

# Editorial



*The Eds getting a lesson on steam turbines in geothermal power stations by a well-known expert (recently profiled)*

We are delighted that this November issue of *Serials* is breaking new ground with the publication of our first supplement to the journal – on the hot topic of e-books. There is clearly much interest in e-books at the moment with the imminent publication of the JISC E-Book Observatory Project findings and the flurry of e-book readers hitting the market. Sitting on the train the other evening, your Ed was amazed to see extensive coverage of e-book readers in a London free newspaper! We have gathered together some excellent, peer-reviewed articles for this supplement covering a wide range of e-book issues, including library acquisition, usage statistics, pay-per-view and e-readers. Papers and case-studies from New Zealand, the US and the UK give a wide ranging perspective of how librarians and publishers are tackling e-books and what our users think of them. From time to time we hope to bring you other supplements on important topics – watch this space.

As University libraries in the UK move into a new academic year and a new budget year, the impact of the economic downturn is being felt more sharply. However, we are well aware that this is not just a UK problem and library colleagues around the globe are also having to tighten their belts. We are therefore pleased to publish an article in the main journal about a freely available JISC service aimed at helping librarians make informed decisions about their bibliographic and full-text databases, by providing them with accurate, unbiased information on the content of 20 core

databases and platforms. The service is called the JISC Academic Database Assessment Tool (ADAT) and allows any combination of services to be compared and contrasted – a fabulous tool in times of hardship and possible cancellations. Another potential tool for librarians and publishers alike is the journal usage factor. UKSG, in partnership with the Research Information Network (RIN), the International Association of Scientific, Technical and Medical Publishers (STM) and a number of individual publishers, is moving ahead with Phase 2 of the Journal Usage Factor Project. Turn to the Key Issue on the topic to find out more about this important work.

This issue's profile is of Robert Parker of the Royal Society of Chemistry and outgoing chair of ALPSP. In both these roles he has supported a major push for internationalization and our articles by Jonathan Harle and Anne Powell on the partnership between ACU and INASP, and Julie Walker's article on INASP's AuthorAID project show how collaboration with developing countries can aid research.

We are continuing our reviews section with an article on publishing on demand (POD) with a publisher perspective from Matt Howells. Janine Schmidt describes McGill's experience with digitization and publishing on demand, and the purchasing of an Espresso Book Machine. We expect to have more user reviews of POD in our next issues.