1. Introduction

SCONUL, the professional association for academic libraries (www.sconul.ac.uk), is seeking to commission research into the experiences of black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) staff working in its member libraries. This document is the brief for that research.

For more information on SCONUL members, please see https://www.sconul.ac.uk/members-and-representatives and section 11 below.

SCONUL does not collect data on the ethnic make-up of the academic library workforce[1]. However, the lack of diversity in higher education has been clearly documented. For example, work by the Equality Challenge Unit[2] found that, in 2015-16, of UK university academic staff, 85.5% are white while 14.6% are from a BAME background. For senior academic staff, the percentage from a BAME background drops to 2.9%. For full time professional and support staff, 90.9% are white and 9.1% are BAME, while for senior professional and support staff the percentage from a BAME background drops to 5.9%.

Similarly, there is a marked lack of diversity within the library profession according to research carried out by the Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals (CILIP) and the Archives and Records Association (ARA) (Ireland and UK) in 2015. This showed that of the estimated 86K+ professionals working in the library and information profession workforce across public, academic and commercial libraries, 96.7% identify as white[3].

SCONUL is committed to supporting its members as they attempt to develop a more diverse workforce and to collectively "own" the problem of lack of diversity in our own workforces, while recognising that it is part of a wider challenge faced by higher education on the one hand, and the library community on the other.

The research will be used to inform further work in this area which will seek to identify good practice, advice and guidance on fostering ethnic diversity relevant to library

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[1] The total FTE staff working in our member libraries in the UK is 9,853, taken from SCONUL. *Annual Library Statistics 2015-16*, 2017.

[2] Equality Challenge Unit. 2017*. Equality in higher education: staff statistical report 2017*. (accessed on 15 May 2018) https://www.ecu.ac.uk/publications/equality-in-higher-education-statistical-report-2017/

[3] Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals (CILIP) and Archives and Records Association (ARA). 2015. *A Study of the UK Information Workforce: Mapping the Library, Archives, Records, Information Management, Knowledge Management and related professions.* (accessed 05 March 2018), https://archive.cilip.org.uk/research/workforce-mapping

directors and to develop practical advice for members. This work is part of a broader project looking at a range of aspects of workforce development for SCONUL members (see section 11).

2. Project Management

The project will be overseen by the three project contacts identified below. John Dowd will be the primary contact and will act as the main liaison and point of contact with the consultant/consultants to ensure that the aims and the objectives of the project are met. Regina Everitt and Ann Rossiter, Executive Director of SCONUL, will be involved in the key decisions at each stage of the research as set out below.

The project contacts for this piece of work are as follows:

John Dowd – primary contact Assistant Director, Collections Management University of Birmingham j.dowd@bham.ac.uk
Regina Everitt - alternate contact Director of Library and Learning Services, University of East London r.everitt@uel.ac.uk
Ann Rossiter - budget holder Executive Director SCONUL ann.rossiter@sconul.ac,uk

3. The research brief

SCONUL is seeking to commission research into the experience of BAME staff members working in UK HE academic libraries. The consultancy will entail:

- identification of BAME staff members working in UK HE libraries who wish to participate in the research
- development, conduct and analysis of a focus group of BAME staff members
- development, conduct and analysis of structured interviews with the BAME staff members

- analysis of sector demographics and demographics of participants. (e.g., percentage of BAME employed by grade, age, gender, etc.).

4. Identification of BAME staff members working in HE libraries

The consultant will be required to identify staff members who identify as BAME and who wish to participate in the research. The specific approach proposed for this element of the work must be agreed with SCONUL before it proceeds. Participants will be reassured that their responses will be anonymised. Access to relevant SCONUL lists will be made available, however, the supplier should develop their own approach to this appreciating that there will be limited support from the SCONUL Executive or project leads.

Output

The output for this phase will be a list of potentially contactable BAME staff members working in HE libraries who are amenable to being involved in the research.

5. Focus group

The consultant will be required to scope, plan and conduct an initial focus group with BAME staff in order to gain insights into staff member's views and experiences of working in a HE library. The findings of this focus group should then be written up and key themes identified, which in turn will inform the development of a pro-forma for subsequent interviews.

Outputs

The outputs for this phase will be (a) a write up of the focus group which includes analysis of the key themes emerging and (b) a pro-forma for one-to-one interviews.

6. One-to-one interviews and analysis

The consultant will then be expected to use this proforma to scope, plan conduct and analyse a series of structured interviews with participating staff members. It is envisioned that there will be between a minimum of 10 to a maximum of 15 interviews conducted.

Interviews will be conducted by the consultant and are expected to take place in person, by phone, skype or equivalent. The informed consent of participants will be required within the ethical framework agreed for the project.

The mechanism(s) for interview data capture should be proposed by the consultant.

Output

The output should comprise of a) anonymised raw interview data and b) themed analysis arising from interviews and, c) a comparative analysis of demographic data.

The anonymised raw data collected is for the purposes as outlined in this document; SCONUL retains the right to hold the data beyond the life of the project and potentially reuse it for other projects afterwards.

7. Project outputs

The anticipated deliverables of the consultancy are:

- design and delivery of a focus group of BAME staff within an appropriate ethical framework and identification of key themes that emerge
- analysis of key themes emerging from the staff focus group
- development of an interview pro-forma and administration of the arrangements for the interviews within an appropriate ethical framework, including shaping and administering permissions for use of data
- collation of interview and focus group findings in an agreed format, e.g. a written report
- report of emerging themes and demographic of interviewees
- anonymised raw data from interviews.

The project leads identified above will provide a resource for the consultant throughout the project and will agree critical milestones and outputs, including the following:

(a) ethical framework for the research
(b) design of the focus group
(c) interview pro-forma
(d) format for collation of findings
(e) report on emerging themes.

8. Project timescales

The deadline for completion of the project is February 2019. The proposed timeline for the project is as follows:

Project brief advertised	w/c 21st May 2018
Deadline for receipt of completed submissions	15th June 2018
Shortlisting	By 22nd June 2018
Interviews	By 6th July 2018
Award of consultancy	w/c 16th July 2018
Work to commence	w/c 3rd September 2018
Project deliverables fully completed by	28th February 2019
Launch event of Workforce Planning Task and Finish Group programme outputs	TBC 2019

9. Project costs

Consultants are asked to provide a fixed price cost for this consultancy as part of their response to the project brief and to provide an estimate of expected expenses. Where feasible, interviews and meetings with the project leads are undertaken virtually.

10. How to respond to this brief

Consultants are expected to provide a proposal for the completion of the project within the defined timescales noted above, including a fully costed project plan. As part of your responses, please:

- address the proposed methodology, including any intention to depart from the outline set out above
- identify any risks you anticipate to the success of the project
- provide evidence of experience with quantitative and qualitative interview and focus group methodology and the management and analysis of interview data
- set out your experience and knowledge of ethical frameworks associated with personal data capture
- provide evidence of experience of working with diverse groups

- provide the CVs of all those who will be working on the project along with a statement of the role they would fulfil
- provide confirmation of your ability to complete the work to the proposed timescale
- provide a breakdown of costs including expected external and travel expenses.

Selection will be based on an evaluation against the criteria above and the response to the brief, taking account of the cost effectiveness of the proposed approach.

A phone or skype interview will be scheduled to discuss the supporting statement and the approach proposed by shortlisted consultants.

11. About SCONUL

SCONUL represents all university libraries in the UK and Ireland, irrespective of mission group, as well as national libraries and many of the UK's colleges of higher education.

SCONUL promotes awareness of the role of academic libraries in supporting research excellence and student achievement and employability, and represents their views and interests to government, regulators and other stakeholders. It helps academic libraries collaborate to deliver services efficiently, including through shared services, and to share knowledge and best practice. If you would like to know more about our programmes, and how we work, you can read our welcome document here.

SCONUL members are the academic libraries themselves, with the heads of library service making up the Executive Board which is responsible for governance and for setting the strategy for the organisation. SCONUL also has a number of groups supporting the strategy and ensuring that the academic library community is informed about, and engaged with, the major issues and challenges facing the library sector

One of these groups is the Workforce Development Task and Finish Group, chaired by SCONUL Chair, Caroline Taylor, University Librarian at the University of Leicester. The aim of the group is to provide support to members in their own workforce planning. There are three sub-groups looking at different aspects of workforce planning:

- Diversity (and how we foster it)
- Pipeline for new talent
- Developing the current workforce

This brief relates to the first of these sub-groups and will be used to inform a wider set of outcomes including identifying good practice, advice and guidance on fostering ethnic diversity relevant to library directors, and bringing outputs together into practical advice for members.