

Press Releases

UK's leading consortia organise Consortia Conference

February 14, 2012 - Two of the UK's largest public library consortia, the London Libraries Consortium and LibrariesWest, announce a consortia conference to be held on Thursday 3 May in Bath. The day-long conference aims to equip delegates from local government and public libraries across the UK with the knowledge to set up their own consortium or to implement shared services or shared working on a smaller scale.

Five-member strong LibrariesWest serves a population of 1.6 million people in 109 libraries and is a partnership between Bath & North East Somerset, Bristol, North Somerset, Somerset and South Gloucestershire library services. Jon Scown, on behalf of LibrariesWest, explains, "We set up our consortium 15 years ago and have gained a great deal of experience which we feel would benefit other authorities looking at joint working. With the current climate of cuts, consortia working is an ideal way to be able to 'do more with less'."

LibrariesWest has just issued its annual report

(www.librarieswest.org.uk) where Cllr James Hunt, Executive Councillor: Communities, South Gloucestershire Council, says, "LibrariesWest is an essential part of the South Gloucestershire Library Delivery Plan; through working in partnership we are able to provide the best value for money to our residents and strive for the highest quality library service."

The London Libraries Consortium (LLC) consists of 15 London Boroughs and has grown dramatically since it was set up in 2004. It now caters for over 3.6 million Londoners who can use their library card at any of over 150 library branches. Madeline Barratt, on behalf of the LLC, adds, "The conference will demonstrate that there can be many flavours of shared working, all of which can be equally effective. We've learnt many lessons along the way and we'd like to share our experience with other library services."

Speakers from the two consortia will cover topics including:

- Consortium governance
- Integrated backroom services
- Online reference services
- Shared bibliographic services

- Shared enquiry services
- Value of consortium membership to individual authorities

Workshops will provide the opportunity for delegates to find out in greater detail the benefits of consortia working to staff and to library users.

The conference is priced at £75 per delegate plus VAT, which includes all refreshments and a two course lunch. The event takes place at Bath's Guildhall, which is conveniently located in central Bath and easily reached by train or car.

For more information and to book, visit www.consortiaconference2012.com.

OCLC WorldShare Platform

DUBLIN, Ohio, December 5, 2011—OCLC, together with OCLC Global Council and members, is taking the cooperative's ongoing strategy to help libraries operate and innovate at Web scale to a much broader level with the introduction of OCLC WorldShare, a new platform and a new brand that signals OCLC's commitment to greater collaboration in library service delivery.

OCLC is launching the OCLC WorldShare Platform, which will enable library developers, partners and

other organizations to create, configure and share a wide range of applications that deliver new functionality and value for libraries and their users.

OCLC will also deploy data centers around the world in support of OCLC WorldShare and other services. The first data center outside the United States will be implemented this week in the United Kingdom. Additional data centers will be deployed in continental Europe, Australia and Canada in the coming year.

"OCLC's mission and public purpose are clearly aligned with the concept of Web scale," said Jay Jordan, OCLC President and CEO. "We have been providing infrastructure and services that have enabled members to build efficiencies in the management of libraries, and to increase the visibility and impact of their collections in compelling user environments on the Web. To date, this work has been significant. Now we see a need to provide more of those connective elements, the services and systems that will allow libraries to leverage even more of their activities and data together, at Web scale."

The OCLC WorldShare Platform facilitates collaboration and app-sharing across the library community, so that libraries can combine library-built applications, partner-built applications and OCLC-built applications. This enables the benefits of each single solution to be shared broadly throughout the library community.

In the coming weeks, participants from platform pilot libraries will work with members of the OCLC Developer Network to help create and build new applications to populate the OCLC WorldShare App Gallery, where users will see available apps and can install them into current work environments. Developers can showcase their

creativity, partners can create add-on functionality and library staff can find practical, everyday solutions to streamline and enhance their workflows.

The first services built on this new technical infrastructure are Webscale Management Services, which have been rebranded as OCLC WorldShare Management Services, and include circulation, acquisitions and license management applications. Today, more than 30 libraries are already using OCLC WorldShare Management Services, and more than 150 libraries worldwide have committed to the new service since September 2010.

Over time, OCLC will bring together additional OCLC services and applications under the OCLC WorldShare name, including resource sharing, consortial borrowing, metadata management and additional applications. OCLC's currently deployed library management solutions will continue to be maintained and enhanced in line with libraries' ongoing requirements under their current brand names.

WorldCat will continue to serve as the name for shared data, including registries and the knowledge base, as well as discovery services such as WorldCat.org and WorldCat Local.

There are many examples of organizations contributing to the broader Webscale information environment. Some, like HathiTrust, JSTOR and Europeana, are most recognizable to libraries and library users. Others, such as Google and Amazon, are global services familiar to all Web users. These services, and many others, are all part of the information environment users navigate every day—a Webscale environment.

Visit the OCLC [website](#) for more details about OCLC WorldShare.

Launch of 'living' books breaks barriers between humanities and science

24.11.2011 - A series of 21 'living books' has been launched online as part of a pioneering initiative designed to provide a bridge between the humanities and the sciences.

The Living Books About Life series <<http://bit.ly/uO81ro>> is written and produced by humanities scholars from universities across the world - from the UK and America to Poland and Australia - and has re-packaged and re-presented science-related research material to make it more accessible to a humanities audience.

Funded by JISC and published by the Open Humanities Press (OHP), the books address a number of scientific topics whose unifying theme is life, such as air, agriculture, bioethics, cosmetic surgery, energy, neurology and human cloning.

Alastair Dunning, programme manager at JISC, said: "By drawing only on Open Access material to create these 'Living Books about Life', the team is helping define a new era of scholarly communication - and thereby exploiting JISC's vision to make the results of publicly funded research available to all."

The books present recent research on these subjects in a palatable way using interactive

maps, podcasts and audio-visual materials. The result, which can be shared freely amongst both academic and non-academic individuals alike, is an engaging and diverse resource for researching and teaching relevant science issues across the humanities.

As well as bridging the divide between the humanities and sciences, the three partner institutions working on the project - led by Coventry University and including the University of Kent and Goldsmiths, University of London - have 'rethought' the conventional book by developing a new, low-cost and sustainable model for creating, publishing and sharing content.

By embracing the age of open information and the increasing prominence of crowdsourcing, the project leaders ensured each volume in the Living Books About Life series is a 'living' medium itself, able to be updated by readers through ongoing collaborative processes of writing, editing, remixing and commenting.

Gary Hall, Professor of Media and Performing Arts at Coventry University, said: "The 'Living Books About Life' series doesn't just represent a new, exciting and more easily digestible way for people

without a background in science to learn about important scientific issues - it also has the potential to refashion the process of book publishing itself. It's a pioneering example of a sustainable, low-cost, low-tech approach to publishing high-quality books that can be shared easily and freely on an open access basis with anyone who has an interest."

Nicholas Mirzoeff, Professor of Media, Culture and Communication at New York University, said: "This remarkable series transforms the humble reader into a living form, while breaking down the conceptual barrier between the humanities and the sciences in a time when scholars and activists of all kinds have taken the understanding of life to be central. Brilliant in its simplicity and concept, this series is a leap towards an exciting new future."

Read more about the initiative at <http://www.jisc.ac.uk/whatwedo/programmes/digitisation/econtent11/livibl.aspx>.