Re-skilling librarians to support research faculty and students

Mary Auckland
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“[the] need for librarians to reinvent their roles as partners in the scientific and research process is acute”

RIN, 2011
RLUK’s vision is that the UK should have the best research library support in the world.

http://www.rluk.ac.uk/content/re-skilling-research
what do researchers do that librarians might help with?

- Conceptualising new research and developing proposals
- Seeking new information
- Information management
- Research data collection/generation
- Research data discovery, management and curation
- Sharing, discussion, online collaboration
- Analysing and reflecting on information and research data
- Writing up and dissemination
- Compliance, intellectual property, copyright
- Preservation
- Quality assessment and measuring impact
- Commercialisation
- Emerging technology
how are libraries responding?
- some highlights

• Business as usual
• More of what we already do, and better
• Not engaged
• Beginning to get involved
  – More research data related activity
  – Advising on scholarly communication and impact
  – Greater embedding and engagement in research
  – Compliance
What does this mean for librarians’ skills?
areas where skills are needed

- subject/discipline
- research process
- partnerships
- subject information
- research data
- information literacy
- scholarly communications
- funders’ mandates, assessment
- ‘legal’ and compliance requirements
- metadata
- emerging and Web2.0 technologies
skills essential now, and increasingly important over next 2 – 5 years

• Excellent knowledge of bibliographic and other finding tools in the discipline/subject
• Excellent skills to design information literacy training to meet the identified needs of different types of researchers
• Outstanding skills in information discovery, literature searching etc.
• Knowledge to advise on citing and referencing, and the use of bibliographic management software
• Ability to pro-actively advise on appropriate library services to researchers
• Good knowledge of data sources in the discipline/subject
• Excellent knowledge of content in the discipline/subject
• Awareness of current and changing local research interests
• Ability to gain an appreciation of individual researcher/project needs, including effective listening skills
MIND THE GAPS
areas with high skills gap

- Advising on preserving research outputs
- Advising on data management and curation, including ingest, discovery, access, dissemination, preservation, and portability
- Support researchers in complying with the various mandates of funders, including open access requirements
- Advising on potential data manipulation tools used in the discipline/subject
- Advising on data mining
- Advocating, and advising on, the use of metadata
- Advising on the preservation of project records e.g. correspondence
- Knowledge of sources of research funding to assist researchers to identify potential funders
- Skills to develop metadata schema, and advise on discipline/subject standards and practices, for individual research projects
4 areas considered least necessary now or in the future

- Knowledge of sources of research funding to assist researchers to identify potential funders
- Deep understanding of discipline/subject
- Ability to synthesise, analyse and provide digests of ‘discovered’ information
- Ability to advise on the preservation of project records
bridging the skills gap

- In-house training
- Training providers
- Library and Information Schools
- Recruitment
“The Library will become a clear and critical component of a central service that addresses all aspects of the research lifecycle.”

University of Edinburgh
models of researcher support

• ‘traditional’ liaison model
• greater engagement and embedding
• more hybrid support in which new library posts are being created
• University posts, departments and initiatives
• shared services and outsourcing
• commercial services
“The main message ... for research libraries is that the future is now, not ten years away, and that they have no option but to understand and design systems around the actual behaviour of today’s virtual scholar.”

CIBER 2008
“While there is general agreement that liaison roles are changing, research libraries are grappling with defining the scope of these new roles. Identifying emerging roles, determining what work to let go of, designing supportive institutional structures, and ensuring that liaisons have needed skills and knowledge present challenges.”

ARL website
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