

News

Library finances survey 2026

SCONUL is conducting a survey on the current state of library finances and would very much value member participation. Individual institutional responses will be treated as confidential, but we will use aggregated data to (a) provide the sector with an overview of the current financial position and libraries' responses to these challenges and (b) share data with colleagues in Jisc and UUK. The deadline for responses is 19 February, and we are seeking one response per institution. While we appreciate the pressures on everyone's time, a response would be appreciated from as many institutions as possible. This will support the sector as a whole in providing intelligence to support advocacy on behalf of libraries.

Call for expressions of interest in membership of SCONUL deputies and new directors' groups

The SCONUL community has a number of groups for directors and deputy directors who come together to share experience and learn from each other in an informal way. These provide a source of informal support and advice virtually and through face-to-face meetings. In general, groups meet once or twice a year and have between twelve and twenty members. Groups have their own lists and discussions are generally assumed to be confidential unless otherwise agreed. The SCONUL Office facilitates the group's first meeting, after which, the groups self-organise. If you think you would benefit from joining such a group, please fill out the form here: <https://forms.gle/m6u34BCM9T3v3irm7>

Call for volunteers to pilot SCONUL's new Organisational Development Knowledge Base (ODKB)

As the library workforce develops, changes and grows into new areas, sharing organisational structures and job descriptions is a useful way to help share good practice, gain insights into different roles and structures, and facilitate a collaborative community. The SCONUL Organisational Development Strategy Group has undertaken a project in this area to build a searchable database of job descriptions and organisational charts from SCONUL member institutions, and we are now entering the final testing phase. SCONUL is looking for volunteers to take part in a pilot to test the new ODKB and provide feedback. Participating institutions will be asked to load up some or all of their staff job descriptions and an organisational chart, and to provide feedback on this process, and on using the database for search purposes. We welcome institutions of all sizes to participate. We're very aware that job descriptions and organisational structures may be in flux at some institutions. This shouldn't be a barrier to participating in the testing process – we will be happy to ensure that data is included in the final version is up to date. Please email ann.rossiter@scnul.ac.uk if you'd like to take part. The deadline for expressions of interest is Friday 20 February.

SCONUL Spring Conference 2026, London, 1 May

The SCONUL Spring Conference will give delegates the opportunity to discuss how we can collaborate to maximise our impact, and to support our leadership. The event will offer high-quality plenary presentations and lightning talks, there will be a chance to take part in workshops, and this will be an excellent opportunity for colleagues to connect and network. The conference will be held at the Royal

College of Physicians in London on the 1st of May 2026 from 10am to 4.00pm, with registrations opening at 9.30am. Tickets are £175pp. More details will follow soon but you can secure your spot now, for registration details, please email sconul@sconul.ac.uk.

Joint Town Hall on the conclusions of the big deal negotiations, 18 February

SCONUL and RLUK are holding a joint town hall meeting on 18 February at 14:00-15:30hrs where we will hear from Sarah Roughly Barake and Anna Vernon from Jisc on the outcomes of the five big deal negotiations. Members will have an opportunity to consider lessons learned and the future direction of the sector. For registration details, please email sconul@sconul.ac.uk.

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 assesses 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.

SCONUL AI coffee morning, 27 February

SCONUL's next AI coffee morning will be on Friday 27 February at 10am, where we'll discuss AI and library data. We will hear from Tasha Mellins-Cohen, who is the Executive Director at Counter Metrics. 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/>

AI Skills for Librarians: the journey from AI literacy to AI fluency webinar, 13 March

SCONUL's AI working group is hosting a webinar looking at skills and competencies for library teams working on the adoption, integration, and development of AI tools. We will be exploring core competencies for the library teams and discussing how we can support our teams to move from being AI literate to AI fluent. We will be joined by Karolina Andersdotter, librarian and doctoral researcher in information studies at Åbo Akademi University, and by Jason Coleman, Academic Services Librarian at Kansas State University and Keven Jeffrey, Librarian at Kansas State University, who co-chaired the ACRL AI Competencies for Library Workers Task Force which has produced an insightful and helpful guide into AI competencies: <https://www.ala.org/acrl/standards/ai> focused on library teams. The webinar will be held on Friday 13 March, 13.30-15.00hrs. For registration details, please email sconul@sconul.ac.uk.

Libraries in the HERMs

SCONUL has been working with UCISA on amendments to the Higher Education Reference Models (HERMs). These are frameworks that describe the core capabilities that are common across universities. They offer a shared vocabulary to underpin strategic planning and are increasingly being used to support institutional transformation. The existing Business Capability Model didn't fully reflect the contribution of libraries to the institution and a group of SCONUL members has been working with UCISA who were very welcoming of and receptive to the proposed changes. The newly published version incorporates many of the recommendations suggested by the group. Significant changes or additions include:

- BC133 Library Management: changing 'library administration' to 'library management' to reflect both the strategic oversight and operational stewardship of an institution's library services
- BC255 Archive Management: a new capability included to indicate the preservation of and provision of access to records deemed to be permanently valuable
- BC250 Publishing Management: a new capability that was added to highlight the scholarly publishing function through a university press or institutional publishing service

The group also proposed changes that were implemented to improve the descriptions of certain capabilities. We are continuing to collaborate with UCISA on the development of their new Service Model and on reviewing other related materials. If you want to find out more about the HE Reference models, how they are used in institutional transformation and how you might use them to support the work of the library, SCONUL will be running a webinar series on the HERMS and will share details and dates shortly. For more information contact ann.rossiter@sconul.ac.uk.

Academic Libraries and Learning Technologies CIG meeting, 19 March

The next Academic Libraries and Learning Technologies CIG meeting will take place on 19 March, 10.00 – 11.30hrs. Participants are interested in using this forum to share their experiences, as well as to gather input from others for issues at hand. The meeting will cover a range of topics whereby a speaker will share their experience and invite discussion or set the scene for a problem and invite input from others. If you would like to volunteer or if you any suggestions of topic, please feel free to contact bertha.low@bcu.ac.uk. For registration details, please email sconul@sconul.ac.uk. SCONUL Academic Libraries and Learning Technologies CIG is a community of practice bringing together those with an interest in learning delivery and related technologies. To join the community, please subscribe to libs-learning-tech-cig@jiscmail.ac.uk

The Future of the Systems Librarian CIG meetings 2026

The next two 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](#)!

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

- 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

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.

Moving the dial on OER in the UK and Ireland: SCONUL OER CoP Webinar

We were joined by 246 members for our webinar on moving the dial on OER in the UK and Ireland on 22 January. Colleagues heard about the latest developments with the OER Community of Practice for the UK and Ireland and from libraries and academics who shared current best practice in the sector. This webinar also highlighted solutions and discussed how SCONUL libraries can get more involved in driving OER initiatives in their libraries. We also identified demand and willingness for participation from institutions for future work. SCONUL members can access the recording and chat transcript [here](#).

Invitation to Tender: Project to support the transition to open access long-form publications

ARMA, RLUK, and SCONUL have come together with funding from UKRI to enable a coordinated and strategic approach in the transition to OA long-form publications and launched the Advancing Long-form Open Access Practice Project on 3 February, together with the ITT. Open access for journal articles is well established but approaches to OA for long-form publications are diverse and evolving. With UKRI's OA policy for long-form and expectations that future Research Excellence Frameworks may include OA long-form requirements, institutions are addressing common questions around policy, funding models, rights retention, and researcher support. The Advancing Long-form Open Access Practice Project aims to address this by working collectively with the research sector to develop shared guidance and support. Deadline for responses to the ITT is 27 February. [Read more](#)

New AI guidelines to help galleries, libraries, archives and museums prepare for the future

The Archives and Records Association UK & Ireland (ARA) have published new guidelines to help the Galleries, Libraries, Archives and Museums (GLAM) sector prepare their collections for the responsible use of artificial intelligence (AI). [*AI Preparedness Guidelines for Archivists*](#), a four-page guidance has been produced through the ARA-funded FLAME project (AI For Libraries, Archives and Museums) and is freely available to the sector. AI is now a growing topic of conversation across archives and record-keeping services, with managers and stakeholders increasingly asking whether it can help speed up cataloguing, identify sensitive content, or unlock new ways for users to access collections. The new guidelines aim to help organisations respond to these opportunities in a realistic, responsible and informed way. [Read more](#)

CONUL libraries partner with OCLC on a new shared catalogue

A new CONUL Shared Catalogue will preserve and promote access to Irish research and culture. The [Consortium of National and University Libraries \(CONUL\)](#) has selected OCLC to deliver a unified view of the holdings of participating CONUL libraries, following a competitive procurement process. This new shared catalogue, to be built on the WorldShare platform with WorldCat as its foundation, will increase the visibility and discoverability of collections held in CONUL institutions. It will also support participating institutions to understanding what is scarce or common within their collection, helping them to determine how they might reduce their print stock where needed. [Read more](#)

Call for papers: Academic Libraries North Conference 2026

The Academic Libraries North (ALN) conference, Reimagining Openness in Academic Libraries Online, will take place online 24 June and in person in Manchester on 6 July. The conference will look at What does "open" really mean in academic libraries today? Is it a philosophy, a policy, a practice - or a provocation? In a landscape shaped by open access mandates, open research infrastructures, open

educational resources, and open data, academic libraries are often positioned as champions of openness. But are we truly opening up, or simply reshaping the boundaries of control? ALN are inviting submissions exploring any aspect of the topic and welcome submissions from all colleagues working within any institution, whether they are ALN member institutions or not. Closing date for proposals is 13 March and further details can be found here: <https://academiclibrariesnorth.ac.uk/conference/aln-conference-2026/>.

Call for contributions: Jisc Digital transformation library lens webinar

As part of their [Digital Transformation Library Lens \(DTLL\) pilot programme](#) Jisc we are planning an open webinar on 12 May 2-3.30pm on "Library-led digital transformation: using Jisc's Digital Transformation Library Lens" (registration details available shortly) to share more widely the work of the seven university library pilots and how they've been using the [DTLL framework \(web pages\)](#) to guide their digital transformation activities. Jisc are keen to find out if any other libraries outside the DTLL programme have engaged with the DTLL resources and invite you to contribute to the webinar. If you would like to contribute please send Paola Marchionni paola.marchionni@jisc.ac.uk a brief proposal (100 words max) for a lightening talk (5 mins) by Friday 20 February or get in touch if you'd like to discuss anything. Jisc should be able to include about 3 brief presentations/interventions.

LIRG Research Award 2026 – Call for Applications

Applications are invited for the LIRG Research Award 2026. The award of up to £3,000 is open to UK-based applicants with relevant experience or expertise in the library, information and knowledge profession. It supports small-scale research projects aligned with priority research themes. Full details about the award, research themes, and application process, can be found at: <https://www.cilip.org.uk/blogpost/1637267/516676/LIRG-Research-Award-2026--Call-for-Applications>. Closing date for applications is 31 March. Contact: Judy Wright, LIRG Awards Co-ordinator, j.m.wright@leeds.ac.uk

Call for participants: intersection between critical librarianship and critical management studies

A PhD student from the University of Sheffield is seeking volunteers for her research on the intersection between critical librarianship and critical management studies, with a particular emphasis on how academic library leaders leverage criticality to advance social justice. If you are interested in taking part, please contact Lottie Needham at l.needham@sheffield.ac.uk.

Behind the scenes at SCONUL

We have been working with colleagues from a range of other bodies including Oxford University, CILIP, and SUPC on an initiative to engage library suppliers in a meaningful conversation about the shared challenges and opportunities of sustainable publishing. In the first instance, we will be holding a round table with publishers under Chatham House Rule on 29 April to explore the current state of sustainability practice with a particular focus on goals, reporting and common terminology. We hope to use this opportunity to build confidence and a shared understanding of goals and barriers to achieving them and to explore the potential for cross-sector initiatives. We'll share outcomes with the community following the event.

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/>

Vacancy: Academic Engagement Manager (Library), Canterbury Christ Church University

Canterbury Christ Church University are recruiting an Academic Engagement Manager (Library) to help lead academic library services, manage their Academic Librarians and Open Research Librarian, and strengthen partnerships across teaching and research. They are looking for an experienced manager with substantial experience in academic library liaison who has a thorough understanding of the education and research environment in universities, and how the library can actively support, contribute to, and enable academic success. **Closing date 9 February** [Read more](#)

Vacancy: Library Services and Collections Manager, University of Stirling

The Library Services Manager is a key role, leading the delivery of a high-quality, customer-focused library service at the heart of the campus. The role holder will be responsible for all aspects of library services including library collections, technologies and operational service delivery. With responsibility for significant library budgets, the Library Services & Collections Manager will provide leadership and ensure

resources are allocated effectively to support learning, teaching and research priorities across the institution. **Closing date 10 February** [Read more](#)

Vacancy: Content and Discovery Manager, Middlesex University

Middlesex University are looking for a Content and Discovery Manager to manage and progress the development of their Library content, collections, and discovery systems. As a senior member of the Library Services and Digital Skills Education directorate within Digital and Library Services, the post holder will oversee the planning, delivery, and innovation of a collections service that is customer-focused, cost-effective, and highly efficient. They will ensure the resources anticipate the current and future needs of the academic community across learning, teaching, and research. Overseeing the Content and Discovery team, including the Access and Acquisitions Team Leader, the Subscriptions and Partnerships Team Leader and Cataloguer, they will set a clear vision and strategic policy for all aspects of content management. **Closing date 10 February** [Read more](#)

Vacancy: Digital Archivist, National Library of Ireland

The Digital Archivist will play a key role in growing the Born-Digital Archives Team's capacity and capability to acquire, preserve and provide access to born digital archival material that is a record of contemporary Irish life. Combining curatorial judgement with technical expertise, the role is working with creators, donors and digital materials to develop sustainable workflows that support long term preservation and access. Working collaboratively across the NLI, the Digital Archivist helps shape and strengthen the future of digital collecting at the NLI. Within the NLI's planning process, there will be considerable opportunity for the Digital Archivist to identify, scope, propose, and deliver initiatives and agreed projects to improve the NLI's digital collecting capabilities. **Closing date 13 February** [Read more](#)

Vacancy: Director of Academic Services and Libraries (University Librarian), Newcastle University

Newcastle University is seeking an outstanding leader to join their Professional Services Leadership Team as Director of Academic Services and Libraries. This is a pivotal senior role at the heart of the University, providing strategic and operational leadership for Library and Academic Services in support of education, research, engagement and the wider student experience. Leading a directorate of around 200 colleagues, the successful candidate will champion a positive, inclusive and student-centred service culture, delivering world-class information resources, distinctive special collections and archives, and expert support for academic and digital literacies. **Closing date 15 February** [Read more](#)

Vacancy: Director of Student and Library Services, Anglia Ruskin University

Anglia Ruskin University are seeking to appoint a Director of Student and Library Services. Reporting to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education) as a member of the University Executive Team (UET), the post holder will provide strategic and operational leadership for Student and Library Services, delivering an outstanding, inclusive student experience that supports academic success and future employability. They will lead the development and delivery of strategies (including Action & Participation Plan), policies and procedures in partnership with students, the Students' Union, academic staff and professional services. Leading on the development and delivery of innovative cross University strategies and initiatives to transform and enhance student experience, student satisfaction and student success, with a particular focus on continuation, graduate employability, student equity and wellbeing. **Closing date 22 February** [Read more](#)

Vacancy: Assistant Keeper, Grade 1, Photographic Collections, National Library of Ireland

The National Library of Ireland is accepting applications for the position of Assistant Keeper Grade 1 in Photographic Collections. Reporting to the Head of Special Collections, the postholder, will play a key role in caring for and developing the National Library's Photographic Collections. The role will support collection management, cataloguing and access, working closely with curatorial, conservation and digitisation colleagues to enable research, exhibitions and public engagement. **Closing date 27**

February [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.

Delivering digital equity in transnational education (TNE), 12 February

Working with and understanding neurodivergent colleagues webinar, 16 February

20th International Digital Curation Conference 2026 (IDCC26), Zagreb, 16-18 February

AI and the Future of REF: Reducing Burden Without Losing Trust, 26 February

Copim Conference, 26-27 February

Supporting neurodivergent library users webinar, 27 February

OxFOS 2026 Conference, 2-6 March

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

Call for Speakers – NLISN: Neurodivergence and Entry into the Profession, 18 January

Teaching/training neurodivergent students in the library webinar, 23 March

RLUK26 Virtual Conference, 25-27 March

UKSG Annual Conference, Glasgow, 30 March-1 April

LILAC 2026, Sheffield, 30 March – 1 April

EBLIDA Annual Council & Conference 2026, Prague, 20-22 April

LIBER Architecture Group (LAG) Seminar, Dublin, 6-8 May

Critical Approaches to Libraries Conference (CALC), w/c 11 May

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

Call for Abstracts: CONUL Conference 2026, Galway, 27-28 May

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

CILIP Data Protection Conference, 3 June

CILIP Online Copyright Conference, 4 June

UXLibs Europe, York 2, 9-11 June

SCURL Annual Conference 2026, Glasgow, 16 June

Call for submissions: Edinburgh Open Research Conference 2026, Edinburgh, 18 June

Academic Practice and Technology (APT) Conference 2026, London, 19 June

LIBER Annual Conference, Trondheim, 1-3 July

Call for Papers: ARLIS Conference 2026: Challenging Collections, Leeds, 6-8 July

Call for contributions: NLISN (Neurodivergent Library and Information Staff Network) Conference, Leeds, 16-17 July

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