Collections Management: Share the experience @ York

An event organised and hosted by the University of York Library in association with Jisc, RLUK and SCONUL

Ron Cooke Hub, Heslington East, University of York (07.07.15)

***Context***

In early April 2015 an email was sent out on the Jisc Lis-List asking if there was any interest in a Collections Management (CM) focused event, and asking for areas of particular interest for discussion. There was an enthusiastic response from over 70 individuals from 40 institutions, listing a range of subject areas. (**Appendix 1**) Following discussions at the Copac CCM tools board meeting on April 23rd, it was agreed to stage a practitioner based CM event at York in July 2015, with the support of Jisc, RLUK and SCONUL. 80 people pre-booked to attend the day, with a waiting list of over 25 more. Attendees on the day numbered 74, with the focus of the day’s presentations based on the most requested subject areas.

***Aims and Objectives of the day***

The main aim of the day was to encourage the development of a community based around Collections Management.

Objectives:

* To facilitate the sharing of experience and good practice relating to four main areas of collection management activities (external stores, collection management policies, stock analysis and collections development.)
* To enable discussion and network building between participants
* To provide an opportunity for discussing the potential for aligning activities within the community (collaborative working/consortia)
* To provide input and feedback relating to future potential events.

***Anticipated outcomes:***

For the participants to:

* Have insight into how other institutions address Collection Management issues
* Have established new contacts with staff from other institutions
* Be aware of approaches to collaborative work, and its value
* Be aware of follow up activities (including future meetings), which will build on the day and help to establish a Collection Management community
* Feedback on the positives and negatives of the day.

For the organisers/sponsors to:

* Have a list of contacts willing to be involved in future Collection Management community building events, and have had the opportunity to establish some individual contacts.
* Have showcased consortia working
* Have highlighted the value of collaborative working across the community
* Have established priorities (as viewed by practitioners), for future projects and events (leading to autumn strategic meeting and second Collection Management day 2016.)

***Format of the day***

The format of the day was as follows:

* Welcome and introduction to the day
* Presentations:
  + **External stores** (Jo Aitkins University of Leicester)
  + **Collection Management Policies** (Laura Shanahan University of Edinburgh)
* Facilitated discussion groups based on presentations

(Lunch)

* Presentations:
  + **Stock analysis** (Helen Faulds University of St Andrews)
  + **Collections Development (**Rachel Kirkwood University of Manchester.)
* Facilitated discussion groups based on presentations

(Break)

* Short presentations of Consortia working
  + **SCURL**  (Jill Evans (National Library of Scotland), Richard Parsons (University of Dundee))
  + **WHELF** Mark Hughes (University of Swansea)
* Group discussion**: “What does a Collections Management community look like?”**

(Neil Grindley Jisc)

* Round up and close.

Feedback from the discussion groups was recorded on flip charts and displayed throughout the day for delegates to review and comment on.

***Feedback***

The response from delegates was overwhelmingly positive with enthusiasm that the event should be the first of many, and that opportunities should be grasped to build a community focused on Collections Management practices***.***

* Quantitative feedback from delegates (via feedback form.)

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Very Satisfied** | **%** | **Satisfied** | **%** | **Dissatisfied** | **%** | **Total** |
| General Content | 45 | 83% | 9 | 17% | 0 | 0% | 54 |
| Presentations | 43 | 80% | 11 | 20% | 0 | 0% | 54 |
| Discussion Sessions | 26 | 48% | 28 | 52% | 0 | 0% | 54 |
| Venue/Facilities | 45 | 83% | 9 | 17% | 0 | 0% | 54 |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

* Comments from the feedback form gathered, and are listed in **Appendix 2.**
* Feedback from all of the subject based discussion groups was reviewed and is available in **Appendix 3,** (including feedback from the group discussion on consortia working.)

***Actions going forward***

An initial review of feedback immediately following the event highlighted some “quick wins” which could be implemented quickly to take greatest advantage of the level of interest and enthusiasm.

***Short term actions:***

* To circulate delegate list – completed July 15
* Set-up and launch as Jisc CM group email list (LIS-COLLECTION-MGMT): completed 30.07.15. (187 subscribed by 01.09.15.)
* Set up CM web page - initially on the CCM website - in process August 15
* Make event presentations available on CM web page and promote – completed August 15.

***Suggested medium term actions:***

* Strong interest in further CM events, with a number mentioning the possibility of a two day conference. Proposal for second practitioner event Jan/Feb 16
* Requests for re-run of Manchester course on “statistics for librarians” as mentioned by Rachel Kirkwood. Peter Wadsworth (Manchester) is pulling together interest in this and has been made aware of interest from the CM day. (Previous course was run as a pilot course with the support of SCONUL.)
* Half day/full day event focused on gifts and donations and the CM issues surrounding them
* Further potential for CCM tools events and promotion

***Suggested possible longer term actions:***

* Role to support relevant skills development for staff involved in CM work
* Enabling of sharing CM templates, guidelines, policies between institutions
* To benchmark “accepted practice” or “standards” around policies

***Important and/or urgent – but difficult:***

* National Monograph Strategy – a centralised approach is a priority in progressing this initiative and there is a need to generate institutional support. Various strands within the strategy could be identified and realistic timescales set for completion.
* Preservation and conservation of stock – particularly acid paper

***Conclusions***

The day fulfilled the main aim, objectives and outcomes. The event was particularly successful for reaching CM practitioners – those who plan, organise and undertake CM work on a daily basis. These are individuals that may not have been part of a community in the past and/or whose roles may only involve CM as one element. There is significant interest in discussing CM issues at a practitioner level and in building a community. Interest in future events is high.

This new level of engagement supplements, informs, and gives greater context to strategic level CM discussions that Jisc, RLUK and SCONUL are involved in.

Detailed feedback is given in the attached appendices in order to accurately reflect the range of issues and concerns raised on the day. By providing this level of information the aim is to enable reflection on the range of comments, and to encourage a wider discussion regarding further actions.

The challenge is to continue to support and build upon the community of CM practitioners identified at this event. In addition there is an opportunity to enable discussion between Jisc and practitioners regarding the priorities and pressures CM managers face, and how the most effective support can be provided to support CM at a local, regional and national level.

Ruth Elder.

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Last updated 01.09.15