models, responsible AI deployment, and the need for institutions to retain meaningful oversight of how AI is integrated into scholarly communications and research services. At its core is a simple principle: institutions need greater control over how AI is deployed, governed and charged for. It sets out a shared set of expectations covering pricing transparency, cost control, visibility of underlying AI models, service continuity, notice of material changes, and long-term value and sustainability. Read more

Join the Jisc Digital transformation library lens new cohort 2027

Following the success of the Jisc digital transformation library lens research pilot programme, applications will open to join a new library cohort in the week of 9 November. If you would like to receive more information about the Call for proposals directly, please fill in this form . You can hear more about this opportunity at the SCONUL conference on 13 November, together with the publication of *Libraries as partners in digital transformation*, a briefing paper on the experience of the libraries that took part in pilot programme (2025-2026).

British Library sets out refocused strategy to 2032

The British Library has published its new strategy, *Growing Knowledge* (2026–2032), which sets out how it will modernise while keeping its core services free. It positions the Library as a source of trusted knowledge at a time of growing misinformation. The strategy has three priorities:

- Core services: reducing backlogs, improving discoverability, investing in digital preservation and storage, and completing the recovery from the 2023 cyber-attack.
- Researcher needs: new digital tools and spaces, and ethical, copyright-respecting use of AI.
- The next generation: building information literacy, critical thinking and AI skills.

This work is backed by a new storage facility at Boston Spa (opening in 2027), an extension at St Pancras (opening in 2032), and a plan to expand non-government income. Read more

UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) publishes new research data policy

UKRI has published its new Research Data Policy. This UKRI-wide policy updates and harmonises its expectations for responsibly managing and sharing research data so it is findable, accessible, interoperable and reusable (FAIR) and as open as possible, and as closed as necessary. It will apply to new in-scope funding opportunities from 1 April 2027. The policy aims to support: high-quality, transparent and impactful research; effective and responsible management of research data; greater consistency in expectations across UKRI; appropriate sharing and reuse of research data and other digital research outputs. UKRI will host a webinar on 25 November 2026 for researchers, research support professionals and others involved in research data management and you can register here. You can also learn about how UKRI developed the policy and implementation activities on their engagement hub. Read more

SPARC Releases Cost of Knowledge Accounting Analysis & Profitability Report

SPARC has produced a tool which allows researchers to count the investment that goes into a research article before a publisher sees it, and it shows who really pays for knowledge: the public. It shows that more than 95% of the total investment in a published article is typically made by the public before submission to a publisher. Two new independent studies from the University of Sydney Business School measure that public investment and where the returns go. They focus on the four largest academic publishers: RELX (Elsevier), Informa (Taylor & Francis), Springer Nature, and Wiley. In 2025, academic publishing earned margins of 24% to 38% at these companies. Between 2005 and 2025, the four returned US$38.8 billion to shareholders, and academic publishing contributed disproportionately to the profits that made those returns possible. Read more

COUNTER AI best practice phase two

COUNER has published its updated *Best Practice on Generative and Agentic AI usage metrics*. AI tools are an increasingly regular part of how people search for and read scholarly content. As that's happened, tracking agentic usage in a clear, consistent way has become a top priority. This new update extends COUNTER's original best practice to cover not just agentic activity on publisher platforms, but in third-party tools too. As part of this work, COUNTER has also updated its *Best Practice on Syndicated Usage*. Read more

New Report Examines Threats to Public Health Research from Federal Censorship in the US

Research Consulting, in partnership with the volunteer-led initiative #DefendResearch, has published a new report examining the impact of US federal government actions on public health research and the

implications for the wider research community. It identifies threats at system, institutional and individual level, from tampering with the research record to conditioning funding and policing what researchers can say. It also examines how researchers, institutions, libraries and other stakeholders have challenged these actions, through efforts to reverse them, replace threatened resources or refuse to comply, and sets out recommendations to start a wider, solutions-focused conversation about protecting research from censorship. While the research focuses on the United States, its findings raise important questions for the international research community, particularly regarding the role of universities, libraries, funders and professional organisations in protecting scientific independence and ensuring access to trustworthy evidence. Read more.

Call for nominations: UKeiG Jason Farradane Award 2026

Nominations are now open for the 2026 UKeiG Jason Farradane Award, which recognises outstanding, innovative and enterprising contributions to the library and information profession. Presented by the UK e-information Group (UKeiG), the award celebrates individuals or teams who have demonstrated excellence through projects, research, services or resources that have made a significant impact. Nominations are welcomed for work that promotes digital resources and services, raises the profile and value of library and information services, supports organisational goals through collaboration, advances library and information science education, or contributes to professional theory and practice. For further information, nomination guidance and submission details, visit the UKeiG website or contact info.ukeig@cilip.org.uk. Deadline for nominations is 6pm on Wednesday 18 November.

LILAC 2027 bursaries available

LILAC: The Information Literacy Conference will take place from 21-23 April 2027 at City St George's, University of London. Applications are now open for the LILAC 2027 conference bursaries. There are two types of bursaries; LILAC bursaries for under-represented groups and Local to LILAC bursaries for delegates living or working near to the LILAC conference venue. To apply for a bursary, you must be a librarian, volunteer, or information professional working in the UK. Further information about both bursary options, and the application forms, is available on the LILAC website. Closing date for applications is Friday 4 December.

CILIP Academic and Research Libraries Group seeks Co-Treasurer

Are you interested in developing your financial skills and supporting the library, information, and knowledge profession? CILIP Academic and Research Libraries Group (ARLG) is seeking a Co-Treasurer to join the committee and help ensure the effective management of its finances. This is a voluntary role, ideal for anyone looking to build skills and contribute to a professional body. Closing date for applications is 1 December. Read more

David Anderson-Evans

SCONUL was saddened to hear of the death of David Anderson-Evans, former Chair of the UUK/Guild HE Copyright Negotiating and Advisory Committee (CNAC), who passed away in October. David officially retired from Universities UK in the early 2000s but continued to work with the organisation as a consultant, stepping down from that role only last April, at the age of 84. Further details, including information about the funeral or memorial service, will be shared when confirmed.

UK and Ireland Libraries EDI update

SCONUL facilitates the Libraries EDI Coordinating Group, which serves as a forum to share information on EDI related activity across the participating organisations. The group meets three times a year and produces a news update for the community following each meeting. You can find the latest October newsletter and previous ones here.

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.

Interim and project roles

SCONUL keeps a list of consultants working with the library sector. We are also sometimes asked about people interested in project roles or interim positions and we are setting up a list of those interested in such opportunities. If you have colleagues or contacts who may be interested, please do ask them to send their details to SCONUL (sconul@sconul.ac.uk) specifying the kind of opportunities they would be interested in, plus their contact details and LinkedIn reference if available.

Behind the scenes at SCONUL

SCONUL's Content Forum, held last week, has taken an in-depth look at the sector's requirements for the next round of Big 5 journal negotiations and SCONUL's Content Strategy Group will be working with Jisc on these issues in the coming months. We are also in discussion with Jisc on the potential impact of the Microsoft licence changes for libraries and will be sharing more information with the sector as it becomes available.

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 and partner 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. Designing Libraries: https://designinglibraries.org.uk/news/newsletters/
5. LIBER https://libereurope.eu/news/
6. M25 Consortium of Academic Libraries https://www.m25lib.org.uk/events/

7. Mercian Collaboration https://merciancollaboration.org.uk/news
8. RLUK https://www.rluk.ac.uk/rluk-bulletin/
9. SCURL https://www.scurl.ac.uk/news
10. ucisa https://www.ucisa.ac.uk/News-and-Views
11. 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/

Vacancy: Research Outputs Manager, Oxford Brookes University

Oxford Brookes University are seeking to appoint a Research Outputs Manager. The post holder will be responsible for managing and developing Oxford Brookes' institutional repository service. They will oversee key workflows designed to ensure that research outputs comply with university policies, funder open access mandates, requirements of the REF, and legal and ethical standards. The role will be based at the Headington campus, report to the Research & Infrastructure Lead, and collaborate closely with colleagues across the University who support researchers. **Closing date 8 November** Read more

Vacancy: Research Institute Administrator, University of Cambridge

The Cambridge University Library Research Institute is recruiting a Research Institute Administrator. This new post will play a vital role in supporting and developing collections-led research at the University of Cambridge Libraries and Archives. The post holder will coordinate the administration of the Institute by contributing to its portfolio of research projects, events programme and general running. **Closing date 8 November** Read more

Vacancy: Open Research Manager, University of Limerick

The University of Limerick Library is currently recruiting for an Open Research Manager. The successful candidate will have responsibility for managing UL's institutional Open Access Service, including UL's Institutional Repository team. They will provide strategic leadership for the development, delivery, and continuous improvement of open research and open access services. The role will support academic and research staff to understand, adopt, and embed open research practices in line with university policies, funder requirements, and international standards. Working collaboratively with faculties, professional services, library colleagues, and external partners, the postholder will lead service innovation, policy implementation, advocacy, training, and researcher engagement, ensuring that UL researchers receive expert, practical, and timely support across the research lifecycle. **Closing date 12 November** Read more

Vacancy: Eresources Advisor, Edinburgh Napier University

Edinburgh Napier University is seeking appoint an Eresources Advisor. The post holder will have the opportunity to work across a range of library systems and platforms, helping to ensure the electronic collections are easy to find and access. This role combines operational responsibility with opportunities to identify enhancements, influence service development, and bring colleagues together around shared expertise. **Closing date 24 November** 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.

UKRN Open Research webinar series 2026-27

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

Jisc digital research community meet up: Rights retention policies for long form, 11 November

Bibliotherapy: reading that heals - practices of support and recovery in times of war, 11 November

Office for Students and Advance HE: AI in higher education: next steps for the sector, 16 November

UKSG Understanding Resource Discovery of Digital Collections online seminar 2026, 17-18 November

CILIP Rewired Online Conference 2026, 19 November

Mapping Diamond Open Access Journals: Emerging Findings from a Nationwide Study of the U.S. Scholarly Publishing Landscape, 19 November

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

Westminster HE Forum: Next steps for knowledge exchange in higher education and research in England, 23 November

NLISN: Divergent Minds in the Archive, 23 November

LERU Talks: As open as possible, as secure as needed, 23 November

UKRI Research Data Policy webinar, 25 November

UKRN: Open Research: moving from individual recommendations to coordinated action – part 2, 26 November

CGUK Annual Conference, Bristol, 27 November

Historic Libraries Forum Conference, Oxford, 27 November

CILIP North East: Holistic, tailored, and meaningful: Reimagining skills development, 2 December

Call for Papers: Nursing Librarianship Conference 2026, 2 December

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

Westminster HE Forum: Freedom of speech and academic freedom in higher education - practice, regulation and next steps, 19 January 2027

Critical Digital Archives: Travel, Translation, Transformation, London, 21-22 January 2027

21st International Digital Curation Conference, Lisbon, 9–12 February 2027

House of Commons Library Open Day 2027, London, 17 February 2027

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

Call for presentations: LILAC 2027, London, 21-23 April 2027

Call for papers and save the date: Critical Approaches to Libraries Conference (CALC) 2027, w/c 10 May 2027

UXLibs 2027, Oxford, 15-17 June 2027

LIBER Annual Conference 2027, Colchester, 30 June - 2 July 2027