

NoWAL Summary of Activity 2019

The purpose of this report is to provide a summary of NoWAL's activities in 2019 for presentation at the AGM in October 2020, for the current and future NoWAL Board and the SCONUL Executive Board. A version of the summary (with financial data removed) will be available on the [NoWAL website](#).

1. NoWAL Governance

NoWAL is a regional subgroup of SCONUL based in the North West, and uses its close geographical proximity to enhance its outstanding reputation for knowledge exchange, staff development and training; benefitting all staff and students by providing access to specialist skills and sharing expertise and best practice.

NoWAL's mission is:

- To inspire excellence in the learning, teaching and research services of member libraries, supporting their strategic aims
- To celebrate success through collaboration, innovation, influence and partnership.

➤ NoWAL Officers and Organisation

There were several changes in the make-up of the NoWAL Operations Group during the reporting period:

- Heather Thrift (Liverpool John Moores University) stepped down as Training & Development Group Lead;
- Ruth Jenkins (Manchester Metropolitan University) stepped down as the link with the Northern Collaboration.
- Phil Cheeseman (Lancaster University) took on the role of Training & Development Group Lead from June 2019;
- Paul Everitt (Manchester Metropolitan University) joined the Operations Group as the Senior Staff Group Lead.

Susan Murray (Liverpool Hope University) has continued as Chair, with Julia Martin (Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine) as Vice Chair. Julie Hitchen (University of Central Lancashire) continued to provide financial support in the Treasurer role.

The NoWAL Operations Group (also with Nicky Freeman, Operations Officer, ex officio) met three times in 2019 to oversee NoWAL activities, manage the introduction and development of the NoWAL Plan 2019-2022 and set the agenda for the Board meetings and AGM.

The NoWAL Board met in February, June and October with a varied agenda ensuring that members were up to speed on the progress and activities of the consortium. The afternoon themed discussions at the meetings looked at key issues facing the sector, such as Open Access Developments and Plan S. The October meeting was attended by two external speakers, Andrew Grave (CILIP) and Geoff Walton (Manchester Metropolitan University, Library & Information Management Programme) who presented on recent developments in CILIP and the LIS curricula and led a discussion with Board members.

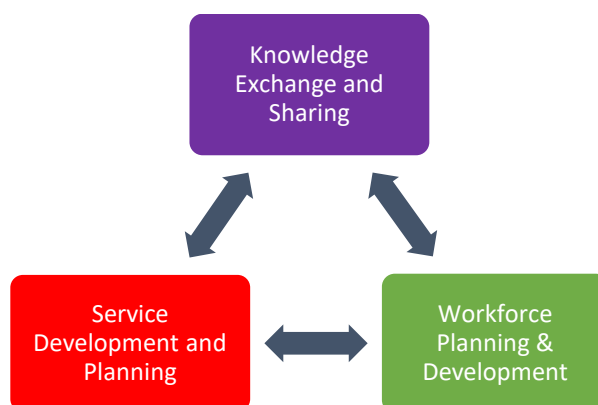
During 2019, NoWAL continued to build on the relationship with SCONUL as a regional sub-group, with SCONUL providing administrative and financial support to the consortium, particularly helpful during the conference period.

NoWAL extends its thanks to the University of Salford Library for continued hosting of the NoWAL Operations Officer during this time.

2. Achievements and Performance

2.1 NoWAL Plan

During 2019, the NoWAL Plan 2016-2019 came to an end, with the Operations Group highlighting the achievements and success of the plan. The Group also developed a new plan for 2019-2022 in liaison with the Board and Senior Staff Group, creating three new strands on which the work of the consortium would focus:



2.2 NoWAL Training & Development Programme

The Training & Development Programme continued to develop during this period, with 2019's activity again underlining the consortium's strong commitment to collaboration and partnership, witnessed in its exchange of experience events, teachmeets and workshops. There were fewer events, particularly expert events, in 2019 as it was a conference year and time and resources were allocated there.

NoWAL ran 12 events, hosting a total of 287 people – an average of 24 people per event: 6 Exchanges of Experience/Workshops, 1 TeachMeet, 4 visits to special interest libraries in NoWAL locations and 1 expert event (Understanding & Dealing with Change facilitated by Lisa Jeskins), the latter making use of NoWAL funds for the benefit of its members. All of the events were well-received and well-attended by attendees and provided additional value to member libraries. See *Appendix 1 for a full list of events.*

NoWAL wishes to thank all staff and institutions involved in running the events. Their contributions and enthusiasm help to enable a coherent and inspiring set of events for all members.

2.3 NoWAL Conference 2019

The NoWAL conference (#nowal19) was entitled *Exploring & supporting diversity in academic libraries*. Hosted at the Foresight Centre, University of Liverpool in July 2019, it focused on issues of diversity and inclusivity in academic libraries, hosting 131 people from across NoWAL, as well as from many universities around the UK. The Programme offered a balance of papers and workshops

across the four conference themes: Accessibility; Collaboration & Engagement; Inclusive Workplace Culture; and Mental Health & Wellbeing. Dr Jason Arday provided a thought-provoking keynote, addressing the persistence of racism in HE and advocating for the decolonising of knowledge and curricula. A post-lunch panel question and answer session, chaired by Susan Murray, proved a successful addition to the conference, with audience participation & insightful panel comments. 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.

2.4 NoWAL Communities of Practice

The Academic Skills, Copyright and Technology Communities of Practice (CoP) created in 2018 continued to develop, facilitating the coming together of staff from across the consortium to discuss key topics and share experiences within their own field of expertise. Development of the Buildings & Space Management CoP stalled in 2019 and it is likely that it will fold in 2020. However, an additional Content & Collections CoP was developed which continues to meet regularly and to discuss the strategic development of content in member libraries.

2.5 Annual Review 2019

NoWAL produced its [Annual Review 2019](#), outlining the key activities of the consortium over the year and celebrating the achievements of the 14 member institutions and of the special interest groups, communities of practice and functional groups.

3. NoWAL Functional & Special Interest Group Reports

3.1 NoWAL Senior Staff Group (SSG)

It was agreed at the end of 2018 that the frequency of Senior Staff Group meetings would be amended to follow the pattern of Board meetings. For 2019, therefore, the Group met in February, May and October, with discussion topics ranging from the NoWAL Plan, maintaining a record of expertise and experience across the consortium to collection management policies and accessibility. The Group continued to hold meetings at different institutions, with a 'roving chair' assigned by the host institution. In 2019, the meetings were hosted by Manchester, LSTM and Chester.

During the year, members of the Group completed a survey looking to ascertain their thoughts on the future of the Group, its functions and remit. The overwhelming feeling from those who completed it was that it should continue in its current form and that they found it to be an invaluable way for senior staff to share knowledge and experience across a range of key areas in service development.

3.2 NoWAL Procurement Group

During 2019, Elizabeth Gillespie (Liverpool) continued as Chair of the Procurement Group. Fiona McClean (Chester) and James Stephens (Cumbria) were joint Monographs co-ordinators, with Sarah Taylor (Salford) and Helen Charles (Manchester) joint Serials co-ordinators.

Monographs: During 2019, the Books, E-books, Standing Orders and Related Material - Inter-regional Agreement was extended to 31st July 2021. The NWUPC provided institutional spend data for the framework agreement to all members. A book review meeting was held at the University of Chester in March. Most of the issues discussed related to ProQuest, with staff reporting issues with delivery turnaround times and damaged deliveries. The first meeting of the NWUPC Library Services Group took place in July. Members of the group discussed ongoing issues when trying to integrate book supplier systems with library management systems via API. It was suggested that this is included in

future tender discussions and the NWUPC will invite book suppliers to the next meeting (March 2020). Book Supplier Review meetings took place in October. There was a reported slight reduction in agreement spend from 2017/18 to 2018/19; this is likely to be related to Brexit and some spend going direct to publishers for EBA rather than via aggregators.

Serials: The Serials, Periodicals and Associated Services Framework Agreement ended on 30th April 2019. The new framework has been awarded to four suppliers EBSCO; LM Information Delivery; Otto Harrassowitz; and Prenax. The agreement commenced on 1st May 2019, led by SUPC. It includes all University Purchasing Consortia and Academic Library Consortia across England and Wales. The end date is 30th April 2021, with optional annual extensions to 30th April 2023. In July, a 'Northern Consortia' Supplier Day was held in Leeds for members of NoWAL, NeYAL and MUAL. LM, EBSCO and Prenax attended to discuss their Framework agreement offers and meet with institutions to discuss the Framework and answer institutions' questions. Institutions have been undertaking supplier call-off to move to the new framework agreement.

3.3 NoWAL Research Group

In June 2019, the Group organised a full-day exchange of experience event on Open Research, hosted at the University of Manchester. The event included a presentation from staff at Lancaster University reflecting on work undertaken to promote a culture of Open Research across the University, including engagement, advocacy, policy refreshes and consultation with senior leadership. There were workshops, facilitated by Judith Carr, on innovations and tools in Scholarly Communications and exploring how using a Business Model Canvas could focus efforts to promote openness at institutions. There were presentations from University of Manchester staff on reproducibility and working as a librarian on an open research project; and Open Access+ and how to reach broader audiences. The day finished with a presentation from the Wellcome Trust looking at Open Research from a funder perspective. In July 2019, Lucy May (Manchester) stood down as Chair of the Research Group (due to maternity leave) and Judith Carr (Liverpool) stepped up from her role as Vice Chair. Katherine Stephan took on the role of Vice Chair.

3.4 NoWAL Academic Librarians' Group

Olwen Pennington and Sheila Murphy (Edge Hill) continued to chair the group during 2019. The Group met in May and November, rotating the meetings round the member libraries, with Liverpool and Edge Hill hosting. The meetings provided a varied agenda looking at drafting reports for academic staff and engagement with departments; induction strategies; the benefits of communities of practice; and highlights of the Relationship Management and NoWAL conferences held in 2019. Members of the Group continue to cite the opportunity to discuss relevant issues with colleagues from across the region as a key benefit of the meetings and of the group in general.

In March 2019, the Group hosted a very successful TeachMeet on Playful Learning at Edge Hill's Manchester Campus. There were presentations and interactive demonstrations from Cumbria, Manchester, Manchester Met and Salford outlining their playful learning successes, including use of locked boxes, escape rooms and a research-based open access game.

Thanks

Thanks are extended to the outgoing Chairs of the Special Interest and Functional Groups for all their contributions to the work of NoWAL over the year.

Appendix 1

2019 T&D Programme

Exchange of Experience / Workshops	Where?	When?	No. (expected)
Promoting Library Resources	Cumbria	January 2019	23 (30)
Acquisitions	Chester	March 2019	32 (32)
Making the Pedagogy Possible	Manchester	May 2019	34 (38)
Customer Services: Behaviours and Values	Salford	May 2019	27 (35)
Research Support: Open Research	Manchester	June 2019	29 (40)
Engaging with Academics	Edge Hill	November 2019	29 (30)
TeachMeets	Where?	When?	No. (expected)
Playful Learning	EHU (Mcr Campus)	March 2019	31 (31)
Visits	Where?	When?	No. (expected)
North West Film Archive	Manchester	April 2019	23 (25)
UCLan Special Collections & LCC Conservation Studios	UCLan / Preston	May 2019	11 (15)
LSTM Tour & Archive Visit	Liverpool	July 2019	8 (15)
Visit to John Rylands Library	Manchester	November 2019	12 (15)
2019 Expert Events (NoWAL Funded)	Where?	When?	No. (expected)
Understanding & Dealing with Change – <i>facilitated by Lisa Jeskins</i>	Liverpool Hope	March 2019	28 (32)