

Profile of the Full Disclosure Implementation Group

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What is Full Disclosure?

Full Disclosure: releasing the value of library and archive collections was a report to the British Library, Library and Information Commission (LIC) and the Library and Information Co-operation Council (LINC) by the UK Office for Library and Information Networking (UKOLN) and the National Council on Archives (NCA) on a national strategy for the retrospective conversion of library and archive catalogues.

The report, completed last year, was the outcome of research commissioned by a Pathfinding Group, which included representatives from key bodies in the libraries, information and archives sectors.

Under Development Conference

Consideration of the report's recommendations lay at the heart of the major conference, *Under Development*, held at the British Library on 10th May 1999. Over 140 delegates from all areas of the library and archive domains were joined by others from a variety of organisations and government initiatives for whom retrospective cataloguing and conversion is highly relevant.

The theme of the conference was enhanced access to our national and cultural wealth through the provision of comprehensive electronic catalogues and finding aids across the UK. Implementation of a national strategy would assist researchers and reduce pressure on libraries and archives as greater awareness of locations will spread the load and promote resource sharing. Lack of a national strategy currently results in neglect of some important collections as

well as duplication of effort. Although much funding is being committed to digitisation of resources, these materials can only be fully accessible through the development of finding aids.

Recommendations

Conference delegates both welcomed and supported recommendations to set up a co-ordinating focus and to put in hand a programme of activities to work towards full disclosure of library, archive and museum resources. While the museum domain was not within the remit of the study, it was agreed it should be included in a national strategy. Points raised at the conference were incorporated into the final report from the research team.

Role of the British Library

Most support was for placing the new national co-ordinating focus within the new Museums, Libraries and Archives Council (now renamed re:source) either as part of it or constituted by it. However as re:source would not be operational for another year, the British Library agreed to host a shadow focus, supported by its new Co-operation and Partnership Programme and named the Full Disclosure Implementation Group, to take on and progress the initial elements of the strategy. The Co-operation and Partnership Programme has supported this initiative since the outset and will contribute staff and financial resources as required. Both LIC and LINC provided further financial support for phase 1.

Membership of the Full Disclosure Implementation Group

A small core Full Disclosure Implementation Group was established, comprising:

David Bradbury (Chair), Director General, Collections and Services, British Library; Clive Field, Higher Education community; Margaret Haines, Library and Information Commission; Frances Hendrix, Library and Information Co-operation Council; Stephanie Kenna (Secretary), Co-operation and Partnership Programme, British Library; Louise Smith, mda(formerly Museum Documentation Association), representing the Museums community; David Thomas, Archives community.

Phase 1 priorities:

Phase 1 priorities for the core group were:

- to work with funding bodies and to put together a robust framework document to guide applicants and funding bodies
- to monitor and co-ordinate existing retrospective conversion activity
- to promote the strategy and create awareness in the various domains
- to disseminate information via the Internet and traditional routes
- to look for funding opportunities and to bid for funding
- to demonstrate the cross-domain links to potential funding bodies

An outer group with wider representation and with the specific remit of keeping the various domains informed of developments has also been established.

The work of the Full Disclosure Implementation Group

The core group has met several times, concentrating on promotion of the strategy, dissemination of information and awareness raising.

Its major success, however, is the recently completed framework document which aims to guide both applicants and funders on strategic

priorities for retrospective catalogue conversion and retrospective cataloguing. The group is pleased to report that the trustees of the Heritage Lottery Fund at their February meeting endorsed the framework, and will now form the basis of HLF policy on projects in this area.

The group has also begun to lobby for re:source to take on the initiative, but as this is unlikely in the short term, the British Library's Co-operation and Partnership will continue to support Full Disclosure, possibly at the same level as before, while continuing to press re:source. "Chris Batt of re:source has now joined the group in succession to Margaret Haines of LIC.

Priorities over the next few months will include promotion of the framework to potential applicants and other potential funders and, in particular, encouragement and co-ordination of applications to HLF.

Notes:

Full Disclosure is published as Library and Information Commission Research Report 10 and is available on the UKOLN website:

<http://www.ukoln.ac.uk/services/lic/fulldisclosure/report.pdf>

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A four page summary of the full report and copies of the framework document can be obtained free of charge from Stephanie Kenna (telephone: 020 7412 7126 or e-mail: stephanie.kenna@bl.uk