

ISSUE 4 • MAY 2023

FSP MONTHLY DIGEST

Welcome to the Faculty and Student Partnerships (FSP) Monthly Digest

This is a platform to share news and updates from across the Directorate. Each issue is published on the first Friday of every month. We welcome and encourage submissions. If you have any items to submit, please send these by the last Friday of every month to:

uml.engagement@manchester.ac.uk

Message from Katy, Associate Director (FSP)

Hello everyone,

We've got another packed FSP Digest for you this month!

- Tia Harriott shines a light on the Customer Services staff input at the Ahmed Iqbal Ullah RACE Centre;
- Michelle Sharples talks about her experience as a guest speaker at an International Conference in Dehli;
- And the TLS team are offering four fascinating insights into their recent activity;
- There's Adam Cooke on his Institute of Teaching & Learning Fellowship project;
- Kerry Scott and Mike Roughly on their experience of attending the information literacy conference, LILAC;
- An update on some recent Library Carpentry workshops;
- And a summary of our input to the Snack and Chat initiative.

So do check them out.

I've been out and about a couple of times since our last Digest. Of particular interest was an event in London organised by our e-textbook supplier Kortext, on Digital Education, which Olivia Walsby and I attended as one of their biggest and longest standing HE customers. Simon Thomson, our Director of Flexible Learning was also one of the keynote speakers at the event. There was lots of talk about the role of Artificial Intelligence in teaching & learning throughout the day, with a general consensus that it should be embraced and not feared as an inevitable part of the future, along with the role the Library can play in supporting and encouraging its use in a positive way in partnership with our academic colleagues.

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[Watch the video message](#)



A second event I attended was in Sheffield, and was an opportunity for RLUK Associate Directors and New Library Directors to come together to discuss common leadership challenges, with a view to agreeing areas in which RLUK might be able to support some collective activity. EDI, succession planning, recruitment and progression were high on everyone's agenda and it was useful to hear how others are approaching these things in their institutions and to share some of what we've been doing.

Back at base I've largely been in routine meetings and catch-up mode, following a bit of time off after Easter. But a highlight for me was our first Directorate Management Team Work Together Day over in Crawford House. What a fantastic space it is and so great to see so many staff from so many different teams working alongside each other in the same space.

Right now I'm noticing how much busier we have become in the last week or two - I can hardly believe we are already in May and on the brink of the Exam season. As the demands from our students increase and begin to feel more urgent, we can often see stress levels rise across the board. So, whilst looking out for our students please do also remember to look after yourselves and each other.

Have a good month everyone!

Katy

News and updates

Customer Services

Working at the Ahmed Iqbal Ullah RACE Centre: A Year in Review

Tia Harriott

A small group of Customer Services staff have been working alongside the team at the Ahmed Iqbal Ullah RACE Centre for over a year now and it has been an amazing experience thus far.

Whilst some of our duties remain the same, including working with the public and managing book requests and returns, it has been a great opportunity to learn more about how other areas of the Library function.

Over the past year, we have mainly been responsible for assisting in the audit of the collections available at the AIU RACE Centre. As a team we have audited over 600 books within the Gender and Culture sections of the library, making sure that the collections contain varied and up-to-date information. We also worked on moving some books that contained offensive language, out-dated views such as eugenics or things related to scientific racism that have been discredited to the Controversial Archive.



The Ahmed Iqbal Ullah RACE Centre, located in Manchester Central Library

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We have also had the opportunity to learn how the AIU RACE Centre manage their archives, with some of us having had the opportunity to retrieve and catalogue some of the new collections for them. Additionally, Zaynah Ahmad and I recently wrote a blog post for Earth Day on the AIU RACE Centre website highlighting key titles on the relationship between the Climate Crisis and Refugeeism. You can read all about it on their [website](#).

It has been wonderful experience getting to work with both the team and the collections so intimately, and to get to see the pioneering work they are doing with the local community. Hopefully in the future we will be able to get involved in this too!

The AIU RACE Centre is a hidden gem and it's a privilege to get to work with them!

Engagement

Attending the International Conference on Academic Libraries

Michelle Sharples

Last month Dom Hunt (Head of Projects and Business Analysis), and I had the fantastic opportunity to travel to Delhi to deliver a presentation at the International Conference on Academic Libraries.

I had never been to Delhi, or anywhere else in India, so I was very excited (and also a bit nervous!).

The conference was being hosted by Delhi University Library System, University of Delhi, as part of the University's centenary celebrations. With a conference theme of 'Transforming Academic Libraries', it probably won't be a surprise that we were invited to speak specifically about Imagine2030. Dom and I were scheduled to speak on the second day of the conference, so after a 4am arrival on the first day, we were up early to squeeze in some sightseeing (Red Fort and Chandni Chowk) before the conference began in the afternoon.

The reception we were given by the conference committee and delegates was like nothing I've experienced before, there was such a buzz around the whole venue, with so much warmth and celebration for being together.

We focused our presentation on telling the story of Imagine2030 so far, explaining it in the context of our University's Our future strategy and the work we did through our Library Reshaping Project. Following our session we were invited to take part in an advisory panel to help shape the future of Delhi University Library System, a conversation we have continued since we returned to Manchester.

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It was fascinating to learn more about the library system in India. Breakout sessions at the conference provided the opportunity for delegates to present their own papers (which frequently came under scrutiny). You needed a thick skin to take part!

In the evenings there was entertainment from a variety of very talented singers and dancers and each day ended with a conference dinner; I especially enjoyed the jalebi! (Indian fried dough).

Huge thanks to Alison Tipping and Adele Gillibrand for their support with conference, travel and accommodation bookings, and to Lindsay Wilson for the fabulous slidepack. If anyone would like to know more about the trip or our presentation, please get in touch.



Dom Hunt helping out with the conference raffle!

Teaching, Learning, and Students

ITL Fellowship: Developing a Co-constructed Toolkit for Academic Support

Adam Cooke, Teaching and Learning Officer in the Teaching Learning and Students team, has been awarded an Institute of Teaching and Learning Fellowship.

Adam has provided an insight into what opportunities the fellowship will bring and what the project aims are:

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This Fellowship will be an opportunity to work with our amazing students, both here in the Library Student Team and more broadly across the University, to explore how academic support is offered to students from widening participation backgrounds. How can we work harder to erase awarding gaps, rather than expecting some students to do more? We know that some students are reluctant to engage, no matter the 'welcome' that is created for them. Yes, our door is always open, but would you walk through it? If not, why not?

Together we'll seek to develop pathways of support for students, trying to better understand what students need, how they want it delivered and when it is most impactful. Having developed and delivered this as part of the pilot next year, the hope is to offer a suggested framework of support and a series of recommendations that could be scalable across the University.

One of the outputs of the project will be that those students who participated will be creating materials that not only support, but also advocate for and amplify their perspectives, experiences, and expertise. We, collectively across FSP, are acutely aware of the language we use with all students and the sensitivities around this. I hope this project can showcase what we do so well and increase our influence beyond the Library. I've argued the Library is uniquely placed to do this and the collective experience across FSP in plugging us in so directly to the student voice was a key part of securing funding for this.

Simply put, the project aims to contribute to University initiatives addressing the awarding gap by enabling and centring student voices from the margins and those who have overcome significant barriers to success. This project is important because it allows us to see, hear and meet the needs of the minority through inclusive practice, instead of asking them to conform to the defined successful pathways of the majority. Or simply work harder and do more.

Reflection on Library Information Literacy Annual Conference (LILAC)

Kerry Scott and Mike Roughley

This month we attended LILAC 2023.

LILAC is an annual conference organised by CILIP, which offers delegates the opportunity to share knowledge and network with information literacy professionals.

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The programme featured insights from academic librarians and independent scholars from around the world (from the US to the UAE), through keynote presentations, parallel sessions, hands-on workshops, poster displays and stalls. This year The University of Cambridge hosted the conference, which took place between Wednesday 19 and Friday 21 April.

The programme covered a diverse range of topics, including accessible and inclusive teaching practices, issues associated with the spread of disinformation and bias, the use of Artificial Intelligence in academic environments, professional development and much more. All the sessions were engaging, and we are already considering how we might apply what we learned into our own practices.

The approaches and ideas shared at LILAC reaffirmed the work we are already doing at our Library, and it was great to discover that other institutions are working on similar projects. We were able to have interesting conversations, share experiences and reflect on lessons learned.

If anybody would like to know more about the LILAC 2023 programme or has any other questions about the general experience of attending, please feel free to contact Kerry Scott or Mike Roughley.

Manchester Library Carpentry team delivers workshops for the White Rose Libraries consortium and University of Utah

Last month, the Manchester Library Carpentry team (Carlene Barton, Phil Reed and Nilani Ganeshwaran), were invited to deliver a workshop for the White Rose Libraries consortium; the Universities of Leeds, Sheffield, and York.

They travelled to Leeds to teach library and information professionals about good practice with spreadsheet data and how to clean messy data with the free OpenRefine software. This work forms part of Nilani's fellowship from the Software Sustainability Institute, and the team are experimenting with better ways to help learners retain their new skills and apply them to real data scenarios from their own institutions. Watch for more details in a blog post soon.

Also in April, Phil led the delivery of another Library Carpentry workshop, this time online and organised by the University of Utah and Advocate Health Wisconsin. He worked with instructors from the United States, Switzerland and South Africa, delivering to medical librarians based in the US, Germany and Israel who will go on to learn about research data management. The lessons included command line (Shell) and version control (Git and GitHub).

There were initial challenges about multiple time zones and adapting some of the activities for online delivery, however, the session ran very smoothly and received glowing feedback. (A Google jam board saved the day!).

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Snack and Chat Update

Sammie Barker

The Library Student Team are continuing to successfully run our Snack and Chat event on Fridays, with sessions now running in line with Assessment Support.

Along with taking free snacks and hot drinks, students will be encouraged to share their 'quotes of encouragement' on whiteboards which we will leave up in the AGLC training room. We hope this will help create a space where students can take a break from their assignments while being able to talk with their peers and our Student Team about what may be worrying them.

We are also providing fruit, dietary 'free-from', and other take-away snacks, to be inclusive of all students. We are taking on feedback from them as we go.

Huge thanks to Dhruv, our Student Team member who created this logo!



Dhruv's Snack and Chat logo!

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