



Editorial: Changes all around

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If you are one of many librarians still trying to find your bearings in a rapidly changing information environment while at the same time facing reduced budgets, this issue of *LIBER Quarterly* is for you. Two LIBER Executive Board members, President Paul Ayris and Norbert Lossau of Göttingen, present broad visions on the situation in which research libraries now find themselves and how they may evolve in the future.

Norbert Lossau looks at the many research infrastructures which are springing up all over Europe and encourages research libraries to get much more actively involved than they are now: ‘Open Access, open science (data), research data infrastructures and management are the catalysts to get research libraries back into the awareness of researchers beyond the humanities and social sciences.’ And: ‘The majority of public funding will go into data infrastructures. Research libraries will benefit only marginally from this funding if they stick to research publications and the digitization of cultural heritage.’

Paul Ayris agrees that there are new sources of funding to be explored for research libraries, especially from EC-funded projects. In addition he points to collaboration as a key ingredient for surviving difficult economic times, such as joint procurement (Big Deals) and shared cataloguing.

International projects can bring more than just money, as demonstrated by Ines Vodopovic, who describes the National and University Library of Slovenia’s involvement in the IMPACT project. Benefits include new knowledge, more standardization and participation in an international network of experts.

Karen Harbo and Thomas Vibjerg Hansen of Aarhus University (Denmark) explore the 'user logic' that should underlie the innovation of libraries' services. The 'Journey of Discovery in Danish Library User Land' allowed 110 library staff to meet hands-on with users in their own environment and learn more about their true needs.

Another example of librarians stepping out of their comfort zone and meeting users (in this case researchers) at their place of work is described by Anne Laitinen and her colleagues from Helsinki University (Finland). The 'knotworking' project made use of the Change Laboratory method in order to develop new kinds of partnership between libraries and research groups.

Such new types of partnership with the research community can really strengthen the library's position in the academic community, but they constitute quite a challenge for library staff who have to learn new skills. Maria Cassella and Maddalena Morando of the University and Polytechnic of Turin respectively, explored whether repository managers in Italy have the new skills required, especially with regard to promoting the repository within the university and with regard to copyright issues. It comes as no surprise that much work is yet to be done to train and educate repository managers adequately.

On the other hand it did come as some surprise (at least to me) that, apparently, research librarianship *literature's* themes have not fundamentally changed in the past fifty years, as discovered by Umut Al, İrem Soydal, and Gülten Alır of Hacettepe University (Turkey) — or is a lack of key words and abstracts accountable for this finding? The authors used social network analysis to identify the bibliometric characteristics of research librarianship literature and pinpoint, a.o., the most productive author and the most prominent journal.

On a more technical note, Timo Borst of the German National Library for Economics (ZBW) looks at the types of controlled vocabularies libraries have traditionally been using. Have they lost their significance in the age of commercial search engines? Borst argues that this is not the case. Controlled vocabularies are still valuable, because they can suggest related search terms, thus bridging the gap between information systems' 'language' and users' 'language', both within academic disciplines and across domains.

Mats Dahlström, Joacim Hansson and Ulrika Kjellman (Sweden) look at digitization as a practice and assert that it is more than just a neutral activity transferring content from one medium to another — it is a *signifying* activity in that the decision as to what to digitize and what not shapes or cultural heritage and indeed transforms the role of the library.

The last article in this issue is a Report by Pavla Rygelová about Open Access Week 2011 in the Czech Republic.

After this issue, *LIBER Quarterly* itself will undergo a transformation. As of Volume 22 *LIBER Quarterly* will become a peer-reviewed academic journal, edited by Professor Raf Dekeyser and a newly established Editorial Board chaired by Professor Mel Collier. The LIBER Board is still looking at possibilities to complement the peer-reviewed *LIBER Quarterly* with a rather more informal online platform to exchange professional information. The LIBER website will keep you posted.