

2019

NoWAL Annual Review



Chair's Reflection on 2019

2019 has been a very busy year for NoWAL, especially in relation to the very successful conference "Exploring & supporting diversity in academic libraries." The theme really hit a chord with delegates and we will continue to explore related themes and topics through future training and development events. Running the conference also made us stop and think about how we run our events to ensure they are inclusive and this has been embedded into how we plan and run all our events. A big thank you to the Conference Team who put so much hard work into the preparations and ensured the day went well.

The NoWAL Plan has been revised and updated by the Board to cover the period 2019-2022. A survey of Directors has been undertaken to help identify priorities and Operations Group members will lead the key themes. Some early examples include exploring the way our training and development is delivered in particular through online delivery and we will also be gathering some key data for benchmarking purposes.

NoWAL and Northern Collaboration decided it was time to explore the relationship between the two consortia so a consultant has looked at the options available to us for the future. This involved a survey to staff and I am very grateful to everyone who took the time to complete this; your contributions are valued. We hope to be able to take this work forward early in the New Year.

I would like to thank all the officers for their contributions this year and also Nicky Freeman, our Operations Officer.

Best wishes,
Susan Murray
Chair, NoWAL

What is NoWAL?

NoWAL is a network of academic libraries based in the North West, and a subgroup of SCONUL. NoWAL benefits staff and students in member institutions by providing access to specialist skills and best practice. The group's geographical proximity enables the provision of outstanding staff development and training, knowledge exchange and sharing of experience and expertise.

The consortium's mission is to inspire excellence in the learning, teaching and research services of member libraries, supporting their strategic aims; and to celebrate success through collaboration, innovation, influence and partnership.

NoWAL Operations Group

At the NoWAL AGM in June 2019, there were several changes to the Operations Group as officers reached the end of their terms of office:

Heather Thrift (LJMU), Sandra Bracegirdle (Manchester) and Ruth Jenkins (Manchester Metropolitan) stepped down from their roles.

In a change to previous years, the vacant positions were offered to both the Board and Senior Staff Group and two member of the Senior Group have joined the Operations Group as a result.

The Operations Group now comprises:



Susan Murray: Chair
Liverpool Hope University



Julia Martin: Vice Chair
Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine



Julie Hitchen: Treasurer
UCLan



Phil Cheeseman: T&D Lead
Lancaster University



Paul Everitt: Senior Staff Group Link
Manchester Metropolitan University

NoWAL Fact:
Officers usually
serve on the
Operations
Group for 2-3
years

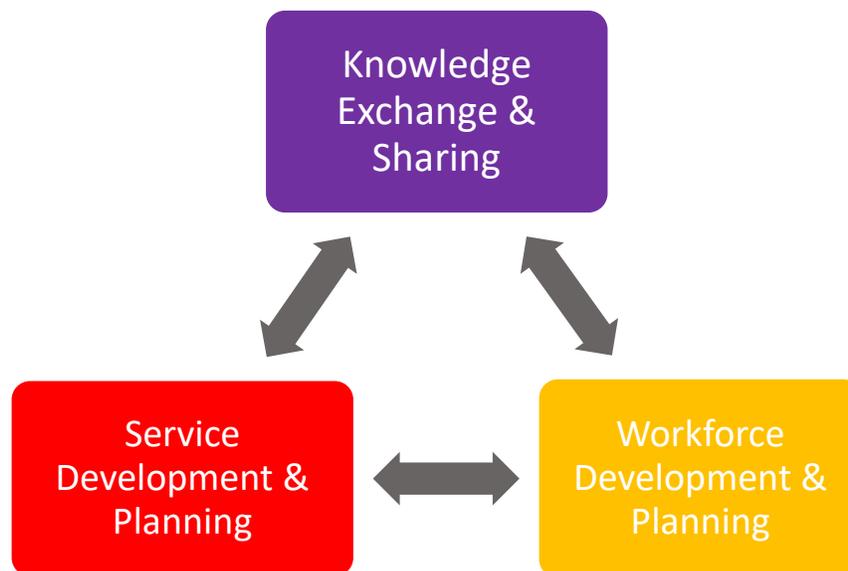
NoWAL Plan

During the first few months of 2019, the aims and objectives of the NoWAL Plan 2016–2019 were reviewed and completed, with items agreed for rollover to a new plan.

The NoWAL Chair would like to thank members of the Operations Group for their efforts on the completion of the Plan’s objectives, not least Sandra Bracegirdle, former Chair, and Heather Thrift, former Training & Development Lead.

NoWAL Plan 2019 – 2022

The new NoWAL Plan was drawn up after consultation with the Board and Senior Staff Group, whose ideas and feedback went into the creation of the new more streamlined and achievable plan. The plan for 2019 – 2022 retains the three strategic themes, but their reach and remit have been amended to suit the style of the changed objectives. Progress made on the Plan will be reported annually at the Annual General Meeting in June.



The new strategic leads for the themes are:

- Knowledge Exchange & Sharing – Paul Everitt and Julia Martin
- Service Development & Planning – Susan Murray
- Workforce Development & Planning – Phil Cheeseman

Further information on the plan, including the aims and objectives against each theme, can be found [here](#).

Activities of Special Interest and Functional Groups

Senior Staff Group



- The Group moved to 3 meetings a year in 2019. These were held at the Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine, University of Manchester and University of Chester.
- During 2019, the SSG surveyed its members, looking at the current and future direction of the group. The results showed that staff were happy with the meeting formats, and it was agreed that the themes for each meeting would be agreed in advance.
- Throughout the year, the group discussed many topics such as the diversification of reading lists, collection management policies, staff development and supporting students with disabilities.

Research Group



- Lucinda May stepped down as chair (to go on maternity leave - congratulations on the birth of her daughter!) and Judith Carr stepped up to lead the group. There was a great response to the request for a new Vice Chair, and Katherine Stephan from LJMU was appointed.
- The group hosted a very well-attended full day event at the University of Manchester in June on Open Research, with external speakers from Jisc and Wellcome, as well as members sharing their experiences.
- The group met in September 2019 and agreed a new set of priorities going forward, as well as a host of training events for 2020. There will be two half day events on the same day (13.05.20), looking at Plan S in the morning and DORA in the afternoon; there will then also be an event looking at research support in general in July 2020. Further details can be found at www.nowal.ac.uk/events

Academic Librarians Group



- Sheila Murphy & Olwen Pennington have continued to run the group as co-chairs.
- The Group met twice in 2019: in May at the University of Liverpool and in November at Edge Hill University. Each meeting had around 12-15 people in attendance and was a great opportunity to share experiences and network with peers from other institutions.
- The Group also convened an extremely well attended TeachMeet on Playful Learning in March, with an opportunity for attendees to participate in interactive induction games. Feedback from the event was very positive, with many praising the opportunity to take part and experience the activities first hand.

Communities of Practice

Since the end of 2018, there have been a number of Communities of Practice (CoPs) developed within NoWAL.

The CoPs have all been set up to enable staff to come together to share experiences and issues, promote good practice and to showcase the best activities and developments taking place across NoWAL.

There are currently 5 CoPs which are in various stages of development:

- Academic Skills
- Building & Space Management
- Content & Collections
- Copyright
- Technology



Examples of activities undertaken by the CoPs:



NoWAL Copyright Community of Practice

- chaired by Neil Sprunt from the University of Manchester
- Met 3 times in 2019 at UCLan, Manchester Met and Edge Hill.

It aims to:

- promote and share good practice in copyright guidance and instruction within NoWAL member institutions
- discuss collaborative solutions to emerging copyright issues
- contribute to the training and guidance of the wider NoWAL community
- to offer support and experience to copyright practitioners in NoWAL



NoWAL Academic Skills Community of Practice

- chaired by Craig Morley from the University of Manchester
- Met 3 times in 2019 at UCLan, Edge Hill and Salford.

It aims to:

- create a community of those involved in information literacy, academic literacy & wellbeing
- an opportunity to share, reflect and develop
- a showcase for new & innovative teaching & learning development practices
- an opportunity to meet and collaborate with colleagues



NoWAL Content & Collections Community of Practice

- chaired by Sandra Bracegirdle from the University of Manchester
- Met twice in 2019, at Manchester and Edge Hill.

It aims to:

- discuss key topics in the area of content and collections in a confidential forum
- share good practice across NoWAL institutions
- facilitate exchange of experience between members
- input into regional and national discussions as appropriate

NoWAL Events 2019

During 2019, the events which took place across NoWAL's institutions included exchanges of experience, TeachMeets, Workshops & visits on a diverse selection of topics. Each event was extremely well attended, with feedback suggesting attendees had gathered lots of tips and ideas to share at their home institutions.

NoWAL Fact:
During 2019 we ran 10 events, hosting a total of 258 people – an average of 26 people per event

I found the whole event useful from the presentations to the group chats

There were some really innovative ideas and practices presented throughout the session that I can see my institution using as inspiration for activities.

Another interesting and useful event and a great chance to catch up with colleagues. Thank you for organising!

Thank you for hosting such an inspiring event!

Event Feedback

A really successful day with thought-out content. The day felt packed with information.

I really enjoy NoWAL events and get a lot from them. Always interesting and informative.

The presentations were all excellent and it was really good to chat to people before and after the session, as well as during the break.

Hearing new ideas from people who are already implementing them, and who can discuss practicalities and the ups and downs that have led them to the finished result, really brings things to life.

NoWAL Conference – 28th June 2019

Exploring & supporting diversity in academic libraries

Friday 28th June 2019

Foresight Centre, University of Liverpool

#nowal19 focused on issues of diversity and inclusivity in academic libraries and hosted 131 people, across a full day of activity and collaboration. Speakers and delegates came from across NoWAL as well as from many universities around the UK, from Edinburgh to Southampton.



Photos courtesy of Twitter

NoWAL Fact:

We had 47 speakers from a variety of UK and Irish universities

The Programme offered a balance of papers and workshops across the four themes of the conference: Accessibility; Collaboration & Engagement; Inclusive Workplace Culture; and Mental Health & Wellbeing. The inspiring keynote came from Dr Jason Arday addressing the persistence of racism in HE and advocating for the decentering and decolonising of knowledge and curricula. A first for a NoWAL conference was the post-lunch panel question and answer session, chaired by Susan Murray. This proved a welcome addition to the programme, with great involvement from the audience & insightful comments from the panel.

The conference raised the profile of NoWAL on a national level with its combination of external delegates and speakers coupled with the innovative NoWAL projects and activities showcased, and via the Twitter buzz which began well ahead of the conference and continued throughout the day and beyond.

The good practice around equality and diversity principles learned during the organisation of the event has been rolled out to all NoWAL events and themes from the conference will be followed up at future events.

NoWAL Fact:
There were 18 short papers, 9 interactive workshops & 2 lightning talks

“My brain is still fizzing with everything from [#nowal19](#) yesterday but I think my biggest takeaway for equality and diversity (not just in libraries but the world right now) would be from [@YearwoodJackman](#) that we need to walk in hope.”

Twitter Quote from [@AlicePonderland](#)

Looking Ahead to 2020

NoWAL Training & Development

NoWAL has a packed programme of Training & Development events in the first half of 2020, with plans for 18 exchanges of experience, teachmeets and workshops, plus two visits to local libraries and collections.

In this non-conference year, NoWAL will also host and pay for 4 expert events to support the work of its member libraries:

- Systematic Reviews – February 2020
- Effective Emergency Planning – May 2020
- Negotiating & Influencing Skills – Date TBC
- Preservation and conservation – Date TBC

NoWAL Fact:
The NoWAL Twitter
account now has 700
followers – follow us
today @nowallibs

NoWAL / Northern Collaboration Review

During November 2019, a consultant was employed by both consortia to look at the synergies and duplications across our activities. The options paper from this consultation will be reviewed in early 2020, with the outcome and plans for the future disseminated to the members during the year.

