

Editorial

Welcome to another issue of *Library and Information Research*, which includes a range of papers exemplifying the rich diversity of research taking place into library and information topics, whether conducted by practitioners, by academics, or as a result of practitioner-academic collaborations. It combines contributions relevant to a range of library and information sectors, including academic, public and health libraries. It includes reflective articles about experiences of conducting research, and articles which encourage the reader to think differently about how research may be carried out and reported.

In an invited contribution, the winner of the 2011 Library and Information Research Group (LIRG) Student Prize, Thomas Muggleton, reflects on his research into the information use of people with experience of homelessness. He describes some of the challenges of conducting research with an often marginalised group of people, as well as summarising his findings, which challenge some possible assumptions about differences between the information use of people without homes and those with homes.

In our second invited contribution, Paul Sturges explores the role of imagination in the research process. Taking in part the conventional structure of a research article (“Literature”, “Methods”, “Findings”), Sturges explores the ways in which each stage of the research process could benefit from a more imaginative approach.

Cruickshank, Hall and Irving report on the findings of the RiLIES2 (Research in Librarianship Impact Evaluation Study) survey, exploring the use of a variety of resources intended to support research into library and information topics. In many cases, it seems that useful sources – both specific to the UK and those with an international dimension – are not as well known as they might be. For the short-term, the LIS Research Coalition website (<http://lisresearch.org/>) now brings together information about these resources.

Irvine, Jessiman and Felce describe a Delphi study of midwifery professionals working in NHS Scotland, exploring their research priorities. This study, undertaken with the assistance of the LIRG Research Award 2010, shows how the Delphi technique can be used by library and information practitioners, as well as illustrating some of its potential limitations. It also demonstrates the multiple levels at which practice and research intersect in the work of library and information services.

This paper is also a reminder of the research awards offered by LIRG. A LIRG Research Scan Award is currently open to proposals for a literature scan exploring the question “what do LIS practitioners want from research?”; the deadline for submissions is 7 January 2013. More information about this opportunity is available at: <https://sites.google.com/site/lirgweb/home/awards/lirg-scan-award>.

Marsh and Evans reflect on their experience of an academic library's involvement in attracting research funding for a university project. They describe the process of collaborating with other departments in their institution, from the initial stage of bid preparation, to carrying out the research, through to the final project evaluation.

The first of our refereed articles offers a different perspective on the topic of academic library engagement with the wider research agenda of universities. Gaby Haddow describes a qualitative study of approaches to research support by libraries in six of the UK's newer universities. The study focuses on library engagement with the Research Assessment Exercise in 2008 and with the forthcoming Research Excellence Framework assessment. This article provides useful and timely insights into some of the challenges facing libraries trying to enhance their role in supporting research, and the approaches they are taking address these issues, including taking on new roles in bibliometric support and research data management and curation, and by developing collections in new ways to support research.

Stuart Palmer also examines quality assessment in academic libraries. Palmer's article discusses an investigation at Deakin University, Australia, which used a qualitative examination of handbook descriptions of academic units or modules to explore possible reasons for differing levels of student satisfaction with library resources, depending on their units of study. The findings suggest that handbook entries which directly mention the importance of the literature may encourage greater student engagement with the library.

Andrew Shenton invites readers to consider the role of the principles paper – articles which use professional experience, as well as the literature or original research, as the basis for conceptualising or modelling aspects of the library and information field. Shenton suggests that this type of paper offers a good opportunity for both practitioners and researchers to distil ideas generated by their work into key statements, which might influence the future development of the profession.

In the final refereed paper, Ship and Robinson explore the role of outreach activities and events in two London library authorities. The findings suggest that combining libraries and learning services, together with hosting special events, may provide one way of revitalising public library services and increasing usage.

Our book reviews should be of interest to readers from a range of sectors: Louise Cooke reviews Garvin (ed.) (2011) *Government information in the 21st Century: International perspectives*; Sally Reeve examines Ruthven and Kelly (eds.) (2011) *Interactive information seeking, behaviour and retrieval*; Justine Sissons writes about Blanchett, Powis and Webb (2012) *A guide to teaching information literacy: 101 practical tips*; and Mathew Stone describes Brettle and Urquhart (eds.) (2012) *Changing roles and contexts for health library and information professionals*.

This issue also provides an opportunity for us to introduce ourselves as the new LIR Editorial Team – Olga Borymchuk, Jan Conway, Jason Eyre, Christopher Walton and myself all hope you find something of interest in these articles. If you

are carrying out research in the field of library and information studies, whether you are a practitioner or an academic, please do consider sharing your findings by writing for publication here on the pages of *Library and Information Research*.

Angharad Roberts

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