

Library Design awards show libraries at the heart of academic life

Augustine House Library and Student Services Centre at Canterbury Christ Church University and The McClay Library, Queen's University Belfast are the joint winners of the 2013 prestigious SCONUL Library Design Awards, with the Library at University of the West of Scotland and Scotland's Rural College (SRUC) taking the honours in the smaller buildings category.

The awards have been made every three years since 1973 and recognise the best in the design of higher education libraries. Images of the winning libraries are available [here](#).

Ann Rossiter, Executive Director at SCONUL, said

"Universities are increasing their investment in high quality design and build for libraries which also come equipped with state-of-the-art technologies. While some predicted that the advent of e-books and e-journals would mean a downgrading of the status of libraries within the institution, it is clear that the reverse is true.

"Providing access to knowledge is vital but is only one part of what an academic library does. Libraries are at the heart of their institutions and one of their most important functions is the provision of a place and atmosphere for learning.

"Canny Vice-Chancellors realise that libraries form an important part of a university's offer to undergraduates; post-graduates and staff, and can be the difference between high and low levels of student satisfaction. Our winning libraries offer a blueprint for how libraries can transform learning."

Liz Waller, chair of the judging panel, said

"Augustine House Library and Student Services Centre at Canterbury Christ Church combines modern design with sensitivity to its historic location by the city walls. It provides flexible and inspiring learning environments which put the student first.

"The McClay Library at Queen's University Belfast is a landmark building marrying contemporary and classic design which has transformed the library service and more than doubled the number of students using the building.

"University of the West of Scotland and SRUC's new library is a highly impressive addition to a new campus which has had a profound impact on the development of the university community."

The full list of Awards and winners:

Over 2000sqm

Winners: Augustine House Library and Student Services Centre, Canterbury Christ Church University and The McClay Library, Queen's University Belfast and

Highly commended: The Forum, University of Exeter

Under 2000sqm

Winner: University of West of Scotland/Scotland's Rural College (SRUC)

Highly Commended: Dame Elizabeth Esteve-Coll Learning Resource Centre, Kingston University

Ends

Notes to Editors:

1. For more information about **the awards** or **about SCONUL**, please contact Ann Rossiter on 07780 43049 or at ann.rossiter@sconul.ac.uk
2. For more information about the **McClay Library at Queen's University Belfast**, please contact Anne-Marie Clark on 028 9097 5320 or at comms.officer@qub.ac.uk.
3. For more information about the **Augustine House Library and Student Services Centre at Canterbury Christ Church University**, please contact Jeanette Earl on 01227 782391 or at jeanette.earl@canterbury.ac.uk.
4. For more information about **the University of West of Scotland and SRUC library** please contact Niall Gordon on 0141 848 3726 or at niall.gordon@uws.ac.uk or Jane Smernicki at Jane.smernicki@sruc.ac.uk or on 0131 535 4331.
5. **About the awards:** The SCONUL Library Design Awards have been running since 1973. The aim is to encourage good practice in library planning and design and to celebrate outstanding examples of cutting-edge design. Awards are given on the basis of the functional design of buildings rather than purely architectural merit.
6. **About SCONUL:** SCONUL is the Society of College, National and University Libraries (sconul.ac.uk). We represent all university libraries in the UK and Ireland, irrespective of mission group, as well as national libraries and many of the UK's colleges of higher education. SCONUL promotes awareness of the role of academic libraries in supporting research excellence and student achievement and employability, and represents their views and interests to government, regulators and other stakeholders. It helps academic libraries collaborate to deliver services efficiently, including through shared services, and to share knowledge and best practice.
7. More information on the winning libraries is available in the attached [briefing](#).