MISSION STATEMENT

CURL’s mission is to increase the ability of research libraries to share resources for the benefit of the local, national and international research community.

VISION:

CURL will make a difference for researchers by helping to build the Distributed and Hybrid Research Library of the future. Researchers, wherever in the world and whatever their disciplines, will be able to:

- Search, locate and request all resources, whatever their format, easily and quickly from the desktop
- Have quick and easy access to an increasing amount of electronic resources, both born-digital and digitised
- Have physical access to manuscripts, archives or printed items that have not been digitised and cannot be moved, wherever these are held
- Have other printed items from outside their own institutions delivered to them efficiently.

CURL WILL:

- Influence change and provide a seedbed for innovative projects and services
- Provide practical tools for finding information
- Engage its membership to improve support for researchers
- Foster synergies through strategic alliances and collaborative partnerships that will benefit research support in the UK, Ireland and worldwide
- Help to shape the wider debate at national and international levels.
This year’s Annual Report records significant achievements in existing services and projects together with expanded areas of activity for CURL.

During the period of the Report CURL has been active both internally and externally, completing the strategic review noted in the Annual Report 2002-2003 and beginning to implement our new Strategic Plan for 2003-2006.

The creation of a new Plan was as a response to a number of factors. Among these are: the increased pace of change in the digital information environment; the outcomes of the Research Support Libraries Group, including the expected establishment of the Research Libraries Network (setting a national agenda for development of research support with which CURL is keen to engage); and the timely change in CURL’s status, arising from the inclusion of the national libraries as full members of CURL, to a cross-sectoral organisation supporting the research community as a whole.


New Task Forces have been created to address a wide range of issues such as the need for a national approach to meeting researcher needs through digitisation programmes, model attributes for digital repositories to support consortial work, and enhancing CURL’s communications with members. The Research Libraries Network will have a major impact on the future of library and information support for research; a Task Force was formed specifically to identify areas in which CURL could work with and support the RLN to ensure its successful establishment and development.

Existing activities supporting CURL’s mission continued to make considerable progress throughout the process surrounding the development of the Strategic Plan.

The CURL database reached the landmark of 40 million records, with a proportion of new records added being from non-member libraries involved in CURL-led RSLP projects. Together with work on improving search result linking, this has further enhanced COPAC as a publicly-available service of high importance to the research community as a whole, and once again COPAC usage statistics show a marked increase over the previous year. Progress in resource discovery was also made through the Archives Hub, with an increase of more than 20% in the number of EAD files available. This included for the first time records from Further Education institutions, again broadening the scope of a CURL-related service.

Partnership is a continuing feature in gaining best benefit from CURL’s financial and human resources. For example, many of the projects we provide funding for (e.g., the successful Britain in Print, CoFoR and SHERPA projects), involve non-CURL organisations such as public libraries and learned societies. In addition, Scholarly Communications issues will in future be addressed by a joint CURL and SCONUL group; we are collaborating with the RLG over using a new interface for the CURL database; and have discussed possible interactions with LIBER. CURL also joined COUNTER, the international initiative facilitating the production and management of statistics for use of online resources. COUNTER membership includes publishers, industry organisations, individual libraries and library consortia worldwide.

The activities and achievements recorded in this Report would not be possible without the commitment of time and energy to CURL’s Task Forces and working groups by staff in member libraries (and other organisations engaged in CURL’s collaborative activities), and by the staff of the CURL Secretariat. Thank you all for your contribution to CURL’s efforts to improve support for the entire research community.
TAKING FORWARD THE CURL VISION:
THE YEAR’S HIGHLIGHTS

The Resource Description and Discovery Steering Group

During the year the Steering Group, chaired by John Hall (Durham) had oversight of a number of significant areas of CURL activity:

CURL DATABASE

As a result of increases in the size of member library catalogues, the database continued to grow, with a rise of 4 million records over the year, to 40 million. Non-member data added to the CURL database included that of RSLP projects ‘Pamphlets & Polemic’ and ‘Revelation’, in which CURL institutions were also lead ones, from St Andrews University Library Special Collections, Reading University Library and University of Wales Lampeter. These records were also loaded into COPAC, ensuring that all CURL-related RSLP records were made available for resource discovery in 2004.

MARC21 DATABASE

Over the course of the year, MIMAS were able to do significant work on the proposed clustering mechanism. In March 2004, a trial Z39.50 target was released to enable the corresponding new de-duplication process to be tested. By the end of July 2004, the contents of this test database had grown from 170,000 to 17.5 million of the 40 million records in the CURL database. Also, in February, resources were released by CURL for the provision of a new web interface for the MARC21 database. By July 2004, collaboration with RLG meant that a technology transfer meeting could take place with them, with MIMAS liaising on technical details with RLG staff over the porting of the RIN21 Web interface to CURL’s MARC21 database. It is expected that the combination of an already familiar catalogue interface, together with the availability of native MARC21 format records, will lead to improved work-flow efficiencies on the part of both our members and users.

COPAC

Between August 2003 and July 2004, the number of CURL libraries with live circulation data went up from 16 to 20. By the end of July 2004, 26 CURL libraries were in COPAC, the additions being the full loading of the 3.5 million records of the National Library of Scotland, and Bristol. Several improvements were made to the COPAC interface. In October 2003 there was a change of layout with an explicit link from each Brief Record to the Full Record display for any item in a result set. Also in January, the Map search interface that had been trialled in the experimental COPAC V3 interface was added to the baseline functionality of COPAC. Finally, the interface was awarded a certificate of excellence for its accessibility as the result of a study commissioned by the Disability Rights Commission. In July 2004, funding made available by the JISC heralds a replacement of the hardware for both the COPAC and CURL database, which will lead to better performance by the end of 2004.

ARCHIVES HUB

The number of EAD files in the HE Archives Hub rose from 13,500 to some 17,500 by the end of July 2004. The main accomplishments in the year were, first, major progress towards completion of the distributed version of the service (with spokes set up in Manchester, Liverpool and Leeds), and second, the adding of archival descriptions from Further Education institutions for the first time in the Hub’s history (this resulted from specific JISC funding being made available to increase Hub content). In October 2003, the Tavistock Institute published a very positive summative evaluation of the Archives Hub, and the site was improved for contributors in January 2004 by the inclusion of separate areas on topics that relate amongst other things to the creation, sending and displaying of information via the Hub.

BRITAIN IN PRINT

John Scally was appointed Project Director, replacing Richard Ovenden during this year. The Board also gave full backing to Phase 2 of the Britain in Print Project bid to the HLF. Phase 2 consists of a retrospective conversion and cataloguing component and modules for the development of additional educational material that will add to the learning aids and tools for the study of Early Printed Book material established during Phase 1. The new web tool for Phase 2 was showcased in October 2003, at the joint CURL-RLG update event, and the application for Phase 2 of Britain in Print was submitted to the Heritage Lottery Fund on 30 June 2004.

By the end of July 2004, 26 CURL libraries were in COPAC, the greatest addition being the full loading of the 3.5 million records of the National Library of Scotland.
COMMUNICATIONS
Chair: Michele Shoebridge (University of Birmingham)

Between September 2003 and February 2004 the Task Force held focus groups at five CURL institutions to inform a review of communication between the various stakeholder groups within CURL. Outcomes were a reduction to optimum level of the number of mailing lists, increased focus on strategically relevant topics at Members’ meetings, and agreement on a project to redesign the CURL Web site for greater potential as a communications and marketing tool. The Task Force also made recommendations for longer-term action on CURL’s external profile as part of a Communications Policy.

DIGITAL CONTENT CREATION AND CURATION
Chair: Richard Ovenden (University of Oxford)

This Task Force was convened following the Strategic Plan 2003-2006 review, to contribute to:

- a national strategy for digitisation of material to meet researcher needs
- strategies for setting up repositories for digitised and born-digital content
- collaborating with organisations focusing on preservation and long-term access to digital content.

Areas identified by the Task Force for activity were: working with the Digital Curation Centre on eScience and eResearch issues, and consortial exploration of LOCKSS to support current and future use of the software by CURL members.

A Digital Resource Management Sub-Group, chaired by John MacColl (University of Edinburgh) was created to establish criteria for essential attributes of digital repositories which CURL consortial activities could adopt, and to evaluate different models (e.g., DSpace, SHERPA, ENCompass, OCLC) based on implementations in different CURL institutions.

The Task Force collaborated with the JISC to prepare a tender for a major study to assess the current provision of digitised born-print collections in order to identify where researcher needs are being met and where CURL could utilise collections and expertise to meet unfilled requirements.

The Task Force and sub-group have close links with the Arts and Humanities Data Service, Digital Preservation Coalition (DPC) and the National Archives. Richard Ovenden, the Chair of the Task Force, represents CURL on the Advisory Board of the DPC. The Task Force will represent CURL at a joint CURL-DPC information and best practice sharing event on digital preservation for practitioners in CURL libraries and beyond planned for Autumn 2004.

Research Libraries Network (RLN)
Chair: Clare Jenkins (Imperial College London)

Formed in summer 2003, the remit of the Task Force was to support the development of the RLN, and to define areas of activity in which CURL could contribute to the RLN’s agenda. The Task Force produced a CURL position paper proposing possible areas for collaboration to enable constructive discussions to take place with the RLN on its inception.

RESOURCE DISCOVERY
Chair: Chris Rusbridge (University of Glasgow)

The Task Force held a high-level discussion on the current resource discovery landscape. Topics included CURL’s contribution to the shaping of that landscape in the future and the possibilities for new resource discovery services for researchers, taking into consideration the success of CURL-related services such as COPAC and the Archives Hub.
RESOURCE MANAGEMENT
Chair: Jan Wilkinson (University of Leeds)

The main activities of the Task Force on Resource Management have been two significant projects:

CURL-CoFoR (Collaboration For Research)
This 20-institution project, directed by Jill Russell (University of Birmingham) and due to complete by August 2004, is examining collaborative collection management procedures for acquisition, access, retention and preservation in the area of Russian and East European studies (REES). As part of the project deliverables, CoFoR has largely completed a toolkit to support the extension of collaborative resource sharing to other fields. This includes:

- Ten-year partnership agreement on the acquisition, retention, and transfer of materials (18 CoFoR institutions have committed to this)
- Country and subject coverage commitments scheme
- Database of UK higher education institutions involved in REES research
- Serials de-duplication listings.

Monograph Inter-Lending
Following the recommendations of the 2003 CURL-British Library study into Monograph Interlending for the UK HE research community, CURL and the British Library agreed to joint fund a one year project to map governance mechanisms for operation of a consortium interlending service involving the British Library and a range of partner libraries. The project began in May 2004 and is directed by Michele Shoebridge (University of Birmingham).

SCHOLARLY COMMUNICATIONS
Chair: Dr. Paul Ayris (University College London)

The Task Force prepared a proposal for an advocacy campaign building on earlier work in light of recent developments in scholarly communications such as the Wellcome Trust’s statement on Open Access, the Berlin Declaration and the Parliamentary Inquiry into scientific journal publishing.

Following a review of relevant UK scholarly communications advocacy activity, the Task Force recommended that CURL and SCONUL form a joint Group to take this work forward. The new Group will meet from the 2004-2005 academic session.

SHERPA (Securing a Hybrid Environment for Research Preservation and Access)
This is a joint JISC and CURL-funded project to develop use of, and to explore legal, technical and other management issues relating to openly accessible institutional digital repositories of research output. SHERPA has also committed to maintaining the ROMEO (Rights Metadata for Open archiving) database, which has an increasingly important national role. In January 2004 further CURL members became SHERPA Associate Partners, bringing to 20 the number of individual institutions involved. The project has been successful in helping partner institutions plan and implement their repositories, and in disseminating work on Metadata standards and Intellectual Property Rights. SHERPA was also invited to submit evidence to the House of Commons: Science and Technology Committee Inquiry into Scientific Publications.

Advocacy work
CURL and SCONUL jointly submitted written evidence to The House of Commons: Science and Technology Committee Inquiry into Scientific Publications on the unsustainability of the current scholarly communications model. CURL also met with the Research Councils UK and ESRC to discuss issues surrounding open access.
Developing Strategic Alliances

LIBER

A meeting with LIBER identified a number of potential areas for collaboration between CURL and LIBER. These included scholarly communications, monograph interlending, access, digitisation and European funding. Further discussion will take place following LIBER’s forthcoming strategic review.

OCLC

Discussion took place with OCLC over a group services proposal offering a subscription-based approach to extending the use of OCLC services, including FirstSearch, Metadata Services, and ILL services, potentially to all CURL members.

RESEARCH LIBRARIES GROUP

Meetings were held between January and July 2004 to discuss the possibility of an RLIN MARC21 interface technology transfer from RLG to CURL. An RLG-CURL Update Meeting was held in October 2003 to share information about projects and initiatives, and a CURL-RLG Technical Services Forum in April 2004 to focus on improvements to the RLG cataloguing interface and their potential impact on CURL libraries.

Consortial memberships

CURL became a subscription member of COUNTER (Counting Online Usage of Networked Electronic Resources), an international initiative designed to serve librarians, publishers and intermediary services by facilitating the recording and exchange of online usage statistics. Development of the COUNTER model as a de facto standard accords with CURL’s aim of supporting CURL members in improving their researchers’ access to electronic resources.

CURL also renewed its support for the Digital Preservation Coalition and the National Council of Archives.

Member Services

A Company Business Task Force was created to examine the implications for CURL in marketing the CURL database more widely. The Task Force also amended the Memorandum and Articles of Association to extend eligibility of CURL membership to non-HE research libraries, and oversaw the completion of a CURL Risk Assessment and Management document to comply with the statement of recommended practice for accounting and reporting by charities.
CURL became a subscription member of COUNTER (Counting Online Usage of Networked Electronic Resources), an international initiative designed to serve librarians, publishers and intermediary services by facilitating the recording and exchange of online usage statistics.
People and Members

New Appointments

**Margaret Haines** was appointed Director of Information Services and Systems at King’s College London, with effect from September 2003.

**David Pearson** was appointed Director of the University of London Research Library Services with effect from March 2004.

**Helen Hayes** was appointed Vice-Principal for Knowledge Management and Librarian at the University of Edinburgh, with effect from September 2004.

**Phil Sykes** was appointed University Librarian at the University of Liverpool, with effect from May 2004.

**Alison Allden** was appointed University Librarian at the University of Bristol, with effect from August 2004.

**Frances Norton** was appointed Librarian at the Wellcome Library, with effect from July 2004.

New Departures

**Jan Wilkinson** served on the CURL Board from March 2000 until leaving her position as Librarian and Keeper of the Brotherton Collection at the University of Leeds in July 2004 to take up the post of Head of Higher Education at the British Library.
MEMBERS

- British Library
- Imperial College London
- King’s College London
- London School of Economics
- National Library of Scotland
- National Library of Wales
- Trinity College Dublin
- University College London
- University of Aberdeen
- University of Birmingham
- University of Bristol
- University of Cambridge
- University of Durham
- University of Edinburgh
- University of Glasgow
- University of Leeds
- University of Liverpool
- University of London
- University of Manchester
- University of Newcastle
- University of Nottingham
- University of Oxford
- University of Sheffield
- University of Southampton
- University of Warwick

ASSOCIATE MEMBER

- Wellcome Trust

PARTNER

- School of Advanced Studies of the University of London
Board of Directors (2003-2004)

Dates indicate term of office. The asterisk indicates a consecutive period of office (members may serve a maximum of two consecutive terms).

Paul Ayris* (1999-2005) University College London
Clare Jenkins (Chair) (2001-2004) Imperial College London
Tom Graham* (Treasurer) (2002-2006) University of Newcastle
Chris Rusbridge (2003-2005) University of Glasgow
Michele Shoebridge (2003-2005) University of Birmingham
Bill Simpson (2003-2005) University of Manchester
Jan Wilkinson* (until July 2004) University of Leeds

At the AGM on 25 March 2004, Clare Jenkins (Imperial College London) and Martin Lewis (University of Sheffield), were elected to the Board for the period 2004-2007.


Caroline Brazier British Library
Marie-Pierre Détraz (to January 2004) CURL
John Hall (Chair) University of Durham
Mike Mertens CURL
Richard Ovenden University of Oxford
Oliver Pickering University of Leeds
Hugh Taylor University of Cambridge
Paul Watry University of Liverpool

Present by invitation:

Julia Chruszcz Manchester Computing
Sean Dunne Manchester Computing
Amanda Hill Manchester Computing

CURL Secretariat

Marie-Pierre Détraz Executive Secretary
Mike Mertens Database Officer & Deputy Executive Secretary
Joy West Administrative Assistant
### Income

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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2004</th>
<th>2003</th>
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<tr>
<td>Subscriptions</td>
<td>227,733</td>
<td>227,733</td>
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<tr>
<td>User charges</td>
<td>41,407</td>
<td>38,598</td>
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<tr>
<td>CEDARS Project*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monograph Inter-Lending Project*</td>
<td>5,208</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monograph Inter-Lending Project IT Consultancy Study*</td>
<td>20,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Revelation Plus*</td>
<td>12,000</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Other income</td>
<td>5,085</td>
<td>6,302</td>
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<tr>
<td>Interest received</td>
<td>23,803</td>
<td>20,733</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total Income</strong></td>
<td>335,236</td>
<td>293,366</td>
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### Expenditure

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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>£</th>
<th>£</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Staff costs</td>
<td>98,753</td>
<td>91,455</td>
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<tr>
<td>Administrative costs</td>
<td>24,224</td>
<td>29,588</td>
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<tr>
<td>Membership activities</td>
<td>38,678</td>
<td>52,100</td>
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<tr>
<td>Database expenditure</td>
<td>(2,676)</td>
<td>29,274</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategic development costs</td>
<td>76,561</td>
<td>89,966</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CEDARS Project*</td>
<td>6,110</td>
<td>4,466</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Expenditure</strong></td>
<td>246,585</td>
<td>296,849</td>
</tr>
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</table>

Net incoming (outgoing resources) for the year and movement in funds

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2004</th>
<th>2003</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Year End Balances</strong></td>
<td>660,098</td>
<td>571,447</td>
</tr>
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</table>

### Note:
- * Restricted funds
- Each financial year ends on 31 July.
- The small deficit in 03 (£3,483) was incurred on CEDARS (restricted funds) due to the timing difference between the receipt of funding and the utilisation of this funding over the life of the project.
- The figure of (£2,676) under database expenditure represents negative expenditure, due to unspent accrued funds.
THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS met on the following occasions:

- 26 September 2003
- 21 November 2003
- 16 January 2004
- 27 February 2004
- 14 May 2004
- 16 July 2004

THE RESOURCE DESCRIPTION AND DISCOVERY STEERING GROUP met on the following occasions:

- 21 October 2003
- 13 February 2004
- 15 June 2004
Never underestimate the importance of a librarian.

Okay, chances are you won’t actually find a librarian in outer space. But librarians do play a vital role on any exploration team, enabling research breakthroughs and real-time solutions. Whether you’re choosing information for research communities or decision support for professionals, Elsevier offers access to a world of information anytime, anywhere. Select from a wide range of scientific, technical and health resources available in multiple media, including innovative electronic products like ScienceDirect® and MD Consult. After all, getting the right information into the right hands is critical to the success of any mission. Building Insights. Breaking Boundaries™.