

NoWAL Annual Review 2017



Chair's Reflection on 2017

Welcome to our Annual Review showcasing the activities of NoWAL in 2017.

I know many staff across the region have benefited from NoWAL over the last year, taking part in our training events, contributing to our special interest groups and sharing good practice across institutions. The NoWAL Conference held at Lancaster University was a particular highlight this year with over 100 delegates attending.

The NoWAL Board meetings have focused on key issues facing the sector and have generated much interesting discussion and shared experiences. This year we have looked at strategic workforce planning, learning spaces and links to NHS libraries and knowledge services. We have also received reports on the progress of our operational plan.

We have continued to develop our relationship with SCONUL as a regional subgroup and are currently working to establish a mutually beneficial governance arrangement which will ensure that we maintain a stable base going forward.

I would like to thank all those who have contributed to the success of NoWAL in 2017, especially members of the NoWAL Operations Group (Susan Murray, Julie Hitchen, Heather Thrift, Ruth Jenkins and David Clay), the NoWAL conference planning group and Nicky Freeman (NoWAL Operations Officer).

Best wishes,

Sandra Bracegirdle
Chair, NoWAL

What is NoWAL?

NoWAL is a network of academic libraries in the North West of England, with an outstanding reputation for knowledge exchange, staff development and training; benefitting our members by providing access to specialist skills and shared services across the HE sector.

NoWAL serves all the UK Universities and Colleges of Higher Education libraries in Cheshire, Cumbria, Greater Manchester, Lancashire and Merseyside. The consortium's mission is to inspire excellence in the learning and research services of member libraries; to drive the North West academic library agenda and be a regional voice for SCONUL; to celebrate success through collaboration, innovation, influence and partnership.

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Progress on the NoWAL Plan



NoWAL's 3-year plan has developed steadily over 2017, with progress being made against all themes:

Knowledge Exchange & Sharing

Sandra Bracegirdle

- NoWAL has continued to work with SCOUNL on developing a robust, mutually beneficial relationship as a sub-group
- Our Board meetings continue to tackle emerging and important topics at each meeting
- The NoWAL website failure has been a setback this year, but work has been done to manage communications and a new site is now up and running
- The Procurement Group continues to input into new contracts, monitor existing contracts and develop training and support for staff across the consortia

Service & Workforce Development & Planning

Susan Murray

- Nominations have been sought for a group looking at how to interpret library generated analytics data better. The Northern Collaboration plans for a similar group are also being investigated
- A research support survey was completed by staff in September 2017, and a Task & Finish Group has begun analysing the results, aiming to produce a report in February 2018
- The Critical Friend process and workflow was approved by the Board in February 2017 and is now an additional offering of the consortium

Training & Development

Heather Thrift

- All NoWAL Special Interest Groups now have Terms of Reference documents and active discussion groups
- Staff have continued to share knowledge and expertise via the comprehensive Training & Development programme and informal visits
- Creation of the Senior Staff functional group allows staff in senior leadership positions to meet, discuss and network twice annually
- Externally hosted events have been routinely advertised via the NoWAL Twitter account and regional training events have been hosted and subsidised by NoWAL

1. Knowledge Exchange & Sharing

NoWAL Website

Work began over the summer on a new NoWAL website, which was launched at the October NoWAL Board meeting, bringing back the domain www.nowal.ac.uk. We hope to use the new NoWAL Website to shine a light on our activities; to celebrate our collaborative successes; to showcase the benefits of NoWAL; and to demonstrate where expertise lies in NoWAL libraries.



NoWAL Governance Guide

Over the course of 2017, the Governance Guide, created when NoWAL had company and charity status, was updated to reflect the partnership with SCONUL and the fact there is no longer a formal reporting procedure to Companies House and the Charities Commission.

The resulting updated **Governance Guide** indicates the current status of the consortia, and provides information on the roles and responsibilities of the officers, Operations Group and Board.

A Year in Procurement

Monographs Update

The new *Books, E-books, Standing Orders and Related Material - Inter-regional Agreement* began on 1st August 2017, running until 21st July 2019, with an option to extend on an annual basis to 2021.

Member institutions received a comprehensive Buyers' Guide for the new agreement in early July and a meeting was held to talk it through and answer any related questions. A NoWAL review meeting to discuss how members implemented the new agreement and supplier performance during the initial months is being organised for February 2018.

We spent
£4,965,057
on books in
2017

We spent
£6,610,888
on serials
in 2017

Serials Update

A meeting to review the first year of the new serials agreement was held in December 2017. This provided an opportunity for members to raise any concerns with supplier performance, having completed a questionnaire based on the framework agreement KPIs in advance

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of the meeting. Suppliers attended the meeting to respond to concerns and to update members with new developments.

Events

During 2017, the group arranged two acquisitions-related events. The first, entitled *'Everything you ever wanted to know about Acquisitions but were too afraid to ask...'* was held at the University of Liverpool in February and proved a great success, attended by 45 Library / Information Assistants from across NoWAL.

The session was an opportunity for staff to meet their counterparts at other institutions and to network and share experiences of common issues, whilst also building their knowledge of systems and processes. Given the success of the first event for Library Assistants, another full-day shared experience event focusing on Document Delivery & Digitisation is planned for January 2018, hosted by the University of Salford.



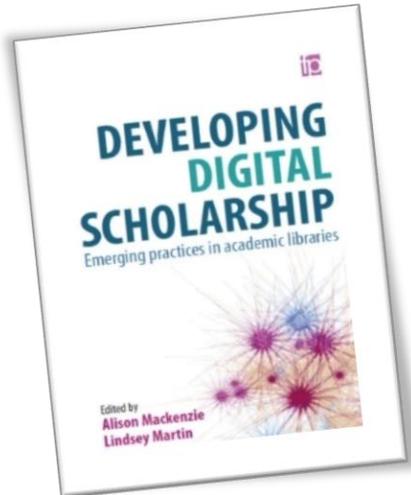
The second event was a successful half-day shared experience event in November 2017, *'Acquisitions - doing more with less'*, held at the University of Manchester and attracting staff from the majority of NoWAL member libraries. Feedback from the event suggested that sharing methods of using budgets wisely, and having examples of what has worked at other institutions was invaluable to those in attendance.

Two members of the NoWAL Procurement Group also presented at the NoWAL conference. Gopal Dutta and Jane Cooke ran a very successful workshop on the ebook accessibility audit, the results of which fed into the new book framework agreement.



2. Service & Workforce Development & Planning

Digital Scholarship Expert Event – January 2017



In addition to the usual programme of exchanges of experience and workshops, we also ran an expert event on Digital Scholarship in January 2017. This event was facilitated by Alison Mackenzie and Lindsey Martin of Edge Hill University, and followed the publication of their book *Developing Digital Scholarship: emerging practices in academic libraries*. The case studies from the book were brought to life by the contributors using a variety of engaging and innovative presentations. The event was attended by staff from within NoWAL libraries as well as from several external institutions, ranging from Swansea to York and many places in between, and received a host of positive comments and feedback.

Data Management Plans Training – May 2017

NoWAL liaised with the **Digital Curation Centre** in Edinburgh to organise a session on reviewing **Data Management Plans** in May 2017, an event previously run in London. NoWAL was able to pay for the training from funds set aside for Training & Development. The event exemplified the increased opportunities that being part of a consortium brings to NoWAL members - it would have been difficult for individual institutions to organise such training for themselves due to cost constraints and it also made it worthwhile to the DCC to provide training in the region.



CILIP's Employer Forum: Impact and Leadership – November 2017

Having made a connection with CILIP at the Northern Collaboration conference in September 2016, NoWAL was asked to partner with the organisation on the delivery of an event aimed at employers and leaders in November 2017. The event, hosted at the University of Salford, was attended by a number of senior leaders from within NoWAL and outside, from across sectors and was a great day of engagement, discussion and networking.



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3. Training & Development

The 2017 programme was put together following a meeting of representatives from all NoWAL institutions, at which members made suggestions based on conversations and ideas brought from their colleagues. These suggestions were then combined with ideas gleaned from feedback at other NoWAL events. This collaborative and collegiate approach ensured that the finished programme included something for everyone and provided the opportunity for all members to host, present or attend a varied and diverse range of events.



In 2017, NoWAL ran 19 events across a full range of topics, from acquisitions to customer services, attracting 434 staff from many roles and grades, making an average of 23 people in attendance at each event.

Of the many strands of feedback received at this year's events, again the one consistent subject for comment concerned the opportunity for delegates to network and liaise with peers from other NoWAL institutions. Examples along the lines of the ones below occurred in the feedback from every event we held in 2017 when asked *What did you find most useful about the event?:*



- “Sharing experiences with other institutions – the chance to speak to others doing a similar role”
- “As usual the networking was great”
- “Networking with colleagues always very helpful”

Staff also frequently commented that the events allowed them to benchmark themselves against other institutions, with usually very positive outcomes:

- “Knowing we are all singing from the same hymn sheet!”
- “Being reassured that other people struggle with similar issues and sharing the joy of finding solutions to those issues”

NoWAL Conference 2017 Review

The NoWAL Conference 2017 *Library evolution: developing academic libraries for the future* was held at Lancaster University in July 2017 and was a great success, due to the high number of delegates; the increased number of suppliers providing sponsorship; the high quality of the speakers; and the enthusiasm and planning skills of the Conference Planning Team.

67 feedback forms returned

Throughout the day there were interactive and hands-on workshops on a range of topics, half hour breakout sessions and a poster display to keep the delegates entertained. A networking lunch enabled the suppliers to meet and greet attendees and a drinks' reception sponsored by Taylor & Francis, the conference title sponsor, rounded off the day.

The breakout sessions were well-attended, with a good split of delegates in each session. Numbers choosing and attending the breakout sessions ranged from 15 to 26, indicating that there was a good level of interest from delegates in all the topics covered. The mixture of papers, workshops & teachmeets was complimented by many delegates.

100% 'Strongly Agreed' or 'Agreed' content of conference was relevant to them



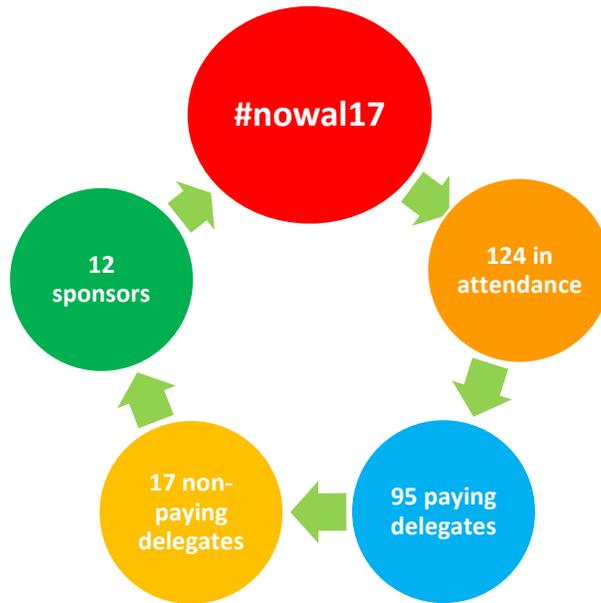
Delegates

Approximately two thirds came from NoWAL member institutions; of the remaining third, there were staff from many different institutions across the country, from the universities of Cambridge and Oxford in the South to the University of the West of Scotland in the north. There was also a good mix of staff from all levels and backgrounds in attendance, from directors to library assistants, via officers from other consortia, from collections to research support.

47 described as 'excellent' & 20 as 'good'

Benefits

Several delegates suggested that the most useful aspect of the day was the networking opportunities afforded to them. There were also some more hidden impacts from the conference - several meetings have come about as a result of delegates attending breakout sessions together or following up with presenters to discuss the possibility of shared projects. We have also created a Knowledge Bank of information for future NoWAL conference planners.



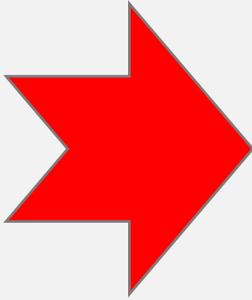
#nowal17 Storify - <https://storify.com/StorifyNoWAL/nowal-conference-2017>

"excellent organisation and a very enjoyable day"

"great to hear about so many innovative projects in the north west – great conference"

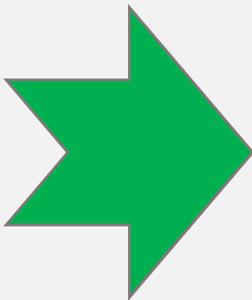
Special Interest and Functional Groups

Senior Staff Group



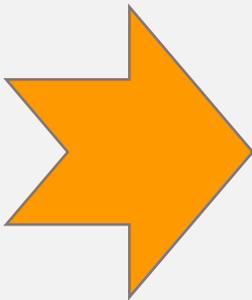
- The group met twice in 2017, and developed the format of the meetings to follow that of the NoWAL Board, introducing a members' update section, networking lunch and a themed afternoon discussion
- The group has agreed that having a 'roving chair' for each meeting is working well and should continue, being reviewed annually to ensure it is still meeting the needs of the Group. The next meeting is at the Lancaster campus of the University of Cumbria.
- The group has developed over the year, and has become an invaluable way for members to share knowledge and experience across a range of key areas in service development.

Copyright Group



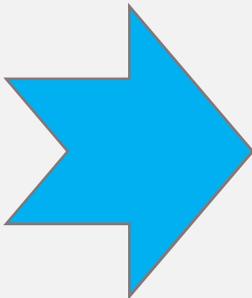
- Over the course of the year, the Group has reviewed and rewritten its Terms of Reference and reactivated the discussion list for its members.
- The aim is to have a core membership of colleagues to organise and coordinate group events allowing discussions on relevant topics and themes for the wider membership.
- An expert event on copyright and copyright education, led by external presenters and taking place at the University of Salford, will form part of the programme of events for 2018.

Research Group



- The Research Support and RDM discussion lists continue to be well used and provide a forum for the sharing of experience, problem solving and dissemination of events.
- A survey of staff working in Research Support generated 17 responses, which have been reviewed by a Task & Finish Group during November 2017.
- A report outlining the main findings, and making recommendations for future NoWAL support, will be tabled at the NoWAL Board in February 2018.

Special Collections Group



- The discussion list has been used on an ad hoc basis to share information and knowledge across the group.
- The list has also been used to 'advertise' members' collections and exhibitions taking place throughout the year.
- The annual Special Collections event, *Smart strategies for tough times*, was held at LJMU in June 2017 which attracted 17 people from across NoWAL. There were new ideas for collaborations, links and funding opportunities arising from the presentations.

Celebrating NoWAL Successes



University of Bolton

LEAP Online, the University of Bolton's Learning Excellence Achievement Pathway, launched in September 2017, designed to support students during their academic journey and personal development while they are at University. The content was a collaborative effort involving the Library team, academics and other support services.

University of Chester

Following the promotion of the Director of Learning and Information Services (LIS) to Pro-Vice Chancellor for Professional Services & Operations, and Chief Information Officer, the Deputy Director responsible for Business Improvement Services, Learning technology / E-resources, Graphics and Print Unit Services is now Director of LIS. A new Customer Service team has been introduced to centralise phone and email traffic and review other communication options with users, allowing frontline helpdesks to focus on face to face services.



University of Cumbria



The university celebrated its tenth anniversary in 2017 which saw many activities to increase its regional and international profile and expand on its assets of "People, places and partnerships." As part of the University's growth plan for the future, the Library and student academic skills were combined with the IT service to create a new department, Information Services. The first results of this were to increase library opening hours across two of the five campuses, refurbish informal learning spaces and lead a university-wide review of reading lists, library resources and develop a revised resource allocation model.

Edge Hill University

Work has been ongoing on the new building, named Catalyst, in which the Library will be co-located with Student Services and Careers. A new frontline service was created to offer a converged enquiry service with a new Customer Services Manager. Frontline staff have gone through a new training plan, as each member of staff will need to answer queries from across all areas of student support. The building is set to be open in May 2018.



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Lancaster University



The refurbished Library has proved to be exceptionally popular with students this year, its success being reflected in excellent survey results, in the NSS in 2017. The Library also achieved joint first place in the UK for good library and library opening hours (THES Student Experience Survey 2017). Since the refurbishment, numbers attending the building have regularly exceeded 50% more than pre-refurbishment levels, leading to pressure on study space, especially during the exam period.

University of Liverpool

Answers to the library questions in satisfaction surveys have been pleasing, with the Library being ranked as top quartile for the PRES; top half for PTES; and above average in the NSS (within the Russell Group).



Liverpool Hope University



The Library took advantage of the University's internship programme, offering an internship in Special Collections to work on one of the founding college archives in preparation for the college's 175th anniversary in 2019. As a particular focus of the project was on the digitisation of photographs, the successful applicant gained valuable experience in digitising photographs using a desktop scanner, digital camera and editing software.

Liverpool John Moores University

The Library went live with Ex Libris Alma and Primo which together provide an integrated Library Management System and Resource Discovery Platform. Students and staff are able to explore the extensive collection of print and digital resources with just one search. The Library team believes it will meet the evolving needs and expectations of both its users and the library service long into the future.





Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine

Since the Library was refurbished in 2016 there has been a significant increase in usage which has more than doubled. In September 2017, the School was granted degree awarding powers, for both taught and research degrees, by the Privy Council following assessment over two years by the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA). As a result, the Library team is now involved in looking at its programme of support in more depth, especially support for postgraduate research students and how it can help in the delivery of distance and online course delivery.

University of Manchester

The Library's contribution to Widening Participation through 'My Learning Essentials' resources was recognised with a Blackboard Catalyst Award for Community Engagement which was presented to the Library at the Blackboard conference in New Orleans in summer 2017. The nomination for the Library WP service and the University's Widening Access Team showcases the university's use of eLearning and blended learning to improve quality, scale and reach in three programmes to which the library contributes.

The Library has created a video summing up 2017: <https://youtu.be/kTGrGuLlecQ>



Manchester Metropolitan University

The Library was named University of the Year at the 2017 Talis Insight Awards. The award was in recognition of the work done over the last few years to wrap services around the student and the library's contribution to student success.

Royal Northern College of Music

The Special Collections team has been successful in obtaining HLF funding for the project *Making Music in Manchester during WW1*.



University of Salford



The University celebrated its 50th anniversary in 2017. The library contributed to the celebrations by curating an exhibition of materials from the Archives & Special Collections and the University's Art Collection reflecting the themes of memory, sense of place and journeys and by promoting the 'Dear Library' initiative, originally conceived by our Chancellor Jackie Kay, to champion libraries and celebrate the breadth of services they offer. The first section of re-developed Clifford Whitworth Library opened and was well received by students.

University of Central Lancashire

The University hosted more than 600 students and academic staff from the American University of the Caribbean (AUC) medical school after their campus on the island of Sint Maarten was almost completely destroyed by Hurricane Irma. AUC is using UCLan's Library and also its teaching and specialist clinical spaces during evenings and weekends when they are not timetabled for UCLan's own students.



NoWAL Goodbyes

During 2017, two NoWAL advocates left their posts for pastures new:



Margaret Weaver, from the University of Cumbria and Chair of NoWAL from 2012 to 2015, left the University at the end of March. As Chair of NoWAL, Margaret's drive and enthusiasm were infectious and she was instrumental in developing the consortium's reputation. She successfully steered NoWAL through its transition from company & charity status to partnership with SCONUL, helping to ensure a more efficient and secure collaboration.

Julie Berry, University Librarian at the University of Salford (and latterly other Interim Directorships at the University) also a great supporter of collaboration and the benefits of working together, left the University in the summer of 2017. Julie had various roles within NoWAL during her time at Salford and was influential in developing NoWAL's systems and services.



Other NoWAL Comings and Goings in 2017

Coming In

- David Clay became the permanent University Librarian at the University of Salford.
- Alastair Flett became Deputy Director Libraries, Museums and Galleries at the University of Liverpool.
- Colin Coghill, Director of Information Services at the University of Cumbria, assumed responsibility for library services in a restructure of the University's support services.

Going Out

- David Summers, Deputy Director of Library Services, retired from Lancaster University.
- Carol Kay, Associate Director, Planning & Resources, Libraries, Museums and Galleries, retired from the University of Liverpool.
- Lisa Toner left the University of Cumbria and is now working as a school librarian at an international school in Bangkok.

Everyone at NoWAL wishes them all the best for their future endeavours.

Looking Ahead to 2018

Manchester has been named as a UNESCO City of Literature and as part of this the Library at **University of Manchester** will be involved in the Manchester Festival of Libraries.

Liverpool is hosting Big Hope 2. **Liverpool Hope** library will be contributing a learning track on Communication and Truth, from manuscripts & early print works through digital resources and managing your digital footprint to social media and fake news.

2018

UCLan will celebrate its 190th anniversary with a year of events & activities: a book on the history of the University & a major international conference on the Temperance Movement will both draw on the Library's archives & special collections.

The re-developed Clifford Whitworth Library at the **University of Salford** will open fully in January 2018

The **University of Chester** Library will continue to focus on working in partnership with our users, particularly around service and information literacy teaching provision.

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