

## **INVITATION TO TENDER**

### **Scoping study and implementation plan for a serials union catalogue (SUNCAT)**

#### **Background**

RSLP, JISC CEI and the British Library jointly funded a feasibility study in 2000/01 to explore the issues and the options relating to the desirability of having a UK national union catalogue (NUC), or catalogues, for monographs and other types of material, including serials. The need for such a system is seen as potentially important within the context of a co-ordinated distributed national collection of resources for research and learning to allow users to identify and locate items in which they are interested that are held outside their own institution elsewhere in the UK. The study was led by University of Sheffield.

The UKNUC study identified a particular need for the development of a national serials union catalogue. The UKNUC concertation meeting and other feedback suggest that this is a high priority. It would form a core enabling service for the JISC JOIN-UP projects, as well as being more widely useful to researchers and institutions.

The study recommended that the National Union Serials Catalogue should comprise records and holdings from the British Library, the National Libraries of Scotland and Wales, large university research university libraries, and some smaller, more specialist, institutions. It was suggested that this would be a physical catalogue of high quality bibliographic records. Customised software would be used to import serials records from local catalogues, match them with existing high quality records from the CONSER database, upgrade records where appropriate, and load them into the National Union Serials Catalogue with standardised holdings information. If required, upgraded records could be copied back to local catalogues. Added-value services and linkages could be developed which would enhance and maintain the value of a separate serials catalogue.

RSLP, JISC/DNER and the British Library have subsequently agreed jointly to fund a scoping study, as the next step. The study would include the development of an implementation plan for a serials union catalogue service.

#### **The scoping study**

The purpose of the study will be to:

- validate the technical model proposed;
- confirm the scope and initial boundaries of the proposed catalogue in terms of data content, institutional involvement and expected functionality;
- identify and consider financial models for setting up and running the union catalogue;
- identify the technical and resource implications for likely key data contributors and confirm their willingness to contribute to the catalogue;
- identify required linkages to and from other serials-related data and services;

- identify options for developing and hosting the service, and the organisational and governance arrangements for its management and sustainability;
- estimate the level of funding requirement.

### **Deliverables**

- A report on the above for funders and for potential data contributors to seek confirmation of their support and willingness to contribute;
- An outline implementation plan for the service;
- A specification of requirements, to provide the basis for inviting tenders for the development and provision of the proposed serials union catalogue service.

The Higher Education Funding Bodies and the British Library will jointly own copyright in the report, the implementation plan and the specification of requirements. The documents must also be made available to the sponsors in electronic form suitable for Web publication.

### **Supporting documentation**

The final report of the UKNUC study, and the serials workpackage are available at: <http://www.uknuc.shef.ac.uk/>

Those wishing to respond to the present tender are strongly advised to consult these documents.

### **Value of the contract**

The value of the contract is expected to be no more than £35,000 (excluding VAT).

### **Timescale**

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, implementation plan and specification of requirements by late February 2002.

### **Selection process**

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.

Proposals must include a description of the work to be carried out, timescales and milestones, as appropriate, and a budget breakdown.

Submissions will be evaluated according to the following criteria:

1. Demonstration of understanding of the issues relating to serials, and an up-to-date knowledge and understanding of the implications of current and likely future developments in the provision of electronic information services and systems.

2. Demonstration of a good technical knowledge of electronic information systems.
3. Suggested approach to carrying out the work.
4. Qualifications and experience of staff involved.
5. Value for money.

The deadline for submission of bids is 5pm on **Tuesday 25 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

Enquiries may be addressed to Mr Milne (telephone: 0131 651 1494; e-mail: [ronald.milne@ed.ac.uk](mailto:ronald.milne@ed.ac.uk)), or to Mr Geoff Smith, Director, British Library Co-operation and Partnership Programme (telephone: 0207 412 7584; e-mail: [geoff.smith@bl.uk](mailto:geoff.smith@bl.uk)), or to Ms Catherine Grout, Assistant Director, Development, JISC/DNER Office (telephone: 0207 848 2493; e-mail: [catherine.grout@kcl.ac.uk](mailto:catherine.grout@kcl.ac.uk)).

Interviews will take place **in London on the afternoon of Monday 15 October**.