Reflections: Conference and Forum

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UKSG held its annual One-Day Conference and Forum at the Grand Connaught Rooms in London on 15th and 16th November and both events were very well received and supported by the many delegates attending them.

As has now become our custom, we asked our student delegates to send us their reflections on the events as a means of capturing some of the highlights.

> Reflecting on the conference, Amy Campbell, an MA Librarianship student from the University of Sheffield, was particularly impressed with the presentation by Jane Winters – 'What role do publications have, in relation to other reputation factors, for researchers?' This was an illuminating presentation on the specific needs of humanities researchers in terms of disseminating their work, promoting open access publishing and helping them deal with an increasingly competitive job market. She highlighted that researchers need to identify all possible audiences when deciding how to publish and share their work and that early career researchers in particular need support from both academic libraries and from publishers in doing this. This was an engaging talk which introduced many of the key themes which emerged from the conference: early career researchers; training and development; the opportunities and perceived risks of OA publishing; and how university libraries can tailor support to researchers in subject-specific ways.
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> For Ari Zuntriana, also at the University of Sheffield, the highlight of the conference was the presentation from Angela Davies and Sarah Thomson on the White Rose Libraries. Ari, who has worked in libraries in Indonesia, really appreciated how the White Rose collaborative practice towards sustainable repositories would be a very useful approach for libraries in many developing countries. In Indonesia, due to a number of barriers, there are many cases where repositories are under developed and underperforming. In their paper, the presenters talked about "sharing works means sharing the risks and cost". Therefore, as a solution for libraries in developing countries, working across institutions would be a best possible solution in overcoming challenges around resources and skills.
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> Ari also took away the fact that a library consortium does not have to involve lots and lots of institutions and that working in a smaller size partnership makes the decision making process more efficient and less complicated.

All in all the presentations around the themes of the conference were very informative to all those who attended and were broad enough to allow some variation in content so that there was something of interest to everyone, whether it be about the future of publishing, the use of social

media for dissemination of research or the use of new technology in the research process. The opportunity to hear from practitioners and those involved in scholarly publishing ecosystem was of immense value to the delegates and particularly our student delegates.

The forum was entitled 'The innovation game – breaking the rules' and encouraged speakers to share their respective innovations across a number of scholarly communications themes. It certainly lived up to this brief.

> Cui Cui, another MA Librarianship student from the University of Sheffield describes how using the themed 'football' backdrop as a metaphor for breaking the rules (ie when the game of football was formed after breaking away from rugby football) the forum set about facilitating its themes. Firstly there was the 'Design of the pitch' which focused on new publishing models, platforms and systems. Key presentations under this theme included those focusing on library collaborations and born digital publishing platforms. The second theme of 'Setting out new ways to play' looked at facilitating text and data mining, particularly within an 'open and sharing' scholarly communications environment. The final theme was that of 'Integrating the game' which invited speakers to think about solving the problems posed by the current environment and included talks on various projects involving IPregistry and JISC's IRUS-UK (Institutional Repository Usage Statistics UK).

There were so many presentations from practitioners and publishers alike at the forum that it would be impossible to report and reflect on them all, but a couple stood out for Sarah Gilbert and Lauren Ferreira (both on the MA in Publishing at UCL).

> Rick Anderson's approach to innovation in his talk 'Better, not newer: why I'm ambivalent about innovation' not only made those attending the forum reassess their potential ideas, but also the ideas that had come before. With 'innovation' being the buzzword of the moment, Rick neatly reminded us that 'the purpose of innovation is not to be innovative'. While there have been many great innovations within scholarly communication - open access, e-books, digitisation to name a few - we must remember that ideas need to be ground breaking only in what they achieve.

> With the theme of innovation in mind, it is useful to consider how diverse areas of our industry are finding effective means of innovating, and the impact of these changes upon the industry as a whole. For example. in the afternoon selection entitled 'Publishing Innovation' we heard from Springer Nature and Ubiquity Press – each concerned with how industry innovation is produced from both within and without. It was particularly interesting to consider their pitches in tandem, given their vast differences in terms of founding motive, age and disciplinary emphasis.

> Tom Mowlam of Ubiquity Press discussed business model innovation, concerned with Ubiquity's support of accessibility in terms of reaching content, and the opportunity to publish as both an academic and a press. He detailed Ubiquity's services to smaller publishers who want to adapt or expand their existing business models, offering both advice and 'plumbing' aids. He also touched upon their own publishing activities and promotion of open access, such as through author waiver funds and intervention with early career researchers. In comparison, Timon Oefelein from Springer Nature took the opportunity to discuss their 40 'current innovation projects', including the Publons Partnership and their transfer desk for rejected papers. His discussion listed the specific routes Springer Nature are developing in order to directly combat the most pressing inefficiencies in scholarly publishing – crucial implementations for an established publisher.

In summary, both the conference and the forum provided much rich content and discussion around innovation and not being afraid to try new things. Scholarly communications need to adapt with cultural, academic and technological developments and being empowered to innovate and to 'break rules' can help our industries to keep up.

Overall it was an extremely successful couple of days and we look forward to doing it all again next year. Most of the presentations from the One-Day Conference and the Forum can be found on the respective webpages.

This report has been collated with contributions from Ari Zuntriana, Amy Campbell, Carolyn Ten Holter, Cui Cui, Lauren Ferreira, and Sarah Gilbert.