

INVITATION TO TENDER

THE DNER AND THE DNC: THE HUMAN ELEMENT

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Over the last few years there has been a considerable amount of activity relating to electronic libraries, research support libraries and the development of both a Distributed National Electronic Resource (DNER) and a distributed national collection of library research resources (the 'Distributed National Collection', or 'DNC'). The various programmes have stimulated a significant number of projects, most of which have employed additional staff, usually on short-term contract. Both newly-recruited and existing staff working within the sector have developed skills as a result of these projects which are important to retain for the future.
- 1.2 In addition, the needs of the UK HE sector are changing as internet access begins to change the ways in which people research, teach and – perhaps most important of all – learn. The Bett Report has already recognised the need to re-equip UK HE staff for the 21st century and to recognise the breaking down of traditional pay and grading barriers. Library and information service/technology staff, in particular, already have vastly different roles from those which they undertook even five years ago. At the same time, there is still an under-supply of people with specialised skills within the HE sector. Implementing projects is often hampered by lack of appropriately qualified staff.

2. Aim

- 2.1 There is a need to audit the workforce in preparation for further change and development and to determine a strategy for the sector. The aim of this study is therefore to learn about the issues surrounding the recruitment, development and retention of project staff in UK HE libraries and archives, with special reference to RSLP and JISC projects. The study will also consider the impact on institutions of employing project staff, and will map areas where retention and recruitment is problematic. The resulting report will seek to make recommendations in respect of future employment and training and development practices within the relevant parts of UK HE. It is envisaged that the audit will combine a mixture of survey techniques with face-to-face interviews and, possibly, focus group work.

3. Scope

- 3.1 The study will survey the staff involved in the various funding councils' library programmes (e-Lib, RSLP, JCEI initiatives, etc.). The project will track project staff and their managers and assess the impact which the programmes have had on the individuals, the organisations for which they work(ed) and the sector as a whole. The emphasis will be on identifying both skills and skills gaps and on blockages to effective utilisation and development of project staff (notably when special funding programmes have ceased).

- 3.2 The study will also be expected to assess the value that has been added to HE programme project workers' careers and to the sector more widely as a result of their involvement in RSLP and JISC projects. It will be important to consider the question of added value in the context of different HE programmes as the factors involved may be different from programme to programme. For example, were different skill sets required for NFF, e-Lib and RSLP projects?

4. Constraints

- 4.1 The study will have to be sufficiently broad in order to ensure that the audit is a valid one. However, the tracing of present and former project staff may not be easy and there will be both time and resource constraints. The study will need to be completed within a nine-month period.

5. Expectations

- 5.1 The outcomes of the project will be used to inform the UK HE sector about future HR planning and development and may lead to a programme of work aimed at redressing imbalances and aiding recruitment and retention. The data presented will need to be sufficiently robust to allow for such follow-up.

6. Likely Stakeholders

- 6.1 The project will be supported by the RSLP and JISC. Consultation with other stakeholders such as the Library Association, the British Library, Re:source and BAILER will also be encouraged.

7. Deliverable

- 7.1 The deliverable will be a report that is suitable for circulation to the UK HE community, and to other interested stakeholders. A draft of the report must be submitted for review by the funders within six months of the award of the contract. The Higher Education Funding Bodies will own copyright in the report. The report must also be made available to the sponsors in electronic form suitable for Web publication.

8. Value of the contract

- 8.1 The maximum value of the contract is expected to be no more than £50,000 (excluding VAT).

9. Timescale

- 9.1 It is intended that the contract will be awarded in order to allow a start by November 2001, with completion and delivery of the report by late July 2002.

10. Selection process

- 10.1 Bids should be no longer than six sides of A4 in length. CVs of the staff carrying out the work should be attached to the submission.
- 10.2 Proposals must include a description of the work to be carried out, timescales and milestones, as appropriate, and a budget breakdown.
- 10.3 Submissions will be evaluated according to the following criteria:

- Demonstration of understanding of the human resource issues in project work
- Suggested approach to carrying out the work
- Qualifications and experience of staff involved
- Value for money

10.4 The deadline for submission of bids is 5pm on **Tuesday 18 September**. Eight copies (hard copy) of each bid should be sent to

Ronald Milne
Director
Research Support Libraries Programme
University Library
George Square
Edinburgh EH8 9LJ

10.5 Enquiries may be addressed to Mr Milne (telephone: 0131 651 1494; e-mail: ronald.milne@ed.ac.uk), or to Dr David Baker, Pro-Vice Chancellor, University of East Anglia (telephone: Tel: 01603-592434; e-mail: d.baker@uea.ac.uk).

10.6 Interviews will take place **in central London on the afternoon of 12 October 2001**.

10.7 Further information relating to JISC and its activities may be found on the JISC website, available at: <http://www.jisc.ac.uk>.

10.8 Further information relating to the Research Support Libraries Programme may be found on the Programme website, available at <http://www.rslp.ac.uk>.