



News Release

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Shared digital library gives research teams vital edge

Scotland's highly-rated university researchers are to benefit from an online shared initiative that makes key journals more widely available.

The new digital library will give academics – who scored top marks in a recent independent review of research – easier access to more than 1500 specialist publications.

The initiative is seen as being vital to the development of Scottish-based research, more than half of which was rated internationally excellent or world-leading in last month's Research Assessment Exercise (RAE).

The Scottish Higher Education Digital Library (SHEDL) has been backed by all of Scotland's HEIs, who say that easier access to more journals will stimulate better research and support learning and teaching. It is the first scheme of its kind in the United Kingdom

It also expected to boost research across different disciplines, and support initiatives that pool research between institutions – a feature of the Scottish research scene which was singled out for praise in the RAE.

Three leading academic publishers – Cambridge University Press, the American Chemical Society and Springer – have signed up for the pilot scheme, negotiated by JISC Collections and led by the Scottish Confederation of University and Research Libraries (SCURL).

Sheila Cannell, the chair of SCURL, who is Director of Library Services at the University of Edinburgh, said: "Differential access to journals has been a problem for some researchers but with the advent of SHEDL we are now providing them with a level playing field. It not only provides universities with a greater range of materials, but will also encourage collaboration between institutions as it gives researchers access to journals on the fringes of their chosen disciplines."

Lorraine Estelle, CEO of JISC Collections said "NESLi2 is the national initiative for electronic journal negotiations and licensing in the UK. Working with the Scottish higher educational libraries on this project has enabled us to further develop the NESLi2 model, and we believe that what we have achieved is a feasible and scaleable model for the future."

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