# Editorial

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Welcome to the latest issue of SCONUL *Focus*. In this issue, we turn our attention to the topic of leadership.

I admit rather than reading any tomes from leadership gurus to find some inspiration for this editorial, my research was limited to a Google search on 'leadership quotations'! One that did resonate, and appeared in a number of results, was by J.F. Kennedy, '*Leadership and learning are indispensable to each other*'. It resonated for two main reasons. First, it implies that leaders need to be constantly evolving: leadership is not like a management task that can be completed. Secondly, a focus on the need for continuous learning is linked to change. The number of changes that our profession is having both to respond to and to be proactive in leading on could surely be another issue of SCONUL *Focus* (or possibly a series of issues over the next couple of years!).

So what is our profession doing to ensure we are equipped with effective leaders to move us forward?

SCONUL has established a Leadership Task and Finish Group, and the Group's Chair, Alison Baud, outlines the objectives and next steps for this recently-established group, with links to the website for more information.

There is no shortage of leadership courses which are aimed either at our profession exclusively or at the higher education community more broadly. A number are featured in this issue. Jan Wilkinson and Roger Fielding describe the LIBER (Association of European Research Libraries) Emerging Leaders Programme, whilst John Tuck profiles the LIBER *Journées* programme, which builds on the success of the former.

Whilst these two examples highlight the relevance of taking an international approach to leadership development, the article by Jo Alcock features the leadership programme that has been developed by CILIP to support future leaders in the library, information and knowledge professions in the UK.

The Future Leaders Programme, developed by the Leadership Foundation for Higher Education, in collaboration with SCONUL, UCISA and the British Library, celebrates its tenth anniversary this year. *(I was on the second cohort – was it really nine years ago? Ed)*. John Cox, a participant in the first cohort, describes the benefits of producing a reflective journal over the last ten years – one of the by-products of participating in the programme.

All the programmes in these articles are featured in an additional article, which provides a series of snapshots from programme participants who offer personal reflections on the impact of being exposed to these leadership development initiatives.

The Higher Education Academy (HEA) offer a number of levels of Fellowship as a route to supporting professional development and leadership. Roisin Gwyer describes the benefits she has found from applying for, and succeeding in attaining, the Principal Fellowship of the HEA.

Of course effective leadership is not only about partaking in courses and other accredited programmes. If the 'proof of the pudding is in the eating', then it is important to demonstrate the implementation of the learning within the organisational content. Many of the articles focusing on leadership programmes do so by reflecting on the difference the programme made to the individuals who took part in them. In addition, the article from Oliver Pritchard offers a practical example of how the development of shared service values at the University of Sunderland drove and shaped a service convergence, reflecting on challenges, successes and key learning for the future. The article by Hugh Murphy also focuses on the impact of effective strategic leadership at

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the institutional level, this being a key component in placing the library at the strategic heart of the academic community and in enhancing its value.

If we are going to consider leadership challenges for the future – for example, succession planning – then having detailed knowledge of the workforce within our profession is also important. The article by Simon Edwards presents the findings of research into the UK information workforce, commissioned by Edinburgh Napier University and undertaken by CILIP and the Archives and Records Association (UK and Ireland), ARA.

Last, but not least (and is the lead article in this issue), the theme of leadership includes an article giving the personal views of six current leaders in our profession who were interviewed via email using  questions set by the SCONUL *Focus* Editorial Team.

As usual, this issue also includes a number of eclectic articles, not related to the overall theme of leadership, which have been accepted by the Editorial Team because of their more general relevance and interest to the profession.