

Collaboration, Evolution, Sustainability

MERCIAN COLLABORATION CONFERENCE



Timeline of the Day

9:30 - 9:45	Arrival and Registration
9:45 - 10:50	Welcome and Keynote
10:50 - 11:05	Break and Networking
11:05 - 11:55	<u>Breakout Session 1</u>
12:00 - 12:30	<u>Breakout Session 2</u>
12:30 - 13:20	Lunch and Poster Presentation
13:30 - 14:00	<u>Breakout Session 3</u>
14:00 - 14:10	Break
14:15 - 15:05	<u>Breakout Session 4</u>
15:10 - 15:55	Round Table Discussion
15:55 - 16:10	Closing Remarks

Breakout 1

Strand 1

Digital Champion – building team digital confidence

Louis Wassell, De Montfort University

Measuring things that matter: joining up data for change

Bertha Yuen Man Low, Birmingham City University

Strand 2

What do International Students want? Supporting International Student transition to UK university education.

V Sharma & Tracy Lowe, Nottingham Trent University

Placing the Library at the heart of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion: The library and the evolving face of Decolonising DMU

Kaye Towlson, De Montfort University

Strand 3

Develop With Derby: how the UoD Library’s civic outreach resource improves academic and information literacy skills for local school students.

Hazel Roome & Naomi Bowers-Joseph, University of Derby

Strand 4

Breaking out of the library: Raising the profile of Derby authored books in the local community.

Lisa Ferrari & Michelle Bennett, University of Derby

All together: Collaborating cross-teams to deliver digital theses

Fred Flagg, Aston University

Breakout 1

Digital Champion – building team digital confidence

Louis Wassell, De Montfort University

This session explores how the Digital Champion initiative at DMU empowers library staff to upskill in digital tools. It highlights the importance of digital literacy for efficient library services.

Through my real-world example, we'll delve into strategies for identifying skill gaps, implementing training options like workshops and tutorials, and fostering a culture of digital confidence within teams.

Attendees will gain practical insights from our ongoing upskilling journey, including successes, challenges, and tips for building a digitally empowered library workforce.

Measuring things that matter: joining up data for change

Bertha Yuen Man Low, Birmingham City University

Library operation generates a wealth of data. How can we harness data to improve services and demonstrate impact?

Library and Learning Resources (L&LR) of Birmingham City University has re-established a programme of active library data analysis, after a considerable lapse of time. We are now on a data journey, developing and refining our approach of data collection and analysis.

In order to achieve our data aims, we deal with the practicalities of data clean-up, develop single version of truth, dashboards, and data stories, standardise data practice, empower library staff in data literacy and, of course, learn from mistakes.

This session will share the journey towards our data aims so far, sharing our overall approach in developing library data analysis and in changing our data culture.

Breakout 1

What do International Students want? Supporting International Student transition to UK university education.

V Sharma & Tracy Lowe, Nottingham Trent University

Join us as we share our journey of collaboration with international students, which aims to identify academic challenges encountered by international students and create a resource which supports and empowers students and mitigates some of the challenges that they may face during their transition to study at Nottingham Trent University.

Discover more about the findings of our research, and the bespoke resource that we created, based on the reported needs and preferences of the students.

Placing the Library at the heart of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion: The library and the evolving face of Decolonising DMU

Kaye Towlson, De Montfort University

Decolonising DMU (DDMU), a university wide, strategic project continues to play a crucial role in the University's EDI work, with the library as a significant contributor. In April 2023 De Montfort University became the first UK Higher Education Institution to be awarded the Silver Race Equality Charter (REC) award by Advance H E. The library, mainly through involvement with DDMU, played a crucial role in this achievement and continues to do so by its inclusion in the current REC Action plan. This places Library and Learning Services at the heart of DMU's race equality work.

This session will share DDMU's past, present and future work which continues in the ever evolving, space of Higher Education and libraries. Delegates will learn the context, actions, collaborations and challenges experienced by DDMU. Those attending will leave with a knowledge of actions, successes and challenges of DDMU and how the project is evolving.

Breakout 1

Develop With Derby: how the UoD Library's civic outreach resource improves academic and information literacy skills for local school students

Hazel Roome and Naomi Bowers-Joseph, University of Derby

At the University of Derby (UoD), the Academic Librarian team work in collaboration with the Widening Access team and Schools and Colleges Liaison (SCL) to accommodate visits from schools across Derby and surrounding areas. The current academic year has seen a significant increase in demand, and therefore we met with colleagues in SCL to discuss alternative ways this need could be met – Develop with Derby was the result.

Develop with Derby is an online platform which provides asynchronous support for skills development. The resource offers follow up' guidance for visiting school students, provides information skills support for schools who are unable to visit and helps bridge the gap into university.

Our presentation will outline the Develop with Derby project from concept to launch and include a demonstration of the platform. Delegates will have the opportunity to discuss and ask questions as well as provide feedback on the resource.

Breaking out of the library: Raising the profile of Derby authored books in the local community

Lisa Ferrari & Michelle Bennett, University of Derby

Find out how University of Derby library staff work with colleagues across the university to support the Derby Book Festival. Derby authors are now showcased at the festival annually.

The talk will share details of how all teams in the University of Derby library contribute to the success of the university's collaboration with the Derby Book Festival. We will also share how the Derby authored books collection has been brought together in online and physical spaces. We will explore how the library supports the festival year round through social media, library collections, displays and promotion. In talking about our experiences so far, as well as our plans for the future we hope to inspire colleagues at other universities. The talk will last 15 minutes, followed by a Q&A session.

Breakout 1



All together: Collaborating cross-teams to deliver digital theses

Fred Flagg, Aston University

How do you solve a problem like unscanned theses hidden away in unsuitable basement storage?

Since 1966, Aston University has granted 5000 thesis-based degrees, 1/3 of which were still paper-only in 2022. Making over 1700 theses available required a collaborative effort from teams across the Library, including Open Research, Information Resources, Information Specialists, and User Services, from filling 239 boxes of theses to uploading individual files into our repository and CRIS.

This session will cover how we shared out the tasks, what worked and the lessons learned.



Breakout 2

Strand 1	<p>Utilising events for collaboration & engagement. Rory Allden, De Montfort University</p> <p>-----</p> <p>Cross-institutional collaboration to enhance study skills support Kate Courage & Sarah Purcell, University of Worcester</p>
Strand 2	<p>AI Won't Kill You, But It Might Kill The King: Giving Students the Opportunity to make Informed Decisions about Using AI Ben Moore, Birmingham Newman University</p>
Strand 3	<p>Launching a Research Intelligence Service: Reflections on the first year Kirsten Elliott & Daniel Rooney, University of Nottingham</p>
Strand 4	<p>Poster Exhibition and Networking</p>

Utilising events for collaboration & engagement

Rory Allden, De Montfort University

A presentation on how library services can foster collaboration and engagement via participation in wider university events, as well as presenting our services to prospective or current students.

Breakout 2

Cross-institutional collaboration to enhance study skills support

Kate Courage & Sarah Purcell, University of Worcester

This paper will outline the development of a new, cross-institutional approach to study skills provision at the University of Worcester, with strong collaboration between Library Services, academic staff, other professional services staff and students. This has resulted in the creation of a new, engaging and interactive Study Skills Portal and the development of a Study Skills Community of Practice. We have also carried out a funded, Students as Academic Partners project, working with students (undergraduate and postgraduate) to evaluate the work and create a road map for future development of study skills support.

The presentation will discuss the process, methods and challenges involved in creating the portal and establishing and maintaining the Community of Practice, leading to a more collaborative approach to study skills provision across the institution as a whole.

AI Won't Kill You, But It Might Kill The King: Giving Students the Opportunity to make Informed Decisions about Using AI

Ben Moore, Birmingham Newman University

Responding to the growing presence of AI in academia can feel terrifying and overwhelming. It's developing so quickly that it's almost impossible to keep up. But librarians at Birmingham Newman University have found that students are less concerned with the details of how to use it – they can mostly work that out for themselves.

What really gets students talking are the ethical questions around generative AI. We decided to give students a brief overview of how to use AI safely in their work to avoid cheating, but lean much deeper into empowering them to make an informed decision about whether or not they want to use it.

cont.

Breakout 2




From dodgy AI training practices, inherent biases, and problematic defences of predatory celebrities, to meth recipes and attempted monarch assassinations, the ethics of AI is a murky business.

Launching a Research Intelligence Service: Reflections on the first year

Kirsten Elliott & Daniel Rooney, University of Nottingham

In 2023 the University of Nottingham Libraries launched a new service: Research Intelligence. The goals of the service are to help researchers build peer reputation and raise awareness of their work. In practice, this means providing training to support staff to develop their online research profiles, promoting the exploration and use of bibliometric research analytic platforms and reinforcing the responsible use of research metrics.

This talk will reflect on the evolution of the service, including the development of training and our enquiry service. We will discuss some of the challenges and achievements so far, and future plans for further developments.



Breakout 3

Strand 1

Better together: regional collaboration to deliver a national open research week event

Laurian Williamson & Lara Skelly, University of Leicester & Loughborough University

Public and Community Engagement in Europe's First Integrated University and Public Library

Gee Cartmell, University of Worcester

Strand 2

Pledges, grassroots, and bananas - starting our sustainability journey at the Open University Library.

Jess Taylor & Lizzie McCauley, Open University

CPD: In at the deep end (wearing arm bands)

Tamasine Ashcroft, University of Birmingham

Strand 3

The long way to a smaller collection: our print journals' journey into offsite storage and how only some made it back

Amy Seal, University of Leicester

Leisure reading for all: using RNIB Bookshare to make Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion accessible

Caroline Lloyd & Clare Williams, University of Nottingham

Strand 4

Networking

Breakout 3

Better together: regional collaboration to deliver a national open research week event

Laurian Williamson & Lara Skelly, University of Leicester & Loughborough University

Loughborough University, De Montfort University and the University of Leicester joined together to celebrate their inaugural Open Research Week from 26 February – 1 March 2024.

From the first, the event was planned open to all and feature a range of topics, speakers and disciplines. What resulted was a hugely successful collaboration in delivering a national event. In this presentation, we share our journey of collaboration and tips on how others could do something similar.

Public and Community Engagement in Europe's First Integrated University and Public Library

Gee Cartmell, University of Worcester

The Hive is Europe's first integrated Public and University Library, a partnership between Worcestershire County Council and the University of Worcester. This partnership offers an unprecedented audience for events in the library and has created an innovative approach to public and community engagement.

Through hosting and contributing to events at The Hive, academics and researchers from the University of Worcester have engaged over 500 members of the public in this academic year alone. These talks, events and exhibitions have helped university teams work towards goals of knowledge exchange and democratising education, while the public benefit from a free, accessible and engaging programme unlike anywhere else in the country.

This model is mutually beneficial for the library, the university and the attendees of the events, giving each party the opportunity to grow and learn alongside each other to the advantage of everyone involved.

Breakout 3

Pledges, grassroots, and bananas - starting our sustainability journey at the Open University Library

Jess Taylor & Lizzie McCauley, Open University

How do you grapple with 'the most pressing issue of our time'? Sustainability is a familiar concept, but understanding how it applies to libraries and what we can do to be greener is harder to get to grips with.

In October 2023, the Open University Library launched the Green Library Network; a grassroots group for any member of library staff who had an interest in sustainability. Since then, we've been raising awareness and advocating for sustainability from the ground up. Our numbers may be small, but our collective voice and knowledge has been powerful.

We will share with you some of the challenges we encountered in our first steps to being greener, how we overcame them, and what we learnt along the way. And of course, answer that age-old question, how bad are bananas?

CPD: In at the deep end (wearing arm bands)

Tamasine Ashcroft, University of Birmingham

Even for the most driven individuals it can be challenging in customer service and technical roles to gain experience of academic engagement beyond the transactional. Opportunities for CPD to enhance a CV can be difficult to find and practical experience needed for an application is almost impossible.

At UoB we have been piloting a scheme that enables staff to develop skills in academic engagement by involving them in the real-world experience of staff student fora. This scheme bridges the gap between deep development activity, such as secondment, and short theoretical training courses which don't allow for experiential learning. The success of the scheme relies on effective collaboration between volunteers, their managers, and the Engagement Team.

cont.

Breakout 3



In this presentation, we will summarise how the pilot was run and evaluated; share stories from the staff involved and demonstrate how it supports CPD, informs service development and enhances engagement with the student community.

The long way to a smaller collection: our print journals' journey into offsite storage and how only some made it back


Amy Seal, University of Leicester

From an External Store closure to a trimmed down print journals collection – be inspired to tackle space issues in your own library - hear about how we analysed and weeded our print journal collection whilst it was in storage.

Leisure reading for all: using RNIB Bookshare to make Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion accessible

Caroline Lloyd & Clare Williams, University of Nottingham


In this talk we will discuss the importance of leisure reading collections and EDI-themed reading lists and explain how we are using RNIB Bookshare to make diverse content from these collections available and accessible to print-disabled students studying at the University of Nottingham. We will also discuss our plans to improve and expand upon this work in future.



Breakout 4



Strand 1	<p>Beyond the Stacks: A Sneak Peek into Library Staff Engagement with Job Shadowing. Ayesha Thompson, Chris Addleton & Cristina Rusu, University of Nottingham</p>
Strand 2	<p>Green Impact: tick boxes or a route to sustainable change? Claire Browne & Steve Bull, University of Birmingham</p>
Strand 3	<p>Seedlings from the Furrows: Nurturing Success in Times of Change. Claire Townsend & Peter Doveston, Aston University</p>
Strand 4	<p>Riding the Wave: Collaborating on Systematic Review Support in Healthcare and Beyond. Giada Zanella & Kathryn Devine, Aston University</p>



Breakout 4

Beyond the Stacks: A Sneak Peek into Library Staff Engagement with Job Shadowing

Ayesha Thompson, Chris Addleton & Cristina Rusu, University of Nottingham

Do your Library teams struggle to stay in touch with each other? Do your staff sometimes not know what the function is of other teams within your Library structure, and who to turn to with a problem?

The University of Nottingham Libraries Training and Development team saw just that with their staff and wanted an interesting and engaging way to combat it. And thus our Libraries Job Shadowing scheme was born.

Job Shadowing is a way for staff to spend time with another team, learning what they do and providing the lightbulb moments when the pieces of the Library jigsaw all fall into place. The scheme not only upskills staff and improves staff engagement but also promotes cross team collaboration.

Green Impact: tick boxes or a route to sustainable change?

Claire Browne & Steve Bull, University of Birmingham

Libraries have an increasing responsibility to think about their environmental credentials. Our central role within the University makes us well placed to explore, whether physically and virtually, sustainability in HE.

In this presentation, we'll discuss our journey with the SOS Green Impact scheme, from achieving a bronze award in 2023, to aiming for gold in 2024. We'll show how we have used the scheme to go from "tick box" activities (to get our house in order) to wider and more impactful change that has become our departmental culture and reaches into the broader institution.

Our presentation will also include a workshop element to allow delegates to explore the enablers and blockers to progress in their own institutions, and help each other consider practical ways to overcome these hurdles and share good practice. Delegates will also have opportunity to share initiatives that they are proud of or have learnt from.

Breakout 4

Seedlings from the Furrows: Nurturing Success in Times of Change

Claire Townsend & Peter Doveston, Aston University

Change is a permanent feature within the world of work and Aston University library, as with many in the University sector, is undergoing a continual process of renewal. This is especially pertinent within the area of staff development where the challenge of managing job fulfilment alongside maintenance of a front facing service is ever-present. This talk will show how we have positively approached staff development within our team of library assistants whilst simultaneously re-energising collections and re-engaging with staff and student bodies

Riding the Wave: Collaborating on Systematic Review Support in Healthcare and Beyond

Giada Zanella & Kathryn Devine, Aston University

The support demands from students and researchers undertaking systematic reviews (SRs) is increasing. As such, more librarians are becoming involved in providing guidance in an area in which they may not have formal training.

The Self-Taught SRs Community of Practice (CoP) is addressing this gap in training, via collaboration and knowledge sharing. Growing to over 200 members within just four months, the CoP fosters a supportive and safe learning environment where members can contribute freely.

Delegates will learn how the CoP's founders defined and promoted this new group. They will see how they use an online platform to welcome new members, encourage discussions, and keep conversations organised in themes. They will also learn how they seek feedback and how the community is evolving. This session is aimed at any professional who supports students and researchers and who is interested in CoPs for professional development.