



**RIN Consultative Group for Librarianship and Information Sciences**  
**NOTE FROM THE NINTH MEETING – 28 NOVEMBER 2008**

*Action points in italics*

Present:

- Jean Sykes (London School of Economics) (Chair)
- Simon Bains (University of Edinburgh)
- Wayne Connolly (Newcastle University)
- Sally Curry (Research Information Network)
- Stéphane Goldstein (Research Information Network)
- Catherine Gray (Research Information Network) (Minutes)
- Ann-Marie James (University of Birmingham)
- Michael Jubb (Research Information Network)
- William Kilbride (City of Glasgow Museum Service)
- Peter Morgan (University of Cambridge)
- Philip Payne (Birkbeck College)
- Elizabeth Shepherd (University College London)
- Stephen Smith (University of York)
- Judy Wright (University of Leeds)

Apologies

- Andrew Booth (University of Sheffield)
- Paul Clough (University of Sheffield)
- Luis Martinez-Uribe (University of Oxford)
- Janet Peters (Cardiff University)
- Paul Vetch (Kings College London)

**1. Minutes of the meeting of 16 June 2008 (paper RIN/LIS/08/12)**

These were approved.

**2. Matters arising**

None.

**3. Update on Group membership (paper RIN/LIS/08/13)**

The group has expanded its membership over the past three months, with seven new members, including the most recent as of yesterday, Dr Monica Schraefel (University of Southampton).

**4. Follow-up to Freedom of Information workshop (paper RIN/LIS/08/14)**

It was agreed that the Freedom of Information (FoI) workshop held on 19 September was a success and that a follow up event next Autumn would be useful. The workshop attracted a mixed profile of delegates and highlighted how the FoI Act could be used as a research tool. Duncan Tanner (Bangor University), who gave the keynote speech at the workshop, is currently working on a FoI guide for researchers in collaboration with The National Archives; this is intended to be published in early Autumn 2009.

*SG/ES to take forward plans for next workshop.*

The following suggestions for the follow-up event were made:

*MJ/ES to approach*

- Host the event somewhere other than London, possibly Edinburgh or Glasgow
- Advertise in Research Council newsletters (noted that ESRC had advertised the 19 September event)
- Cover the differences between the FoI Act and Scottish legislation
- Consider more explicitly the Environmental Protection Regulations
- Help to disseminate Duncan Tanner's guide

In the meantime, RIN could produce a briefing note on FoI demonstrating how it is relevant to researchers; and also slides for libraries to use in their training programmes

*SG to take forward*

*SG to check if D. Tanner is already doing this*

## 5. **Data management initiatives – co-ordinated approach to advocacy and policy development** (*paper RIN/LIS/08/15*)

There have been several reports and initiatives over the past couple of years relating to data management and recommendations made as to how policies should be developed. However implementation of such recommendations has proved more difficult.

Working with JISC, the Digital Curation Centre and Research Libraries UK, RIN is looking to develop an advocacy strategy regarding implementing change, using the conclusions of these previous initiatives as a starting point. This would be targeted at specific organisations, such as Research Councils and other funders, with the aim that they commit to a plan of action. The intention was to commission an external consultancy to work with RIN and other project sponsors to develop such a strategy.

Comments from the group were welcomed:

- The Group supported the idea of such an advocacy project, but emphasised the need to found this on demonstration of benefit and value of data sharing; any advocacy had to be evidence-based to be genuinely persuasive – RCs are clearly concerned about the cost implications. Related issues such as storage and repositories needed to be separated out, and reassurance provided about data security, confidentiality, etc.
- There are problems with researchers believing adding extra data management costs into their bid may affect the funding they receive. Provision of incentives, rewards and/or recognition could therefore be an important factor for the encouragement of data sharing, in the same way that RCs have provided incentives for public engagement. RCs need to be more explicit and proactive about the support that they could provide regarding the implementation of the data management plans that they themselves call for.
- Not all researchers wish to release their data – so in some circumstances, it may be more important in the first instance to focus on data capture, rather than sharing

Jean Sykes used the opportunity to update the Group on progress with the UK Research Data Service (UKRDS) feasibility study, which is nearing its end. The report stemming from this will be available on the HEFCE website at the earliest opportunity. Although there has been no funding decision made as yet, the report is expected to recommend that a distributed UK data service is feasible. The first two years of the project would be seen as a 'pathfinder phase' rather than a pilot study.

Comments from the group were welcomed:

- Need to bring the Digital Preservation Coalition (DPC) into the fray, to tap into their outreach expertise
- updates on the project can be sent to members of the group
- researchers who do not receive funding from RCs (e.g. archaeologists) also need to be considered

There will be a UKDS conference with HEFCE on 26 February 2009 at the Royal Society in London.

*- S Bains to advise J Sykes of useful contacts within DPC*

*- RIN to circulate UKRDS information to Group members*

## 6. RIN report of finding aids for objects and artefacts (*paper RIN/LIS/08/16*)

This recent project, focused on finding aids for objects and artefacts for researchers, has now finished, and a paper was circulated outlining the report's recommendations. The study, which was probably the first occasion that researchers have been consulted in this way, aimed to review the availability of finding aids and identify barriers to access, and should be a starting point for discussions on how to improve this availability.

Comments from the group were welcomed:

- Some members expressed concerns that the recommendations are too prescriptive and strongly worded, and that this might lead to negative reactions from the museum sector; for instance, the level of difficulty faced by some museums in converting internal catalogues into externally-facing ones. However, the Group was reminded that the project was well-researched, and reflected views carefully collected from museums and researchers; the MLA was consulted in the study and more than half of the report is concerned with the point of view from the museums. The full report provides more clarity and background as to how these conclusions were reached.
- Nevertheless, it was understood that RIN would need to take care in the way that conclusions are communicated, so as not to create the impression that the report has ignored the views of museums.
- It was suggested that museum curators would be concerned that increased information about the collections would lead to an unmanageable increase in demands on their time. On that basis, there could be benefit in a study on the impact, particularly on museum logistics, of making collections information more widely available, as set out in the report.
- It was suggested that commissioning case studies highlighting the benefits of improving researchers' access to collections would be valuable – RIN could approach MLA or similar to part-fund.
- The place of museums in the scholarly communications cycle could also be usefully investigated.
- Members noted that there is a different institutional framework in Scotland, where MLA's remit does not reach.

*- RIN to fine-tune the presentation of the recommendations in order to present them as positively as possible*

## 7. Update on UK Research Reserve (UKRR)

UKRR will enable academic libraries to address the issue of management, storage and/or disposal of low use printed journals. The aim is to ensure the preservation of 3 copies of each journal, with guaranteed access through the British Library's Document Supply service.

Phase 1 of UKRR was a pilot involving six institutions over two years. In phase 2, starting in January 2009, funding from HEFCE will allow

the scheme to be extended to all academic libraries that wish to participate. The UK is the first country to undertake such a project. RIN is providing the secretariat for the UKRR Advisory Board. A project launch will take place on 19 February 2009. A new project manager, Frances Boyle, has been recruited; she will be based at Imperial College and take up her duties in February 2009.

#### 8. RIN communications strategy (*paper RIN/LIS/08/17*)

Now the RIN team has expanded, it has more resources to improve communications and expand the dissemination of RIN material. A new Communications Officer and Partnerships and Liaison Officer have been in post since the Summer; this has already improved RIN's capacity for outreach work with learned societies, libraries, research funders, etc.

Suggestions from the group as to how our strategy may be improved were welcomed:

- Nomination by universities, perhaps through their PVCs, of a contact within their institution for RIN to liaise with
- Share delegate lists for RIN events, or give delegates the names of people from their institution involved with RIN, e.g. consultative group members
- More contact with IT Directors in Universities

RIN will be looking to redevelop the website shortly and would welcome suggestions for improvement. Jean Sykes suggested each consultative group designates three members to feedback to RIN, rather than trying to reach all members individually; Steve Smith, Wayne Connolly and Simon Bains volunteered.

*- SS, WC, SB to feedback to RIN on content and structure of the website*

#### 9. RIN update (*paper RIN/LIS/08/18*)

- A paper detailing RIN's current and forthcoming projects was circulated. As always, suggestions of new areas of research are welcomed
- Simon Bains enquired who was involved with the 'case studies' project at Edinburgh.

*- SG to pass names on to S Bains*

#### 10. Other business

- Stéphane Goldstein noted there will be a joint Consultative Groups residential meeting held on 7-8 May 2009. This will give members of all four groups the opportunity to meet and share ideas. Further details will follow nearer to the time.
- RIN is collaborating with SHERPA to hold a workshop in London on 11 February 2009 regarding compliance with requirement to deposit material in repositories.

**Next meeting: 16 February 2009, 13:30 -16:00**