

Press Releases & News

Opening up resources for learning

Wed 15 Oct 08: Students, academics and higher education institutions are to benefit from the combined experience and knowledge of educators throughout the country. An innovative project announced today will significantly increase access to educational resources across the higher education sector.

The Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) has announced an initial £5.7 million of funding for pilot projects that will open up existing high-quality education resources from higher education institutions to the world.

The Higher Education Academy and JISC will work in partnership to deliver the 12-month pilot projects. These will run at institutional, subject and individual level along with accompanying support services. The projects will be formally launched in April 2009.

Dr John Selby, Director of Education and Participation at HEFCE, said, 'Significant investment has already been made in making educational resources widely available by digitising collections of materials and enabling people to reuse and adapt existing content to support teaching and learning.

'This new initiative will test whether this can be done much more generally across higher education. If the pilots are successful, we will have demonstrated that we could significantly expand the open availability and use of free, high quality online educational content in the UK and around the world. This will give further evidence of the high quality of UK education and make it more widely accessible.'

Open educational resources could include full courses, course materials, complete modules, notes, videos, assessments, tests, simulations, worked examples, software, and any other tools or materials or techniques used to support access to knowledge. These resources will be released under an intellectual property license that permits open use and adaptation.

As a result of this agreement institutions will be encouraged to share and reuse learning content - enhancing productivity for educators and students. Ultimately we hope that learning materials and resources will be shared universally - locally, nationally and globally, to support learning.

Prospective students from across the world will benefit as they will be able to view content produced by an institution prior to applying to study there, enabling them to make application decisions supported by a genuine understanding of the high quality of learning materials available to them.

Dr Malcolm Read, Executive Secretary at JISC said, 'This is the first time that a project of this nature will have been undertaken on this scale, collaboratively across an entire

national educational sector. We want this 12-month pilot to be a success to enable the education community to benefit from world class e-learning resources.'

David Sadler, Higher Education Academy Director of Networks said, 'A positive student experience depends on having access to resources. Students and academics will benefit from this move to make more content available. The Higher Education Academy will be taking the lead on subject-based pilots, with consortia of departments, subject associations, professional or statutory bodies being led by our relevant Subject Centres.'

DRIVER and eIFL.net sign Memorandum of Understanding

September 29, 2008: DRIVER and eIFL.net - Electronic Information for Libraries - have identified demand for cooperation in order to progress and enhance the provision, visibility and application of European research outputs through digital repositories.

DRIVER is a joint initiative of European stakeholders, co-financed by the European Commission, to establish a flexible, robust, and scalable infrastructure for all European and world-wide digital repositories, managing scientific information in an Open Access model increasingly demanded by researchers, funding organisations and other stakeholders. DRIVER's mission is to expand its content base, supporting the global research community with high quality research output, including textual research papers and complex forms of scholarly electronic publication.

Rima Kupryte, Director of eIFL.net, said 'eIFL.net and DRIVER share the vision that research institutions should contribute actively and cooperatively to a global, interoperable, trusted and long-term data and service infrastructure based on Open Access digital repositories. This agreement includes joint approaches to consolidation of national communities for the European repository network and active joint dissemination of best practices of Open Access scholarly communication in countries and regions without such formal policy.'

Norbert Lossau, Scientific Coordinator of DRIVER and Director of the Goettingen State and University Library commented: "DRIVER can only be successful through collaborating with all relevant stakeholders and by including all countries. eIFL has an excellent track record in supporting developing countries. Cooperation with eIFL will contribute to the joint vision through an established communication network and enthusiastic pioneers in many countries."

e-Duke Books Scholarly Collection

September 9, 2008: Duke University Press announces the official launch of a new electronic book product, the e-Duke Books Scholarly Collection. This collection provides online access to at least 100 new scholarly books published by Duke University Press in the humanities and social sciences in a calendar year. By purchasing the current year's titles in the collection, libraries also receive access to over 900 Duke University Press backlist books now available in electronic form.

The e-Duke Books Scholarly Collection is hosted on the ebrary platform, which allows an unlimited number of simultaneous users at a subscribing institution to access content and use ebrary's searching, navigating, archiving, and other research tools. The content of the collection is full-text searchable, like that of other titles to which the institution has access via ebrary.

Additionally, Duke University Press has partnered with Duke University's Perkins/Bostock Library to provide enhanced MARC records, including chapter-level metadata.

With the guidance of project consultant and library market specialist October Ivins, a pilot project was launched in January 2008, allowing a select group of nineteen partner libraries to provide feedback concerning such matters as access, pricing, the site license, and vendor preferences. Ivins comments, "Collaborating with staff at Duke University Press and Libraries, ebrary, and BiblioVault, as well as with our pilot partner libraries and book vendors, has been a process filled with new insights that have improved our product and business model. Collectively, I feel that we have fulfilled Duke University Press director Steve Cohn's vision of creating a library-friendly e-book collection that other university presses and small publishers may use as a model."

Norm Medeiros, associate librarian of Haverford College, states, "Haverford, with its partners Bryn Mawr and Swarthmore Colleges, entered into the pilot through the PALINET consortium in order to provide faculty and students with a collection of high-quality electronic books. The integration of the e-Duke books into our ebrary channel affords easy access to the collection. Usage has been strong, indicating that the titles with their digital advantages are serving our users well."

The business model of the e-Duke Books Scholarly Collection builds on that of the e-Duke Journals Scholarly Collection, which also evolved with much collaboration and feedback from the library community. The e-Duke Books Scholarly Collection features a similar library-friendly tiered pricing structure based on Carnegie classifications and an inexpensive print add-on option.

For more information about the e-Duke Books Scholarly Collection pilot project, please visit www.dukeupress.edu/library/edukebooks/index.html.