

News

1. General

1.1. British Association for Information & Library Education and Research heads of departments and schools committee

1.1.1. Government inconsistency in superhighway matters

The news that the UK Department of Trade and Industry is to guide the government's Information Society initiative is welcome, but it stands out oddly against decisions in other Ministries that deliberately attack the education and research basis for the Information Society.

One of the main agencies for the support of research into information issues has been the British Library Research and Development Department (BLRDD). We understand that, this year, this agency is to have its grants budget cut by £300,000 and its staffing budget cut by £100,000. This is on top of a relentless decline to the point at which its 1995/96 budget buys less than 50% of what it could buy in 1979 and out of a grants budget of only £1.6 million.

Those unfamiliar with its work may be surprised to learn that the BLRDD has been the leader in supporting research into information retrieval and the information needs of citizens and specialised professions and sectors. Its priorities have included medical information, business information, and applications of information technology in a wide range of significant areas. These priorities are now in tatters following the latest cuts.

Clearly, the Department of National Heritage – the ultimate funder of the BLRDD – has no conception of the significance of the agency for the needs of an Information Society and, probably little interest. The question must be asked: Why is this research body of national importance not located within a Department of wider relevance to Government? The DTI's strategy demands research support; the BLRDD is well-equipped to supply that support and deserves to be linked closely to the Information Society initiative.

For further information contact: Professor Tom Wilson, Head of Department of Information Studies, University of Sheffield, Sheffield S10 2TN, UK. Tel.: +44 114 282 5081; fax: +44 114 278 0300; email: T.D.Wilson@Sheffield.ac.uk; <http://www.shef.ac.uk/uni/academic/I-M/is/lecturer/toml.html>.

2. Courses

2.1. *MBA Information and Library Management Programme at Loughborough University*

Loughborough University's novel MBA Programme in Information and Library Management received its official launch at special Open Events in early 1996.

The programme is the result of a joint initiative by the Loughborough University Business School and the Department of Information and Library Studies. It is aimed at middle and senior managers who wish to enhance their performance and career potential. Designed for part-time study on a block-release basis with minimal disruption to a professional working life, the programme comprises nine modules covering major areas of management including a synthesising project.

Individual modules can also be studied on a 'short course' basis for managers who wish to develop specific areas of expertise.

For further details contact: Sarah Wiltshire, MBA Information and Library Management Administrator, Management Development Centre, Loughborough University, Rutland Hall, Loughborough, Leics, LE11 3TU, UK. Tel.: +44 1509 223140; fax: +44 1509 233313; email: s.e.wiltshire@lut.ac.uk.

2.2. *MSc in computerised systems goes modular*

The School of Library, Archive and Information Studies at UCL has for many years offered an MSc in Information Science (Computerised Systems for Librarians, Archivists and Information Managers). This course is unique amongst taught MScs offered by LIS schools, being intended as a mid-career development course in the use of technology in LIS, and designing for experienced information professionals rather than those seeking a first professional qualification. It has traditionally been offered on either a one-year full-time or two-year part-time basis.

For the first time (commencing academic year 1996/97) this highly successful course will also be offered on a modular basis, in response to demand. Students will be able to undertake all or part of the course over an extended period (up to 4 years) on a credit basis, leading to the award of a Certificate, Diploma or MSc dependent on elements successfully completed. Modules which are available through this programme include General Computer Studies, Database Applications, Introduction to Programming, Systems Management, and a range of options as Advanced Studies; an additional Project module is required for the award of the MSc.

For further details of course contents, fees, or for an application form, please contact Kerstin Michaels, School of Library, Archive and Information Studies, University College London, Gower Street, London WC1E 6BT, UK. Tel.: +44 171 380 7204; fax: +44 171 383 0557; email: o.manager@ucl.ac.uk; <http://www.ucl.ac.uk/SLAIS/slais.htm>.

2.3. International summer school on the Digital Library – 4–16 August 1996 in Tilburg, the Netherlands

This provides an excellent refreshment opportunity for librarians trained at intermediate or higher levels and for teachers at library schools. Thirty international experts will be dealing with strategic as well as practical aspects. They will use training methods like lectures, case studies, hands-on sessions and discussions. The Summer School will prepare you for setting up your own digital library, providing you with knowledge you can apply directly when you return to your own situation.

The Summer School is organised by Ticer Ltd, the Tilburg Innovation Centre for Electronic Resources, in cooperation with Elsevier Science. In 1995 Ticer was founded by Tilburg University with the aim to make the university's expertise on digital libraries and IT infrastructure available to third parties.

More information on the Summer School (programme, lectures, etc.) can be found via the home page of Ticer B.V.: <http://www.kub.nl:2080/ticer/>. You can also contact them via their email address: ticer@kub.nl. Jola van Luyt, Head External Services, Tilburg University Library; email: Jola.vanLuyt@kub.nl.

2.4. Internet courses

2.4.1. Internet for Everyone

Internet for Everyone is an on-line course of instruction on using the Internet. An easy-to-understand, structured course, offering step-by-step practical guidance on major topics, ranging from basic through to advanced. The course as a whole is intended for beginners to networking, who have some familiarity with computers. The course provides an introduction to the Internet and computer networks in general, describing and illustrating the main software tools for navigating the networks. However, these tools are only a means to an end, the end being the wealth of information and communication resources offered via the networks. The course looks at types and examples of networked information, at the means for searching that information, and at the communication facilities and resources on the net. Find the course at <http://www.mailbase.ac.uk:8080/ife>. Ref. No. 553.

3. Research

3.1. Elsevier/LIRG Research Award

The Elsevier/LIRG Research Award has been given to David Allen of Sheffield University's Department of Information Studies to illustrate the ways in which higher education institutions (HEIs) are transforming the methods used to provide information for teaching and learning and investigate the links between the transformations and any strategies developed.

The development of information strategies at the instigation of the High Education Funding Councils and the Joint Information Systems Committee has addressed the areas of management information and the redefinition of roles and boundaries within the institutions. A driving factor in strategy development is the competitive advantage that can be gained or sustained. There also is a growing awareness that innovative use of communications and IT can transform the ways in which HEIs function. It is the competitive and transformational aspects of information for teaching and learning that the research will address.

The Elsevier Science Publishers/Library and Information Research Group Research Award was launched in 1990. It is designed to encourage research and innovation in library and information science, and is made annually on the basis of proposals submitted by practitioners and others in the field. It is intended that encouragement will be given to research directed at improving the accessibility, retrievability and usefulness of information. The Award is made annually with a closing date in October each year.

The Library and Information Research Group (LIRG) was formed in 1977 to bring together all those with an interest in library and information research and investigation within the profession and elsewhere. Its main activities are the organisation of meetings of all kinds throughout the UK; the publication of Library and Information Research News; and the submission of comments and statements to committees, working parties, government agencies, etc. active in the field.

For further information: Philip Payne, Learning Support Services, Leeds Metropolitan University, Calverley Street, Leeds LS1 3HE, UK. Tel.: +44 1132 835966; fax: +44 1132 833123; email: p.payne@lmu.ac.uk.

3.2. Robert Gordon University

3.2.1. The dissemination of information skills research

The School of Information and Media at the Robert Gordon University in Aberdeen is embarking on a new project, in association with the British Library, which will investigate the impact of research into the development of information skills. The project will investigate to what extent the decisions of librarians, teachers and senior management are influenced by research findings, and whether there are any barriers to the flow of information from the researcher to the practitioner. The research team will work with members of the information and teaching professions in a number of regions to establish the extent to which research is influencing decision-making. The project will evaluate a unique methodology for evaluating the impact information on the decision-making process. This methodology, when proved successful, should be transferable to other information contexts.

For further information: Mike McConnell, School of Information & Media, Robert Gordon University, Merkland Building, 352 King Street, Aberdeen AB9 2TQ, UK. Tel.: +44 1224 262 954; fax: +44 1224 262 969; email: m.mcconnell@rgu.ac.uk; JANet mailbox: SLIS@rgu.ac.uk.

3.2.2. Do research findings impact on practitioners' decisions?

A number of studies have attempted to examine this problem, but none have managed to assess the actual knowledge of practitioners. A new investigation by Dr. Dorothy Williams, Michael McConnell and Kay Wilson, of the School of Information and Media at the Robert Gordon University in Aberdeen will attempt to resolve this issue. The study, funded by the British Library Research and Development Department, will focus on management, teachers and librarians in schools concerned with decisions about information skills development. A major aim, however, is to develop a new methodology for assessing the impact of information which can be used in other areas.

For further information contact: Dr. Dorothy Williams, School of Information and Media, The Robert Gordon University, 352 King Street, Aberdeen AB9 2TQ, UK. Tel.: +44 1224 262953; fax: +44 1224 262969; email: d.williams@RGU.AC.UK.

3.2.3. Disintegration of a heritage?

The thousands of books in Britain's country houses are as important a part of the national heritage as the paintings and furniture, but owners generally have no clear policy on the management of the collections. They are threatened by the changes in ownership and use of the country houses which are part of the national heritage. A review of the library collections in Britain's 1,300 historic houses and castles is now to be undertaken by Peter Reid, a Research Student in the School of Information and Media at the Robert Gordon University, Aberdeen.

For further information contact: Peter H. Reid, School of Information and Media, The Robert Gordon University, 352 King Street, Aberdeen AB9 2TQ, UK. Tel.: +44 1224 262959; fax: +44 1224 262969; email: P.Reid@RGU.AC.UK.

4. Conferences

4.1. Electronic access to fiction: research and development in subject searching, indexing and knowledge transfer via OPACs and networking

Research Seminar, arranged by The Scandinavian Book House Consortium and The Royal School of Librarianship. Sponsored by NORDBOK/Nordfolk, the Nordic Council of Ministers to be held 11–13 November 1996 at the Royal School of Librarianship, Copenhagen, Denmark.

In the years to come, Nordic libraries and librarians will face new challenges in enhancing access to fiction. The introduction of networking and new electronic media in libraries has created a shift from collection-based to access-based information services. Such developments require new ways of accessing fiction and other works of art. The aim of this seminar is thus both to strengthen the Nordic cultural collaboration in access to fiction, and at the same time to contribute to international research and development in electronic access to fiction and other works of art.

Papers are invited in 6 major areas as follows:

1. Access to fiction via networks, such as the Internet/World Wide Web.
2. IT applications in the arts and humanities, including cataloguing and electronic mediation of works of art, for instance images and music.
3. Classification and indexing of fiction or other works of art in local online library catalogues and national/regional on-line catalogues.
4. Electronic information services for specific user groups and communities, for instance for children; examples: OPAC design, enriched catalogs, multimedia applications.
5. Knowledge organization for specific user groups and communities, including, for instance, reader-interest categorization of collections, stock categorization, compilation of user-oriented vocabularies (classification schemes, lists of subject headings, thesauri).
6. Multilingual information searching and compilation of multilingual, multicultural thesauri, in particular for the arts and humanities.

Prospective speakers are asked to submit extended abstracts *in English* (500–1000 words) to the chair of the seminar as indicated below. An international program committee will review the abstracts. Authors of accepted abstracts will be requested to submit full papers for publication in seminar proceedings.

Seminar and Program Chair: Hanne Albrechtsen, The Royal School of Librarianship, Birketinget 6, DK-2300 Copenhagen S, Denmark. Tel.: +45 31 58 60 66; fax: +45 32 84 02 01; email: hal@db.dk.

Submission deadline: July 1, 1996; notification of acceptance: August 23, 1996; final papers due: November 1, 1996.

4.2. FID/ET seminar, October 20–21, 1996, Graz, Austria

I am pleased to announce that following our traditional practice the FID/ET Committee is going to arrange a pre-congress seminar at the coming FID Congress in Graz.

As can be seen from the attached "Call for Papers", the topics of the seminar are focused on the new roles and functions that are emerging as a result of the new knowledge transfer practices which will be dominant in business and organizations within the next few years. The world of information has been under continuous change during the last decade and there is every reason to believe that the rapid changes will continue and that our involvement in the electronic information environment will increase.

This development requires an entirely new perspective, new strategies and new skills on the part of information professionals. In order to support the development throughout the world, information professionals need to learn new combinations of competences and skills. Adaptation to the emerging electronic information environment demands considerable re-education of, and continuous learning by, all professionals, challenging their intellectual capabilities and requiring adjustment of their mental models and perceptions of work tasks.

The seminar programme will also be a natural continuation of the committee work of

the last FID/ET Pre-Congress Seminar in Tokyo, 1994, where "Multifunctional Information Work. New demands for training?" was discussed. The seminar provided insight and knowledge about many on-going activities where the integration of different skills and competences of multifunctional information work has been successfully carried out by LIS institutions in cooperation with other academic institutions or private companies.

At this seminar the focus is on the utilization of electronic information storage, network communication technologies to enhance professional competence and providing the individual information professional with new operational and strategical capabilities.

To avoid the stress and inconvenience of numerous parallel sessions and activities during the FID congress, the seminar will begin in the morning, Sunday 20 October 1996, the day before the official congress start, and end at in the afternoon the next day. The afternoon of Sunday 20 October is reserved for the FID/ET Committee Business Meeting.

The seminar fee (approx. 1,300 ATS) covers lunch both days, coffee and refreshments as well as copying and clerical assistance.

For further information contact: The Royal School of Librarianship, Birkenget 6, DK-2300 Copenhagen S, Denmark. Tel.: +45 31 58 60 66; fax: +45 32 84 02 01; email: iw@db.dk.

5. Internet

5.1. World Wide Web

5.1.2. Library schools

I am pleased to announce the availability of a comprehensive collection of links to library schools in the United States and Canada at: URL:<http://www.infi.net/~rdralph/library/schools>.

Randy D. Ralph, MLIS, Ph.D., Systems and Extension Librarian, Guilford Technical Community College, Jamestown, NC, USA.

5.1.3. ALISE

The Association for Library and Information Science Education (ALISE) is pleased to announce its WWW homepage. URL:<http://sils.umich.edu/~durrance/ALISE/alise.html>.

The page now features the 1996 ALISE conference, January 16–19, 1996: "Caught in the Crossfire? Conflicts and Cooperation among the Institutional Cultures of LIS Education". Individuals may download a pre-registration form.

The page includes announcements about Association activities, including the ALISE Research Awards Competition, as well as the ALISE Awards program – Professional Contributions to Library and Information Science, Teaching Excellence, and Service to ALISE Awards.

It also includes a list of member schools and accreditation information.

The page is not graphic intensive and thus can be accessed effectively by lynx, but for the best results, use Netscape 1.1.

Please send comments to Emily Lenhart. Email: elenhart@umich.edu.

5.2. Listservs

Archival educators and those interested in archival education are invited to subscribe to a listserv created to host reports and discussions of topics of interest to those involved in archival education.

Information in the following categories especially is sought for this listserv:

1. announcements of upcoming meetings of archival educators or meetings that in some way will concern archival education;
2. reports on meetings that have included archival education among the topics of discussion;
3. announcements and descriptions of upcoming academic courses and/or continuing education offerings, including workshops, institutes, and the like;
4. publications concerning archival education and training, especially publications from or about new programs and curricula;
5. descriptions of new or revised course syllabi, course material, curricula, and/or classroom techniques;
6. publications useful in the classroom, and announcements and reviews of text books, journal articles, and separate publications;
7. descriptions of an queries about use of technology, from computer applications in the classroom to distance education; and
8. news of archival educators, and particularly members of the Section for Archival Education and Training of the International Council on Archives.

To subscribe to the archival educators' list, in the body (not the subject line) of a mail message, write the following message: subscribe icaeds Your first name Your last name (example: subscribe icaeds Jane Doe) send the message to: listproc@mcfeeley.cc.utexas.edu.

This listserv extends the communication offered previously by the ICA Education and Development News, the newsletter of the Section on Archival Education and Training of the International Council on Archives, edited by David B. Gracy II of the University of Texas at Austin. With questions or for further information please write to: David B. Gracy II; email: gracy@uts.cc.utexas.edu.

6. Publications

6.1. *FID News Bulletin: December 1995 "Focus on education and training"*

In this special issue some of the new, innovative approaches which LIS institutions have adopted for their courses are presented. These new approaches are geared to prepare the students to meet the challenges of current societal and business needs and are regarded with high esteem by both students and their peers in the academic world alike.

Ms Monique Jucquois-Delpierre reports findings from her research in the information profession market which she has been conducting since 1987 in the Ruhr area of Germany. By systematically observing the market and by evaluating the training activities in various types of enterprises, she has been able to develop several theses which are useful in identifying the possible types of job that can be realistically envisaged for information scientists, as well as how to improve and adjust the curriculum and course studies. She reports that in 1994 the market greatly welcomed the skills of an editor, a journalist or a PR person. Also, the most frequently sought after "profile" was that of an "intermediary"; namely a translator, somebody who can transfer and transform information from one science to another, convert specialized information into a form for more general consumption and explain specialist applications to a large public. In 1995 market developments in general were slower and the "information technology specialist" was the emerging and most frequently required profession on the job market.

Mr Theo Bothma from the University of Pretoria, South Africa, gives a very convincing example of the current strategy applied by many LIS institutions: to merge their resources with other academic institutions and offer courses combined with other academic subjects where "information studies" are actually integrated with other disciplines.

Elisabeth Davenport's paper offers ideas for innovative learning and workflow and task analysis, she suggests three types of task where a range of new tools, collectively named as "groupware", can be efficiently used to allow people to work together across different dimensions of space, time and team size. Skill with groupware is likely to become a critical application area in the next decade as information specialists find themselves working outside the boundaries of organizations.

Collaborative or group learning refers to the interpersonal process by which the team members, through discussion and debate, offer explanations, interpretations and resolutions of problems. This technique is already used in several places for the reengineering of education and working processes.

Ms Elisabeth Simon shares with us some of her knowledge and experience in running a "continuing education programme" in the present "time of transition" in Central and Eastern Europe. On the basis of the extensive book donation programme set up by the Federal Republic of Germany and the on-site continuing education programmes in library and information management, she illuminates some basic problems connected with the import of Western techniques and methodologies to these countries without taking into consideration the differences in cultural and professional conditions. For

example, all the countries had a very elaborate system of continuing education, in most cases carried out by Methodological Centres, but the participants from these countries are not familiar with any form of group work, roundtables or similar ways of working with each other. Therefore she emphasizes that continuing education programmes where Western management and methodologies are taught without modification, make no progress in this environment. Thus the local personnel has to be empowered to play a leading role in the information process. Vital points in this programme are: education and training for “Managing Change” and the “adoption” of countries and institutions where assistance can be given in a more direct and efficient way.

Mr H. Huttemann from the Deutsche Stiftung für Internationale Entwicklung reports on the DSE Experts Meeting on Continuing Education Programmes for Library and Information Personnel in Educational Institutions, which aimed to identify areas which could be implemented by DSE in 1997–98. Training-of-Trainers Workshops in the subject areas of management skills, operations and services as well as training of school library personnel have been selected as the main priority area for qualitative and quantitative training programmes for the target group.

There is much more to say about the great demand for continuing education programmes in our field, and about the many new concepts which have been developed globally for distance learning, adult education, life-long learning etc. However, due to limited space, this complex issue cannot be fully explored here. But we do promise that the FID/ET Committee will continue to report on developments and trends in this field in the form of individual articles.