SCONUL statistics equality and diversity data investigation

1.   Introduction

1.1   SCONUL, the professional association for academic and national libraries (www.sconul.ac.uk), has been collecting and publishing statistics from university libraries for more than 30 years, providing a rich source of information for members to draw on for identifying trends and benchmarking against other institutions (https://www.sconul.ac.uk/page/sconul-statistics).

1.2   SCONUL has a strategy (https://www.sconul.ac.uk/page/sconuls-strategy) which identifies six major areas of challenge. Drawing on the work of the Organisational Development Group, we are seeking to gather data to support our strategic aims in relation to leadership in complex environments.

1.3   SCONUL is seeking to increase understanding of the make-up of the workforce, as measuring the diversity of our workforce is a prerequisite for effective monitoring and promotion of diversity in the library sector.

2.   Project management

2.1   The project will be overseen by the Services Steering Group, who are leading this piece of work on behalf of the SCONUL Executive Board. The Services Steering Group will collaborate closely with the Chairs the Organisational Development Group, the Statistics Steering Group and a representative from Jisc.

2.2   The four project contacts are identified below. Anna O'Neill will be the primary contact and will act as the main liaison and point of contact to ensure that the aims and the objectives of the project are met. Pat Christie and Emma Anderson will be involved in regular catch ups and the key decisions at each stage of the project as set out below. Ann Rossiter is the key contact for financial and contractual arrangements and is the budget holder.

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Pat Christie – alternate contact
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Emma Adamson – alternate contact
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Ann Rossiter – contact for financial and contractual arrangements
Executive Director
SCONUL, 94 Euston Street, London, NW1 2HA
e: ann.rossiter@sconul.ac.uk

3. The research brief

3.1 SCONUL is seeking an experienced professional to work with a representative cross-section of the SCONUL community to deliver the underpinning data that will help us to develop baseline statistics in order to assess the impact of planned interventions to address the lack of ethnic diversity both in the HE sector and in the library profession.

3.2 It is envisaged that this will include the exploration of the data required, what already exists and where, and the ease with which member institutions are able to supply the data. The work will include:

a) **New questions on diversity** - a set of questions relating to the diversity of library and associated staff that can reasonably be responded to by all members of the SCONUL community, either through the provision of existing data, e.g. using HESA data, or new questions and which draws on best practice in relation to the questions asked e.g.https://www.advance-he.ac.uk/guidance/equality-diversity-and-inclusion/using-data-and-evidence/monitoring-questions

b) **Collation of additional feedback** - inevitably, a discussion on statistics will elicit rich content, which, although not directly within the scope of this work, we wish to capture. In particular but not exclusively, what statistics are currently used for (i.e. possible case studies).

4. Note on scope and methodology

4.1 Appropriate methodologies for carrying out the research should be articulated as part of the response to this project proposal. These may include focus groups, surveys or other approaches.

4.2 The research exploring the data into the diversity of the workforce should cover a cross section of the SCONUL membership, including national research libraries,

research-intensive universities, and teaching-focused HE institutions of different sizes.

4.4   Care should be taken to ensure that there is an appropriate geographical spread of member libraries engaged in the research. Any geographical, regional or national differences identified during the research should be articulated in the report.

4.5   The questions for the SCONUL statistics annual return were reviewed and changed in 2014. The work will require communicating to members the purpose of the project, how they can feed into the development of the questions and the outcomes of the review.

4.6   The service provider will liaise with the Chair of the Services Steering Group, who in turn will ensure other interested parties are kept informed of the work of the project e.g. Organisational Development Group, Communications Advisory Group, Statistics Steering Group, the Executive Board and potentially a representative from Jisc.

5.   Research outputs

5.1   The principal outputs will be:

a)   a clear picture on whether SCONUL member institutions are able to supply data in two key strategic areas on the diversity of their workforce (if not supplied via HESA), with specific reference to groups or types of institutions if relevant (e.g. size or mission group)

b)   An understanding of the barriers that may inhibit the provision of data, whether that be ethical considerations, institutional culture or systems, again with specific reference to groups or types of institutions if relevant.

c)   data to inform the writing of the questions by the Statistics Steering group for the SCONUL annual statistical return for autumn 2020.

5.2   We will ask the project team appointed to present early findings and interim questions at a future joint meeting of the Services Steering Group who will liaise with other relevant groups to refine the final questions in response to comments from the groups.

5.5   Please note that SCONUL will retain ownership of the data collected and all outputs from the research project, in any form of media.

6.   Project timescales

6.1   The deadline for the project is 17th August 2020. The proposed timeline for the project is as follows:

Stage	Action	Timing
Tendering process	Project brief issued	Friday 12th June 2020
	Opportunity to discuss requirements with the SCONUL Services Steering group	12th-19th June 2020
	Deadline for receipt of completed submissions	5pm on Monday 22nd June 2020
	Shortlisting carried out	Week beginning 22nd June 2020
	Consultancy awarded	Monday 29th June 2020
Research process	Phone briefing with SCONUL team and work commenced	Week beginning 29th June 2020
	Early outcomes of research presented at a virtual meeting at SCONUL	Week beginning 24th July 2020
	Draft questions presented at a meeting at SCONUL	Week beginning 10th August 2020
Outputs	Final questions submitted to SCONUL team	17th August 2020

7. Project costs

7.1 The project should cost no more than £2,000 (including VAT and all internal and external expenses).

8. How to respond to this brief

8.1 Consultants are expected to provide a proposal for the completion of the project within the defined timescale and budget noted above.

8.2 As part of your responses, please:

a) address the proposed content and approach, including a communications plan and any intention to depart from the outline set above

b) provide evidence of knowledge of statistics and higher education, and of equality and diversity issues.

c) provide details of your proposed methodology

d) provide a rationale for the methodology that you have proposed

e) identify any risks that you anticipate to the success of the project and how you plan to mitigate these

f) provide the CVs of all those who will be working on the project along with a statement of the role they would fulfil

g) provide confirmation of your ability to complete the work to the proposed timescale.

h) provide a fully costed project plan, showing hourly rates, inclusive of VAT and any travel or other external expenses

8.3 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.

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

8.5 Questions about the brief should be addressed in writing to Anna O'Neill at the email address above, copying in other members of the project team. We will endeavour to answer points raised on the brief and provide further background on SCONUL if required.

9. About SCONUL

9.1 SCONUL (www.sconul.ac.uk) 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. More information about SCONUL's strategy, activities and programmes can be found via https://www.sconul.ac.uk/page/about-sconul.

9.2 SCONUL members are the 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.