News

SCONUL Library Design Awards 2025 - Open for submissions

We are pleased to announce the return of the SCONUL Library Design Awards which for the first time include a new category for service design alongside the category for library spaces. The triennial awards return after a break during the Covid 19 pandemic and projects completed between 1st January 2018 and 31st December 2023 are eligible. Details of the two categories and how to submit an entry can be found here: https://www.sconul.ac.uk/services-for-members/library-design-awards/library-design-awards-2025/. Deadline for submissions is Wednesday 26 February and should be sent to lisa.mclaren@sconul.ac.uk. Read more

SCONUL conference, 3 March 2025, London

SCONUL's Spring Conference will discuss the library's central role in institutions' digital transformation. It will explore technology-enabled library spaces supporting research and teaching, the development of the systems' librarian role, data-driven decision-making and service development, and AI skills for education and employability. The conference will be held on Monday 3 March, 10am to 4pm at The British Library, Knowledge Centre, 96 Euston Road, London, NW1 2DB. For registration details please contact sconul@sconul.ac.uk.

SCONUL CPD Focus Groups

We are holding three focus groups in the New Year, aimed at getting a range of thoughts on our ongoing CPD review. These groups will be for both senior leadership teams and staff working at team leader level. We are anticipating quite small groups to encourage deep reflection. If you email sconul@sconul.ac.uk we can send you the registration link. The dates will be:

- Monday 27 January, 10am-12pm – Senior leaders
- Monday 10 February, 2-4pm – Team leaders
- Thursday 27 February, 2-4pm – Senior leaders.

Finance survey

The deadline for submitting a response to SCONUL's survey into sector finances is Monday 20 January. SCONUL is keen to understand the current challenges facing members on finances and this survey builds on the pulse survey carried out in May 2024. Individual institutional responses will be treated as confidential, but we will use aggregated data to (a) inform negotiations and discussions with publishers and other library suppliers and (b) provide the sector with an overview of the current financial position and libraries' responses to these challenges. 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 providing intelligence to support negotiations with publishers and for advocacy on behalf of libraries. Please contact ann.rossiter@sconul.ac.uk for further information.

Join SCONUL's AI coffee morning on 31 January

For our first AI coffee morning of 2025, we'll revisit the discussion on AI and copyright. The discussion held last June looked at issues around legislation and the changing nature of this, as well as the practical issues around dealing with AI content in the academic space and on reading lists. The role of copyright in regard to AI proved to be a hot topic worth exploring in more detail. If you'd like to rewatch the AI coffee morning held in June around copyright, then you can find the recording and resources here. The AI coffee morning will take place on Friday 31 January from 10am – 11.30am. For registration details please contact sconul@sconul.ac.uk.

How to get ahead in libraries webinar part two, 5 February

The second 'How to Get Ahead in Libraries' webinar focuses on getting into leadership without a formal library qualification, often seen as a barrier to more senior leadership. All of our speakers here have explored alternative routes to 'library school' and are now in a variety of senior roles. Speakers Chris Banks (Imperial College London), Dr Sarah Pittaway SFHEA (Birmingham City University) and Simon Hall (Head of Library Liaison (Medicine and NHS), Imperial College London) will share their journeys and give practical suggestions for others looking to take that same step. We hope this webinar will be useful and inspiring for people who are looking to get into library leadership, but perhaps don't fit the traditional profile. The webinar will take place on Wednesday 5 February 2025 from 11am - 12.30pm. For registration details please contact sconul@sconul.ac.uk.

SCONUL Technology-enhanced library spaces webinar recording

SCONUL held a webinar on technology-enhanced library spaces on 11 December 2024 looking at new and innovative library spaces. Attendees heard from Alan Carbery from University College Cork about the Digital Scholarship studio that allows for new modes of learning and knowledge building. Sophie Wonnacott and Stewart Palmer spoke about the Digital Makerspace at the University of Exeter and how this space has transitioned to the library, and Monica Westin and Emma Thompson discussed the innovation space being set up at Manchester Metropolitan University, as they transition to a new library and look to build this into their new library building as standard. The recording, chat transcript and presentations are available here: https://www.sconul.ac.uk/knowledge-hub/library-technologies/technology-enabled-library-spaces-webinar-11-december-2024/

Joint letter to IEEE from SCONUL, RLUK, SHEDL and SCURL

As the IEEE and Jisc negotiations have broken down, leading sector bodies called upon IEEE to come back to the negotiation table to finalise a new deal for academic libraries. SCONUL had a mandate from our membership to reject individual deals at an earlier town hall and it is hoped that an agreement can be reached soon. Read more

Share your time and experience and become a SCONUL Mentor

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 from across SCONUL who want to be a part of this highly valued scheme. Benefits of becoming a mentor include: offering your insight and advice to someone looking to navigate the next stages of their career, a one-to-one client-focused relationship, supporting emerging and newly appointed leaders, add to your CV. Click here to discover more about how the scheme works, and you can find more information for mentors and how to apply here.

SCONUL deputies and new director groups – expressions of interest

SCONUL is putting out a call for expressions of interest in membership of deputies and new directors groups. The SCONUL deputies and new directors groups provide informal support and advice both virtually and through face to face meetings. In general, groups meet once or twice a year and have between a dozen and twenty members. Each group has their own discussion list and conversations are generally assumed to be confidential unless otherwise agreed. The SCONUL office facilitates the group's first meeting, after which, the groups are expected to self-organise. If you think you would benefit from joining such a group, please fill out the form here: https://forms.gle/KYoTuu4sKEzFJgKx8

SCONUL Statistics Review update

We are pleased to announce that we have published our consultation report from David Baker and Associates. The research work carried out looked at national and international views on benchamarking statistics and puts forward a range of recommendations, which a task and finish group is exploring further. Read more.

UKRI developing new research data policy framework

New pan-UKRI research data policy framework will maximise the value of data arising from UKRI funding and support an open research and innovation culture. The new policy framework is being developed collaboratively by the research councils, Research England and Innovate UK. It will update and streamline expectations and guidance for research data arising from UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) research funding. This will include guidance relating to research data management plans and making data findable, accessible, interoperable and reusable (the FAIR data principles), and will take account of the latest technological advances. Read more

Disabled students' and library services

Disabled Students UK's annual survey looks at the experience of disabled students at UK institutions including access to support and the accessibility of buildings and services. The survey is based on 1,200 self-selecting responses from disabled students across over 80 UK HEIs. The report includes two questions specific to libraries - on digital accessibility and on physical spaces. 57% of respondents agreed with the statement "I find the online library resources easy to navigate and use", down from 58% in 2023. 68% of respondents replied positively to the question "Do you find the physical library facilities accessible?". The full report can be found here: https://disabledstudents.co.uk/2024-access-insights-report-3/

The National Library of Scotland invites applications for the Fellowship in Digital Research 2025-26

This Fellowship supports an exciting opportunity for a three-month period of research into any aspect of the Library's data collections available on the Data Foundry using data science or other digital research methods or techniques. This year, the Fellowship's theme relates to Artificial Intelligence/machine learning: what happens at the intersection of cultural heritage and new technologies? What can we learn from applying AI tools to the collections? What efficiencies are generated, what opportunities are created, what risks are formed? How can access to collections be widened, and how can learning about the collections be shared? More information, including a link to the further particulars, available at: https://data.nls.uk/projects/digital-research-fellowship-25-26/. Deadline: 5pm on 17 February 2025.

Designing Libraries International Newsletter

Designing Libraries will be producing a quarterly newsletter on all things library design, including Case Studies, tips on design layout, themed pieces, such as green libraries and outdoor spaces etc. This will also be a wealth of information on Library Design resources. You sign up and subscribe to the new quarterly Designing Libraries International Newsletter via: https://designinglibraries.org.uk/contact-us/designing-libraries-international-newsletter-subscription-form/

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.

Updates from our peer organisations:

1. Academic Libraries North https://www.academiclibrariesnorth.ac.uk/
2. CONUL https://conul.ie/news/
3. LIBER https://libereurope.eu/news/
4. M25 Consortium of Academic Libraries https://www.m25lib.org.uk/about-the-consortium/newsletter-archive/
5. Mercian Collaboration https://merciancollaboration.org.uk/news
6. RLUK https://www.rluk.ac.uk/rluk-bulletin/
7. SCURL https://www.scurl.ac.uk/news
8. ucisa https://www.ucisa.ac.uk/News-and-Views
9. 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: Leeds Beckett University

Leeds Beckett University has appointed Coral Black as their new Director of Library and Learning Services. Coral is University Librarian at University College Cork, and so already part of the SCONUL Director community. She has a wealth of valuable experience from her current post and senior roles in the UK, New Zealand and Australia. Coral will start her new role on 10 March.

Vacancy: Library Digital Services Coordinator, Liverpool Hope University

Liverpool Hope University is seeking to appoint a 0.5 FTE Digital Services Coordinator to join their Library Services team. Reporting to the Head of Library Services, this is a new role responsible for the management and ongoing development of the digital library services in support of the Teaching,

Learning and Research activities of Liverpool Hope University. It will include oversight and development of the Library Systems portfolio including the Library Management System, Digital Collections software, repository, discovery and reading list systems. It will also develop the Library's data capability and co-ordinate training and support of digital services. **Closing date 10 January** Read more

Vacancy: Academic Liaison Manager, University of Northampton

The University of Northampton is seeking to recruit to the post of Academic Liaison Manager within Library, Learning and Student Services (LLSS). The Academic Liaison Manager will lead the team of Academic Librarians in four areas of activity: delivering embedded information skills support to students and staff within the University's three Faculties; supporting the development of the library collections and enabling the integration of resources into learning and teaching; ensuring effective liaison between the library and the University's Faculties, Professional Services and Academic Partnerships, including involvement in quality assurance events and processes; and delivering interventions and activities to support community and external engagement and the Access and Participation Plan. **Closing date 12 January** Read more

Vacancy: Senior Librarian (Research & Resources), University of Gloucestershire

University of Gloucestershire are seeking a Senior Librarian (Research and Resources) to join their Libraries and Student Support team. Key responsibilities will include managing the Research Repository, developing cross-University research support, supporting researchers, resource management and Content Management Policy. The post holder will engage with cross-institutional stakeholders, driving collaboration and innovation in research support services, and ensure that the library continues to meet the evolving needs of the academic community. **Closing date 12 January** Read more

Vacancy: Manuscript Metadata Project Officer, SOAS

SOAS Library Special Collections are hiring a Manuscript Metadata Project Officer for a fixed-term (7 months) project. Reporting to the Curator of Rare Books & Manuscripts, the post holder will assess, refine and enhance existing manuscripts metadata in preparation for ingest into the new content management system, Epexio. The post holder will work with various data formats, including MARC, TEI-XML, XLSX, as well as manipulating OCR generated text from scanned resources, to ensure consistent and comprehensive metadata. This work will also enrich existing catalogue records with additional information on extent, physical descriptions, provenance, and bibliographic details. **Closing date 12 January** Read more

Vacancy: Head of Content Services, University College Cork, Ireland

UCC Library is looking for a Head of Content Services. This senior management role will lead a portfolio encompassing collection development, information resources management, resource sharing and reading list services. The post holder will play a key role in driving innovative approaches to the provision of information and related services in support of learning and research. **Closing date 14 January** Read More

Vacancy: Head of Digital Systems, University College Cork, Ireland

UCC are looking for a Head of Digital Systems . This senior management role will lead a team of library and technical professionals in developing UCC library's digital library infrastructure and digital asset management capacity. As a member of UCC Library's leadership team the post holder will provide

strategic vision for leveraging and implementing innovative systems, disruptive technologies, and physical infrastructure that enhance the design and delivery of leading-edge library services. **Closing date 14 January** Read more

Vacancy: Research Data Management Co-ordinator, City St George's, University of London

City St George's University of London are seeking to appoint a Research Data Management Co-ordinator. The post-holder will work closely with other Library teams, maintain St George's Figshare data repository and other research data management systems, and will work in partnership with the institution's stakeholders, including the Joint Research & Enterprise Service and Information Governance staff to ensure a cohesive and researcher-centric service is provided. **Closing date 15 January** Read more

Vacancy: Subject Librarian, University of Bath

University of Bath are currently seeking to fill a full-time Subject Librarian position in the Academic Services section in the Library. This vacancy is in the Faculty of Science library team, with current responsibility to support the Life Sciences department which includes: Providing library induction, information skills teaching and handling enquiries; Managing library collections and budgets for the department; Liaising with academic staff, students, publishers and professional groups; Contributing to library strategy and participating in task and finish and special interest groups. **Closing date 26 January** Read more

Vacancy: University of Westminster Press Scholarly Publications Manager

University of Westminster are seeking an experienced Publications Manager in a specialist role, to manage the University of Westminster Press (UWP) based in the University's Library & Archive Service. UWP is a digital-first open access publisher of peer reviewed academic books, policy briefs and journals. The postholder will undertake a full range of professional publishing activities within UWP, ranging from commissioning, and liaison with the production partner, to marketing, ensuring an excellent experience for our authors and editors. They will work with the UWP Editorial Board to maintain quality standards. They will work with (and as part of) the UWP Management Board, taking a leading role in the strategic development of UWP, working in close partnership with the Research Environment & Scholarly Communications Lead, to ensure UWP maintains its position as a core part of the University's open research environment. **Closing date 26 January** Read more

Vacancy: Assistant Director (Technical and Digital Services, Library), Birmingham Newman University

Birmingham Newman University are recruiting for an Assistant Director (Technical and Digital Services). The post holder will be a key member of the Library's Leadership Team, leading on all aspects of the Library's technical and infrastructure services, focusing on library systems, acquisitions, procurement, scanning and digitisation, together with Library administration and the University's research repository. As a member of the Library Leadership Team the post also plays a key role in strategic planning and development of the whole library service. **Closing date 28 January** Read more

Vacancy: Director of Cultural Collections and Curatorial Practice, University of Leeds

University of Leeds Libraries are seeking to appoint a Director of Cultural Collections and Curatorial Practice. This role will work closely with the University Librarian and Keeper of the Brotherton Collection,

the Director of Library Services, Associate Directors, and other members of the broader leadership team, and will provide leadership and strategic capacity for the libraries. In addition, the role-holder will contribute to the cultural shift, positioning University of Leeds libraries as a beacon of innovation and inclusivity. **Closing date 14 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.

NLISN: What does it mean to be information literate for an autistic person in the academic library workplace?, 20 January

UKSG webinar: "SHERIF Showcase: Powering Progress with Enhancement", 21 January

ARLGS & SCURL EDI Network Wellbeing Day, Glasgow, 31 January

19th International Digital Curation Conference (IDCC25), The Hague, 17-19 February

Access Lab, 24-27 February

AI and Libraries: Literacy, Ethics, and Responsible Use," 13 March

Call for presentations: LILAC 2025, Cardiff, 14-16 April

UKSG 48th Annual Conference and Exhibition, Brighton, 31 March-2 April

DARTS9 'Opening Doors: Empowering Librarians to conduct and support research', Swindon, 21-22 May

Call for papers: 16th International Conference on Performance Measurement in Libraries, Liverpool, 3-4 June

Call for proposals: 50th Annual Conference of IASSIST, Bristol, 3-6 June

Call for papers: User Experience in Libraries 9: 'Trust the Process', Liverpool, 10-12 June

SCURL Annual Conference, Aberdeen, 19 June

Open Science Conference 2025, Hamburg, 8-9 October