

SCONUL Shared Services Development Plan 2013-18

Vision

In 2018 SCONUL libraries enjoy the benefits of a number of new shared and collaborative services which have reduced costs and increased quality. Some are major national services with international partners; some are on a more modest scale, but equally valuable. They are community owned, although most of them are not community delivered.

SCONUL has worked with its strategic partners to devise, develop and deliver these services in a long term programme, many of which have made a contribution towards the realisation of the national digital library. This has built up trust and confidence and has developed the skills of the academic library community in governing, managing and operating shared services.

Background and Recent Major Shared Services Initiatives

Libraries have a long tradition of effective collaboration and sharing of services of which document delivery/inter library loans are a longstanding example. UK academic libraries have collaborated in developing services such as the SCONUL Access scheme (which enables researchers, academic staff and certain categories of students to visit and borrow from over 170 higher education libraries in the UK and Ireland) and the NESLi initiative for licensing online journals (with an estimated £40m savings for libraries since its inception in 2004).

The genesis of the current SCONUL initiative in collaborative and shared services is a Jisc and SCONUL jointly commissioned library management systems study in 2007 which reported in the spring of 2008. This led to a successful bid for funding from HEFCE for a shared services feasibility study in library management services and related systems. The work established the appetite for shared services and in late 2009 SCONUL developed a strong business case for a shared service focused on the licensing and management of electronic content, integrated with a total library management and services platform. Reductions in Government funding for HEFCE shortly after the submission of the business case meant that there was insufficient funding to develop the project further.

SCONUL continued to work with the Jisc to refine the business case and developed the scope for a more limited service. As a result in early 2011 modest pump priming funding was secured from the HEFCE Universities Modernisation Fund for the development of a shared electronic resources management service. Jisc Collections were subsequently engaged to develop the service and KB+ phase one was finally launched in September 2012 with funding secured for phase two development. In parallel, SCONUL worked closely with the Jisc in developing an innovation programme for library management systems which resulted in a number of small, but successful, pathfinder projects. International interest in these activities has led to a joint programme with the Kuali Foundation in the US, partially funded by the Mellon Foundation. The GOKb programme has an emphasis on community managed data for electronic content at an international level.

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All of these activities are in the context of an existing number of large scale shared services enjoyed by SCONUL members delivered by its strategic partners. Examples include the general negotiation and licensing support activities of Jisc Collections, the UK Access Management Federation for providing access to licensed resources, the national data centres at EDINA and MIMAS, Copac (enabled by RLUK) and SUNCAT.

Principles

- The focus of SCONUL is on shared services at UK level and co-ordinating regional activities to ensure that expertise and experience are shared and to minimise duplication
- Shared services will be devised, developed and delivered in partnership
- Shared services will be community owned (although not necessarily community delivered)
- Most shared services will be planned in consultation with the SCONUL strategy groups
- SCONUL will not normally deliver the service
- There are different scales and shapes of shared services, all of which have a place in bringing benefits to SCONUL members:
 - some highly ambitious (where developing them to embedded production services has a long delivery timeline);
 - some smaller, possibly of a pathfinder variety;
 - some involve a large number of institutions, some a small number
 - some organised regionally, some nationally, some beyond geographic boundaries
- Shared services will be underpinned by standards where possible – internationally recognised ones where available
- SCONUL's emphasis will be building on existing activities/ partnerships as these are more likely to have already generated the high levels of trust which are the foundation upon which effective shared services can be built
- Shared services will be developed with the international context in mind, including ability to scale up or interface with similar services elsewhere in the world.

Partners

Partnership is at the core of SCONUL's approach to shared services.

There are five different categories of partnership:

- Partners for practical collaborations

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- for example; AMOSHE, British Library & other national libraries, CILIP, Jisc (including EDINA and MIMAS), RLUK, UCISA
- Partners for influencing
 - for example; AoC, BAILER, BUFDG, Funding Councils, GLAM organisations, Leadership Foundation, SCL, UUK
- Regional and national consortia
 - for example; CONUL, M25, Northern Collaboration, NOWAL, SCURL, SWHELDS, WHELDF, White Rose
- International
 - for example; ARL, CAUL, Kuali, LIBER, Sakai
- Vendors and the open source community.

National digital library

SCONUL will continue to develop the concept of a UK-wide National digital library which would allow university libraries to share between them the administrative costs of acquiring, accessing and managing electronic resources, both in terms of staff and systems, and to broaden the availability of electronic resources within and beyond the UK academic community to help deliver academic excellence and student success in UK higher education.

Potential Areas for Shared Services

There are nine potential areas for shared services with which SCONUL will engage in this planning period:

- Collections and Access
 - The focus will be on shared systems/ services to support collaborative purchasing, licensing, walk in access etc.
- Systems and Discovery
 - This is the most developed area at the moment because of previous work of the HEFCE and Jisc funded projects
 - Activities in the area will be guided by progressing the three domains identified in the HEFCE shared services feasibility study report of November 2009, summarised by the “Kay jigsaw” diagram *Shared Services: a platform for progress*¹:
 - Domain 1 – electronic resource licensing and management
 - Domain 2 – discovery to delivery

¹ <http://helibtech.com/file/view/091204+SCONUL+Shared+Service++for+distribution.pdf> (page v)

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- Domain 3 – local library management
and informed by Jisc innovation activities such the Jisc Discovery Summit
- Curation and Preservation
 - Such as digitisation, curation of digital assets
- Existing Shared Services Delivered By Others
 - Influencing:
 - Ensuring that new developments are informed by community requirements
 - Providing feedback on service delivery quality
 - Sharing of expertise and brokerage between regional shared services and projects
 - When required, assist, or where appropriate take the lead, in the transition to alternative service delivery models or providers (which may include SCONUL itself)
- Research Data Management
 - There are a number of specific activities which could be under other categories, but with the major strategic impact of research data management activities for most SCONUL members, this is a major category in its own right
- Expertise
 - Specialist expertise
 - Updating expertise
 - Developing new expertise
- Skills for Shared Services
 - Governing
 - Managing
 - Operating
- Customer Facing Services
- Library Business Analytics
 - Supporting collection management
 - Supporting student and researcher experience
 - Benchmarking

SCONUL will maintain a list of potential shared services in these categories which will be reviewed annually, with services added or removed from the candidate list and some candidates taken forward for further consideration using the methodology described in the next section. The current list of candidates appears in the Appendix.

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Methodology

- Annually refresh and review candidate services to take forward for consideration by the Shared and Collaborative Services Strategy Group
- Prioritisation Criteria:
 - Alignment with SCONUL priorities
 - SCONUL intervention will result in a significant impact
 - Building on existing SCONUL activities
 - Building on activities of partners
 - Newly emerging services may be easier to deliver as shared services than existing ones
 - Enthusiastic groups in the community willing/ able to take forward
 - Demonstrable benefits
 - Services best delivered at UK level
 - Indicative good value for money
 - Mixture of larger and smaller initiatives at the same time
- For each prioritised candidate service:
 - Verify community appetite (scope, commitment, likely benefits on a wide scale, quick wins, risk)
 - Check for alternatives (options appraisal)
 - Identify and engage project team(s) to take forward:
 - suitable partners
 - members of the community
 - Undertake pilots to demonstrate proof of concept
 - Develop a business case
 - Devise a sustainability plan
 - Complete a risk analysis and risk management plan
 - Sign off to proceed by SCONUL Executive Board (and governance boards of the partners where appropriate)
 - Secure funding
 - Adopt a phased, vanguard approach ensuring the service will meet the wider community's requirements as well as the vanguard's
 - Provide regular progress reports, and engagement with, the community

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- SCONUL Shared and Collaborative Services Strategy Group monitors progress and engage with project manager(s), regular reports back to the Executive Board
- Coherence and alignment with SCONUL strategy and wider activities:
 - SCONUL Shared and Collaborative Services Strategy Group charged with advising SCONUL Executive Board
 - SCONUL Executive Board charged with overall responsibility for managing the strategic partnerships

Mark P Toole
3 May 2013

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Appendix: Candidate Services Spring 2013

- Collections and Access
 - Finch follow up (shared systems/ services to support)
 - Development of SCONUL Access Scheme (including its sustainability)
 - Implement and embed Walk In Access projects' reports/recommendations
 - Inter Library Loans
 - Repositories
 - e-books management
 - National Monograph Strategy
 - Identity Management
- Systems and Discovery
 - Domain 1 (electronic resource licensing and management)
 - Embed KB+
 - Extend KB+ to e-books
 - Extend KB+ to post cancellation access
 - Other shared services enabled by common and shared data created by KB+
 - Collaborative cataloguing services
 - Domain 2 (discovery to delivery)
 - Build on recent Jisc Discovery project
 - Easier authentication (both for library members and for library staff to manage)
 - Reading lists
 - Domain 3 (local library platform)
 - Build on recent Jisc LMS projects
 - Sharing experience/ expertise in regional/ sub-regional shared services and projects
 - Integration with corporate systems
 - Using "infrastructure as a service" approach
- Curation and Preservation
 - Digitisation programmes/ equipment/ skills
 - Curation of digital assets
- Existing Shared Services Delivered By Others

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- Potential candidates may become clearer when Jisc future plans are announced
- Research Data Management
 - Shared systems for data
 - Sharing of expertise and good practice (library directors, library staff + advice for researchers et al)
 - Sharing of training
- Expertise
 - Authentication services
 - Collaborative procurement at regional level
 - Emerging new areas eg mobile delivery, digital preservation
- Skills for Shared Services
 - Governance & leadership
 - Practitioner
 - Sustainability
 - New professional and technical (development and supporting)
- Customer Facing Services
 - Enquiries requiring specialist knowledge and experience
 - Virtual enquiry services
- Library Business Analytics
 - Development of JUSP, RAPTOR and similar services
 - Copac collection management
 - Analysis of library activity data

Note – this is a candidate list; there is no commitment to take forward any of these identified candidates for development into a shared service during the planning period and other candidate services are likely to be added to the list when they are identified.